Strategic Plan
2013-2015

June 2013
Draft

Rwanda Manufacturing Association

Profile of Rwanda Manufacturing Association

Rwanda Manufacturing Association is an organization focused on enhancing business opportunities and environment for Rwandan manufacturers. We are dedicated to ensuring our members take advantage of business opportunities locally, regionally and internationally and that their voices are heard and represented in all spheres of influence.

Our XX members are reputable companies with national regional and international operations, the association is able to influence the decisions that affect business at local and national levels. of in a bid to promote the sustainable and mutual business interests of our members.

In addition to the Association's role as an advocate for our members' interests in Rwanda, we work hand in hand with the businesses and domestic and foreign investors to increase networking opportunities and create other benefits to our members in manufacturing sector

The association is a member of Private Sector Federation (PSF).

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1   Introduction

This document describes Strategic Plan for the Rwanda Manufacturing Association for the period 2013-2015. It is intended for use by the Association to increase the effectiveness of its assistance to members, focus on the key issues in the manufacturing sector and raising funds for its operations.

The Rwanda Manufacturers Association (RRAM) is one of the associations of the Private Sector Federation (PSF). The PSF is founded in 1999 as an umbrella organization that represents interests of Rwandan business community. Today it consists of more than 23 associations organized in 9 Chambers. The Manufacturers Association is operating under Chamber of Industry. Its objective is to assist its members to become modern, innovative and responsible manufacturing industry, competitive at regional and international level. The mandate of the RRAM and the PSF as a whole have become multifaceted and gained regional dimension following the Rwanda's membership in East African Community (EAC) in 2007.

The strategic planning process was conducted with the management and members of the Association during early 2013. The strategic planning process sought to establish the nature and character of the Rwanda Manufacturing Association and to map out its future development. Through this process he Association establishes key goals, priorities and strategies and defines the measures needed to evaluate the success of these goals. The strategic plan is basis for detail annual planning of activities and is rolling in nature so that each year a new revision takes place..

1.1   Manufacturing sector in Rwanda

Although Rwandan export has been dominated by the traditional products coffee and tea, the more recent growth figures of the manufacturing sector in Rwanda are very promising. Manufacturing exports accounted for 45% of Rwanda's non-traditional exports until the end of September 2012, up from 36% in 2011. It increased over twofold in 2012 over the first nine months of 2011.

Manufacturing sector export statistics 2011/12

- Milling industry is up 337% with total exports up to end September 2012 at US$15.7 million;
- Beverage exports up 153% with US$10.7 million in exports;
- Iron and steel exports up 185% with US$ 3.8 million worth of exports;
- Plastics up 221% with US$2.6 million worth of exports;
- Cement and other construction material up 160% with US$2.4 million in exports;
- Soaps and washing preparation up 346% with exports of US$0.55 million and;
- Animal and vegetable fats up 1022% at US$0.54 million.

1.2   Strategy Building Blocks

The three main building blocks of the strategy are:

1. RAM Strategy Mapping
2. Action Planning and Definition of Priority Projects
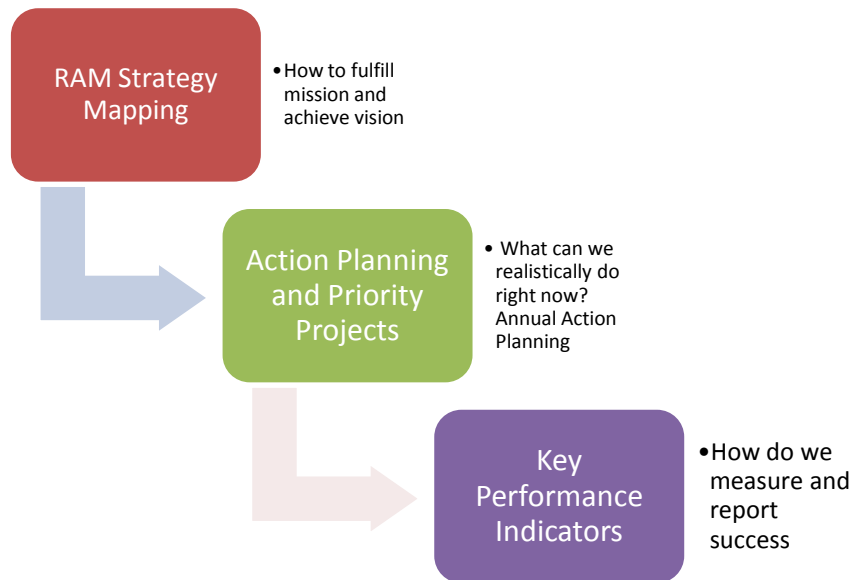3. Key Performance Indicators and Reporting

