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Leadership Final paper

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Paul Kagame, current President of Rwanda since 2000, inherited a country that had just survived one of the most outrageous genocides in history. Not only that, Rwanda at that time was heavily based on agriculture, and this sector accounted for more than 90% of the workforce (FRIEDMAN, n.d.). This issue escalated further because of the lack of land capable of being ploughed and the high birth rate that threatened subsistence rates (FRIEDMAN, n.d.). Rwanda's main agricultural products in 2000 were tea and coffee, which are very defenseless against market forces and global demand, making them unreliable as the economic cornerstone of any society. Geographic barriers also added to an already fragile economy President Paul Kagame was taking over since Rwanda is a land-locked country. The odds of him lifting his country out of genocide's ashes to where Rwanda is now were numbered. In fact, Rwanda's public debt in 2000 was greater than hundred and fifteen percent of their GDP (FRIEDMAN, n.d.). But, Paul Kagame was able to do what he did through what he called "Vision 2020" with its pillars, which this paper will focus on.

"Vision 2020" started in 2000 as a road map to be used to get out of poverty for a nation that was devastated given all the problems and more stated above. In order for the government to solve these main issues, it put forward a plan that was based six major pillars to be followed by both public and private sectors to ensure collaboration across the country towards one goal. This paper will focus on the four major pillars.

Their first pillar was based on creating and promoting good governance and a capable state through the rule of law (e.g., transparency and accountability of leaders in the government), decentralizing the decision making process to give local communities a voice in solving issues that concerns them and creating a small public

sector that can elaborate policies that will turn Rwanda into an international market economy (FRIEDMAN, n.d.). This first pillar has promoted community since it seeks to decentralize power by letting everyone participate in the decision-making, especially when the problems at hand concern them. This leads to a more collaborative society where, for example, more problems can be dealt with very quickly and efficiently as well, since it is not a bunch of people who probably are out of touch with the reality on the ground, but rather, it involves those who have experienced the problem at hand. Efficiency is also part of what could result from this pillar since it seeks to enforce the rule of law. This makes sure government leaders are not doing whatever they want with the power invested in them. The management of public funds and corruption are two of the problems that were mitigated by implementing this pillar, which in the end boosted the economy and increased the standard of living in Rwanda. On the other hand, liberty is shuttered in this pillar because of the government's controlling nature since there is a small group of people deciding the trajectory of the economic policies and regulating the market. In this situation, the free market is not an option that puts liberty at stake.

The second pillar was the “development of human resources and the transition to a knowledge-based economy” (FRIEDMAN, n.d.). This was done through very aggressive policies aiming at redefining their education system and a major improvement in the healthcare infrastructure domain. Again, the sense of community can be detected in this second pillar. What President Paul Kagame succeeded in doing here is to put people first, their well-being, and their education as well. Without the cooperation of each Rwandan to their fullest capacity, the country would not have been able to be where they are now. For example, Rwanda is currently known for its

very innovative use of technology (FRIEDMAN, n.d.). This would not have happened if not for the bright minds of Rwandans who cooperate every day to innovate and maintain their infrastructure instead of competing with each other. And that is the whole essence of community.

Their pillar three is “is a comprehensive program of privatization”(FRIEDMAN, n.d.), which is described in their plan as “the emergence of a viable private sector that can take over as the principal growth engine of the economy, is absolutely key”(FRIEDMAN, n.d.). Now, with this pillar comes efficiency since it motivates huge business enterprises. For example, public sectors sometimes take for granted what they manage because they are public goods whose loss will not affect them personally. But, since this pillar wants to privatize more sectors, this means that the business at hand is now more personal, and you find people more engaged hence more productivity (efficiency).

And the fourth pillar is creating “ proactive efforts for gender equality.” Through this policy, President Kagame promoted equality to a high degree, with now more women in the parliament than in other countries in the world. I would close by saying that even though some policies he took did not have all the four poles of the economy in it, President Paul Kagame tried to incorporate various them here and there, with more focus on policies that promote efficiency and community with very limited liberty. In terms of equality, he succeeded at uniting a country divided to its core through peace and reconciliation programs. This may not sound like an economic policy, but they would not be where they are today without unity and peace.

References

FRIEDMAN, A. *Kagame's Rwanda: Can an Authoritarian Development Model Be Squared with Democracy and Human Rights?* [Ebook]. Retrieved 1 May 2021, from <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/36687207.pdf>.

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