Figure 1: Strategy Building Blocks

1.2.1   Building Block 1: RAM Strategy Mapping

The strategy mapping is the most important analytical and design tool of the RAM strategy. A Visual Strategy methodology is used consisting of five steps presented in the Figure 2.

Step 2: Operating Environment Scan

What is happening in the RAM operating Environment

(Who is relevant and why, What strategies are important, What is the political framework nationally and regionally...)

Step 3: Internal Analysis

What is the current operating model of RAM? Identify key processes

Step 1: RAM Vision, Mission and Core Values

Step 4: RAM SWOT, Goals and Milestones

Tabular Summary of Horizon Scanning and Internal Analysis

Step 5: Strategy Maps

Graphically translates the RAM goals for each process

Figure 2: Visual Strategy Mapping

Step 1: Visual Strategy Mapping starts with definition of *vision, mission and core values* that would guide the operations of the RAM and keep the focus of the members.

Step 2: An *Operating Environment Scan* performed in the next step looks at the RAM operating environment in order to identify opportunities and threats that can help better position RAM programmes and activities.

Step 3: The *internal performance analysis* looks at the current operating model. The analysis is divided into 9 related sections. In each section the analyses of the RAM current operating model is conducted creating the key building blocks of the future strategy.

Step 4: The SWOT framework presents the "Opportunities and Threats" based on Horizon Scanning and "Strengths and Weaknesses" based on RAM Internal Performance Analysis in a convenient tabular framework.

Step 5: The RAM Strategy Map provides an overview of the main projects and processes that will lead to realization of the established RAM goals.

1.2.2 Building Block 2: Action planning and priority projects

The detail action planning and selection of priority project is based on the RAM Strategy Map developed under Building Block 1.

However, the effective implementation of these projects will depend on the level of achieved operational capacity of the RAM, available resources and external conditions such as government policies or development client's programmes.

For these reasons the RAM will have to periodically, but most probably annually, conduct the prioritisation exercise that will review its Strategy Map and decide with action paths are

the most important and realistic to pursue. The programmes and projects selected in this way will become a priority and will be included in the detailed Annual Action Plan.

1.2.3   Building Block 3: Key Performance Indicators

Performance management enables the RAM management to measure the organisation's performance to achieve one or more pre-selected goals. Performance indicators will be based on the detail Action Plan developed under Building Block 2.

2 Manufacturing Association (RAM) Strategy Mapping

2.1 Step 1: The RAM Vision, Mission and Core Values

Based on through discussion the RAM members developed the following formulations of the RAM Vision, Mission and Core Values.

The Vision

Vision of the RAM to become trusted, respected and effective partner that acts as a catalyst of innovation and competitiveness of the manufacturing sector in the region.

The Mission

Mission of the RAM is to to provide the common platform for advocacy, services and information sharing that unites all stakeholders in manufacturing sector in Rwanda in order to take advantage of business opportunities locally, regionally and internationally.

The Core Values

Core Values of the RAM are PROFESSIONALISM, INTEGRITY and CONSISTENCY in pursuing its mission

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2.2 Step 2: Operating Environment Scan

First analytical step towards the strategy building is a scan of the RAM operating environment. By continuously scanning the operating environment the RAM will be able to anticipate and senses the new opportunities as well as to create strategies to deal with potential threats to implementation of its mandate.

The opportunities for the RAM to improve its operations exist in both national and regional context. Some of the key opportunities include:

- Positive political/security image of Rwanda
- EAC membership of Rwanda
- Central position of Rwanda in Great Lake Region
- High impact of manufacturing on economy
- GoR focus on manufacturing as a priority sector
- High local job creation
- Improving infrastructure in Rwanda
- Growing technology base in the country
- Manufacturing laws
- Rwanda environmental image

On the other hand the current operating environment brings several impediments to the successful RAM operations:

- Regional instability
- Slow progress of EAC integration process
- Political instability in DRC as one of the largest market for Rwanda manufacturers
- World demand and prices
- Regional and world competition
- Limited access to markets
- Lack of trained human resources in Rwanda
- High cost of transport
- High cost of energy
- Access to energy
- Government policy on environment
- Law enforcement arbitrary
- Lack of prevention in enforcing environmental regulation

2.3   Step 3: Internal Analysis

The internal analysis maps the relationship and processes necessary for effective functioning of the RAM. It consist of nine blocks presented in Figure 3.
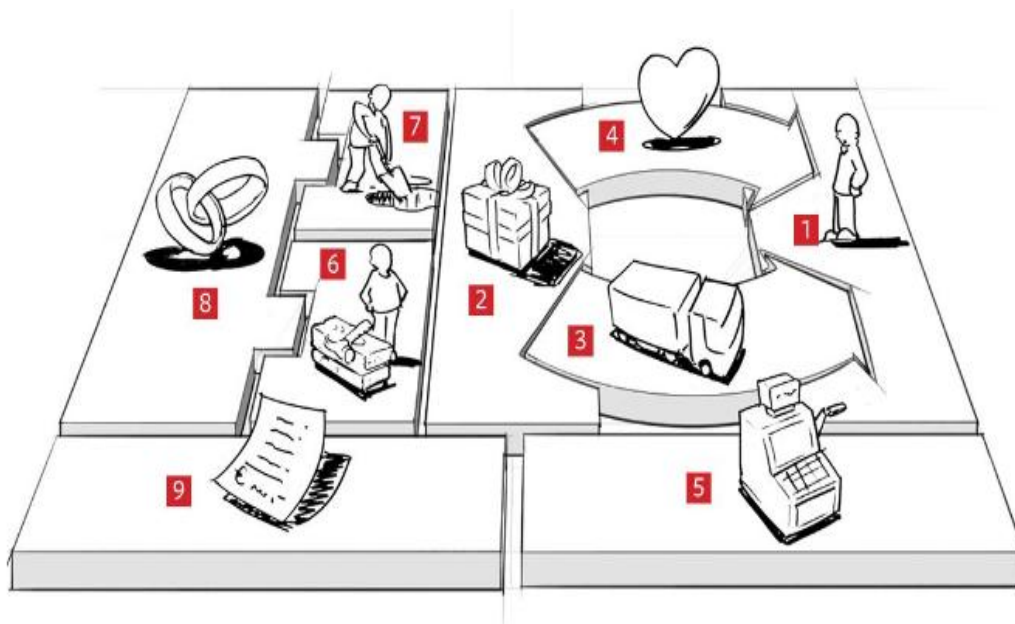

Figure 3: Nine building blocks of the Internal Analysis

The nine building blocks include:

1. Client Segment – Who are RAM Clients (members, government, other associations, development partners)?
2. Value Proposition – What value (*i.e.,* money, services, opportunities contacts, among others) does the RAM bring to each Client segment?
3. Delivery Channels – How is value delivered to each Client segment?
4. Client Relationship – What kind of relationship does each Client segment expect from the RAM?
5. Value stream – What value are Clients willing to provide?
6. Key Resources – What resources (*i.e.,* money, expert staff, information infrastructure, conference facilities, external experts, among others) does the RAM require to deliver value to Client segments?
7. Key Activities – What key activities does the RAM value proposition, delivery channel and Client relationship require (identification and monitoring of NTBs, research of NTBs, engaging in advocacy channels nationally and regionally, monitoring and reporting to fund providers, communication and branding, training, among others).
8. Key Partnerships – Who are other partners of the RAM? What resources do we require from them?
9. Cost Structure - What are the most important costs?

2.3.1   RAM Client Segments, Value Proposition and Delivery Channels

In these three elements of the internal analysis the RAM looks at its key clients, the value that it brings to clients and the delivery channels. By defining these elements in a proper way the RAM creates a strong basis for looking at the further elements of internal analysis.

The clients are identified in five groups: Members, Government, Other Associations, Foreign Investors and Development Partners.

Related to the RAM mission, the main value proposition is to deliver efficient, well organised services for its members. The RAM also wants to be a reliable partner to the government in providing a point of contact with the private sector companies from manufacturing sector and sector expertise relevant for policy making. The sector is also one of the key generators of growth in Rwanda. By networking with other associations the RAM will make sure that the synergies are released for the benefit of all private sector companies. As one of the services the RAM is planning to provide investor advisory services aiming at facilitating new foreign investments and capitalisation of the existing firms.

A number of delivery channels will be utilised to deliver these services including interactive RAM website and other important communication channels will have to be developed as a part of implementation of the strategy.

Client	Value propositions	Delivery Channel
Private sector member companies	- Professional Training and Development, - Branding, - Access to Markets, - Advocacy, - Get the job done, - Business Networking,	- Branding of the Association - Web Site, Hot, Line Lines E-mails and SMS Messages, - Training sessions - Data-bases - Suggestion box

	• Supporting Compliance, • Power of association	
Rwanda Government	• Provision of statistics, • Sector related inputs for the purpose of policy making; • Feedback on implementation of policies, • Sensitisation on key issues (such as EAC), • Provide platform and point of contact, • Wealth creation	• Surveys • Research papers • Information meetings, • PPD for manufacturing
Other Associations/PSF	• Experience, Technical Support, • Information, • Add the strength to their voice, • Business network	• Participate in national and regional platforms, • On-line sharing of information
Foreign Investors	• Information on investment environment; • Check-list for setting up company, • Joint-venture partners, • Experience sharing	• RAM meetings; Joint national and regional workshops, meetings and conferences • Success stories on elimination of NTBs
Development Partners	• Projects Ideas, • Delivery to the programmes of DP • Linking the DP resources with needs • Experience sharing	• RAM meetings; Joint national and regional workshops, meetings and conferences • Success stories on elimination of NTBs

Table 1: RAM Clients, Value Proposition and Delivery Channels

2.3.2   Client Relationship

It is important for the RAM to clearly define the relationships with each of the client segments. Relationships can range from personal to automated. I the Table 7 the RAM has identified the relationship with each of the clients segments.

Client	Client relationship
Private sector member companies	• Dedicated personal assistance • Automated services
Rwanda Government	• Dedicated personal assistance • Automated services
Other Associations/PSF	• Automated services

	• Communities
Foreign Investors	• Dedicated personal assistance • Automated services • Communities
Development Partners	• Dedicated personal assistance • Automated services • Communities

Table 2: Client Relationships

Personal assistance is a relationship that involves very good understanding of the client and its needs. It represents the deepest and most intimate type of relationship and normally develops over a longer period of time. With the dual relationship to public and private sector institutions and companies where they appear as the RAM members as well as clients, the RAM has already a very good picture of how to best position in relation to each of them. This form of close cooperation will be further extended by introduction of new communication means.

Automated services will be established to increase contacts with wider section of public and private operators, development clients and general public. They will include electronic means of communication described in the following chapter under communication programme of the RAM.

Developing relation to clients via for example business *communities* is often effective way to pass the message relevant for delivering service. Increasing the general knowledge of the problems that manufacturers face in Rwanda and Rwanda traders in EAC countries increases the awareness of the importance to for example remove NTBs or harmonise legislation and standards. It improves the environment in which the RAM and its clients work together towards the common goal. In relation to development clients this way of establishing relationship increases the awareness of the general public in Rwanda about their contribution to increasing trade and economic prosperity.

2.3.3   Value Stream from clients

A Value Stream is another important building block of the RAM internal analysis. It is examined under assumption that the RAM value proposition for each client is met with the value stream from the client. By knowing what kind of contribution to RAM operation can be expected clients is essential for good planning of resources. The list of the expected value streams is presented in Table 8.

Client	Value stream from the client
Private sector member companies	• Membership Fees • Information on business constraint • Sector specific expertise

Rwanda Government	• Provide expert advice on potential policy solutions • Support and participate in RAM domestic and regional activities • Open advocacy channel for elimination of NTBs such as PPD • Leadership in political dialog with EAC and other countries
Other Associations	• Sector specific knowledge • Synergy for addressing cross-cutting advocacy issues • Advocacy products and tools (PSF) • Joint training programmes for members
Foreign Investors	• Additional capital • Know-how in manufacturing • Networking
Development Partners	• Co-funding RAM operations • Funding research on advocacy issues • Providing training programmes • SME and other business development schemes and incentives

Table 3: Value Stream from the Clients

2.3.4   Key Resources required by RAM

Key resources analysis explore the demand side of the RAM resource equation. The question is what kind or resources are needed by the RAM to deliver value to clients.

Most of the required resources fall under three groups: funding for operational cost, expert knowledge and infrastructure.

Client	Key resources per Client segment
Private sector member companies	• Expert knowledge for addressing advocacy issues • Funding for operating advocacy channels • Funding for service delivery
Rwanda Government	• Expert knowledge in active advocacy • Funding for operating advocacy channels
Other Associations/PSF	• Communication channels • Funding for regional events
Foreign Investors	• Expert knowledge in investing in Rwanda • Communication channels

Development Partners	• Knowledge in developing donor relation

Table 4: Key Resources per Client Segment

2.3.5   Key areas of RAM activities

Based on the mission and vision and the internal and external operational environment the core RAM strategic activities and programmes will be defined under three Strategic Outcomes:

- SO 1: Strong and Sustainable Association
- SO 2: Priority sector issues addressed and resolved
- SO 3: Effective services provided to members

Detail description of the RAM strategic programmes in these three areas is provided in Chapter 5.

2.3.6   Key Partnerships

In order to implement its mission and the key programmes, the RAM will start building strategic partnerships with other Association , academic institution and development clients. Strategic partnerships will be based on mutual interest in facilitating development and business growth, research on priority advocacy issues and implementing manufacturing development programmes.

In Table 6 we provide the list of partnerships modalities that will be used by RAM.

Partner	Type of Partnerships
Other RAMs	• Strategic alliance on removing cross-cutting issues affecting private sector businesses
Academic institutions	• Cooperation to acquire know-how, research results and statistics on manufacturing
Development partners	• Information sharing on RAM requirements and DP assistance programmes

Table 5: RAM Partnerships

2.3.7   Cost Structure

This building block describes the most important costs that will be incurred while operating under above described RAM business model. Creating and delivering value and maintaining Client Relationships all incur costs. Such costs depend on the definition of Key Resources, Key Activities, and Key Partnerships.

The RAM is following a value driven costing model where the focus is not on the cost implications of the key activities but on the result of advocacy and effect of services on capacity of members to grow their businesses. It is however, important to focus the limited RAM resources on key projects that will deliver this value while maintaining the operational functionality of the RAM. Following this logic, the cost structure of RAM is presented in two categories: the fixed operating costs of the RAM and the variable project related cost.

Type of cost	Type of expenditure	Estimated amount per year*
Fixed RAM operating cost	• Rent for RAM offices • RAM Secretariat – salaries • Time of senior managers • Communication cost • Stationary	tbd
Projects related cost	• Local and regional traveling cost • Consultants fees • Rent of conference facilities • Communication	tbd

.* detail costing is developed in the RAM Action Plan

Table 6: RAM Cost Structure

2.4 Step 4 – RAM SWOT, Goals and Milestones

The SWOT framework presents the "Opportunities and Threats" based on Horizon Scanning and "Strengths and Weaknesses" based on RAM Internal Performance Analysis in a convenient tabular framework.

 Table 8 presents the SWOT analysis for the Rwanda RAM.

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Resources	• Membership base • Good reputation of the sector • Motivated and active leadership • Self- funded Secretariat	• Capacity of staff insufficient to implement all activities • Passive and inactive membership • Lack of financial resources
Organisation	• Ability to function independently	• Recently established institution • Association strategy still in development

Work results	• Lots of experience with various manufacturing sector activities • Some major successes in advocacy of members	• Services not fully developed and not tailored to user groups • Insufficient service recognition of members and general public • Lack of M&E so results are difficult to measure • Undeveloped CSR activities in the sector
	OPPORTUNITIES	**THREATS**
Political	• Positive political/security image of Rwanda • EAC membership of Rwanda	• Regional instability • Low progress of EAC integration process
Economic	• High impact of manufacturing on economy • GoR focus on manufacturing as a priority sector	• World demand and prices • Regional and world competition • Limited access to markets • Lack of trained human resources in Rwanda • High cost of transport • High cost of energy
Social	• High local job creation	
Technological	• Improving infrastructure in Rwanda • Growing technology base in the country	• Access to energy
Legal	• Manufacturing laws	
Environmental	• Rwanda environmental image	• Government policy on environment • Law enforcement arbitrary • Lack of prevention in enforcing environmental regulation

Table 7: Rwanda RAM SWOT Analysis

Based on the results of SWOT the RAM will design its goals and key milestones for the committee as a whole as well as for the RAM sub-groups such as Customs and Tax, Standards or Transport.

2.5 Step 5 – RAM Strategy Map

The RAM Strategy Map graphically translates and summarises the results of the strategy mapping exercise ..

The central section of the Strategy Map is the listing of the three RAM Strategic Programmes. Through these programmes the RAM will realise its value proposition to clients and stakeholders and by utilising the opportunities from the operating environment achieve the three Strategic Outcomes.

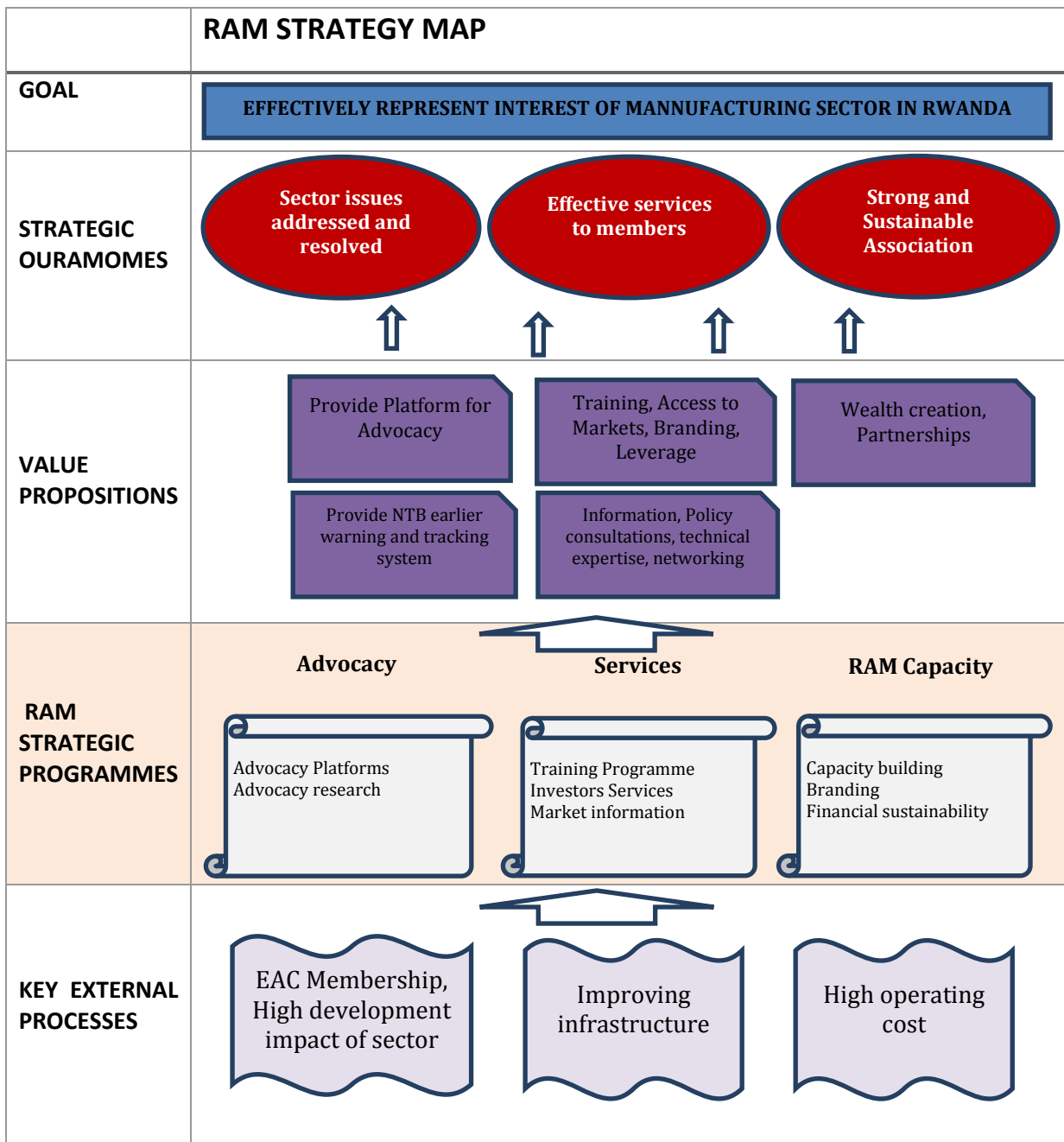| RAM STRATEGY MAP	
GOAL	EFFECTIVELY REPRESENT INTEREST OF MANNUFACTURING SECTOR IN RWANDA
STRATEGIC OURAMOMES	Sector issues addressed and resolved / Effective services to members / Strong and Sustainable Association
VALUE PROPOSITIONS	Provide Platform for Advocacy / Training, Access to Markets, Branding, Leverage / Wealth creation, Partnerships / Provide NTB earlier warning and tracking system / Information, Policy consultations, technical expertise, networking
RAM STRATEGIC PROGRAMMES	Advocacy / Services / RAM Capacity / Advocacy Platforms Advocacy research / Training Programme Investors Services Market information / Capacity building Branding Financial sustainability
KEY EXTERNAL PROCESSES	EAC Membership, High development impact of sector / Improving infrastructure / High operating cost

Figure 4: RAM Strategy Map

3   RAM Strategic Programmes

The RAM Strategy is focused around three Strategic Outcomes. Under SOs the RAM defines seven Strategic Programmes.

	Strategic outcomes	Programmes
1	Strong and Sustainable Association	Capacity building Branding and Communication Financial sustainability
2	Priority sector issues addressed and resolved	Advocacy Programme
3	Effective services provided to members	Training Programme Investors Services Market information

Table 8: RAM Strategic Outcomes and Programmes

In the following sections these programmes are further developed and detailed.

3.1   SO1: Strong and Sustainable Association

3.1.1   Capacity Building Programme

The capacity building programmes will be defined in RAM Annual Training Plans and organized using internal and external trainers. In the approach to training the RAM is primarily concerned with building capacity of the Secretariat to better understand and apply advocacy processes and tools but also to acquire management skills for developing and delivering other services to members.

The RAM will make Annual Training Plans to include advocacy training based on the PSF Advocacy Manual and Training Tools and general topics such as membership management, international cooperation, communication techniques and acquisition of finance.

3.1.2   Branding and Communication Programme

The Rwanda RAM branding and visibility programme has three components or streams that will focus on creating the RAM brand, increase flow of information between RAM members, with the external stakeholders and support RAM advocacy activities.

RAM Visibility Programme		
	External Communication	Advocacy Communication	Internal Communication

GOAL	Promote the image of RAM as an active and results oriented public-private forum	Raise awareness and influence on policy-making processes, activities and decisions leading to elimination of NTBs	Keep RAM members knowledgeable and passionate about RAM activities
AUDIENCE	• Private companies and organisations (Members of RAM) • Government ministries and agencies (Members of RAM) • General Public • Media	• Private companies and organisations (non-members of RAM) • Government ministries and agencies (non-members of RAM) • RAMs in EAC member countries • EAC institutions • Business associations in EAC • Media	• Private companies and organisations (Members of RAM) • Government ministries and agencies (Members of RAM) • Ministry for East African Integration Affairs
MESSAGE	RAM is pro-active forum capable of representing government and private sector interests in monitoring NTBs and engaging with key national and regional stakeholders in NTB elimination.	Elimination of NTBs by fostering cooperation and applying consistent set of actions and instruments is possible. It is a key conditions for improvement of business environment and overall welfare in Rwanda	RAM encourages innovative ideas and supports the work of its members by developing effective tools and processes for NTB monitoring and elimination
ACTIVITIES	• Media Kit • Style Guide • Website enhancements • Event planning	• Advocacy Communication Toolbox • Website enhancements • Case studies • Publications • Media articles/advertorials	• News Brief – email campaigns • Bulletin board - quizzes

Table 9: RAM Visibility Programme

Communication Activities/Tools

Developing and employing creative, effective and engaging communication tools specifically for each target audience will enable RAM to get the right message to the right stakeholder using the most relevant medium. There are many ways to relay messages, and knowing the communications environment is critical.

Communication tools will differ among stakeholder groups. Usually a combination of tools is most effective, depending on available resources.

To reach a diverse stakeholder base with varying messages, RAM will develop the following communication tools:

RAM News Brief

The RAM will develop monthly News Brief summarising achievements, work in progress and future plans and distribute through a number mediums including the website, alerts on SMS and an electronic version sent to members. The newsletters will be written using form and content that is easy to read and of interest to the target stakeholders.

Case Studies

For each successful NTB elimination case the RAM will develop a case study outlining the "what, when, where, how and results" of these successes. The case studies should be documented in case format and distributed to media houses, membership and other stakeholders as standalone publications and within newsletter on the website.

Editorials

These are articles on specific topics of interest to stakeholders to inform and educate. They may be written by key members within RAM, or by well-established external experts on advocacy issues.

Frequently asked Questions (FAQs)

Like Fact Sheets, the FAQs are an important tool composed by RAM for distribution to stakeholders in policy papers, newsletters, electronic platforms, and as handouts at events and meetings. FAQs will be kept regularly updated just as Fact Sheets are, and should be regularly reviewed to incorporate progress updates, emerging issues, and public feedback.

Advocacy Communication Toolbox

This will be an off-the-shelf toolbox that will fully outlines and describe communication processes and materials that any group can use and customize to meet their specific communication needs. It will include such elements as the following:

- How to develop an effective advocacy paper
- Best practices in advocacy and lobbying
- Guide and template explaining how to write and distribute press releases
- Microsoft office templates that can be customized with specific logos and information
- Key contact lists including media and other stakeholders

RAM Website

The RAM website should be a proprietary website designed to inform and secure feedback from visitors. The website should also have functionality for online surveys to test message dissemination and garner feedback. Other information such as FAQs, newsletters, press releases and editorials will also be available on the website.

RAM Style Guide

To make sure that the RAM message are consistently portrayed internally and externally, a Style Guide will be required. The Style Guide will outline the image of RAM with respect to logo, tagline, report formats, fonts, colours etc..
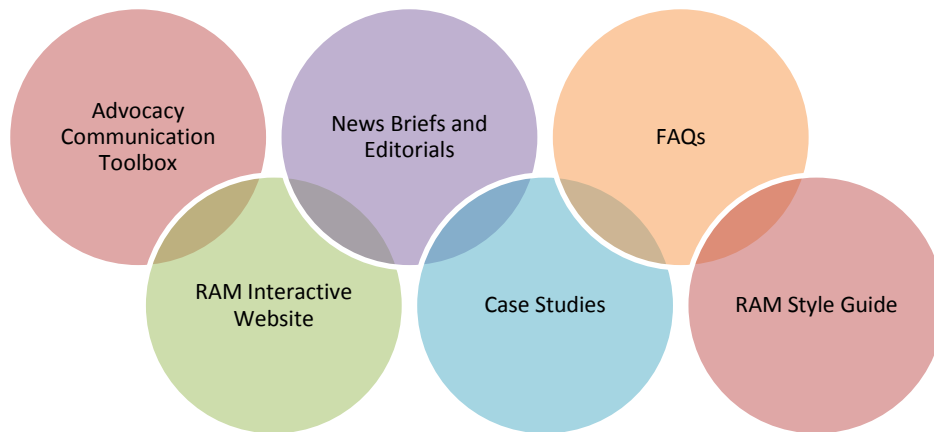

Figure 5: RAM Branding and Communication Tools

3.1.3   Financial Sustainability Programme

The financial sustainability programme is based on the principles of the membership strategy and a standard financing mechanism used by associations . It has two main components:

- Differentiated membership fees
- International cooperation programmes and donor/investor relations

Differentiated membership fees

The RAM membership strategy will be based on delivery of concrete and well defined products, tailor made for the members. Members will be offered to subscribe to different service packages and use only services and products from the RAM that are relevant for their size, stage in development and other business aspects. The RAM ambition is to develop a portfolio of services that would attract more private sector businesses to join the association and in this way increase benefits for everyone.

Membership fees will be based on delivery of products and services. They will consist of *annual subscription* to a pre- defined sets of RAM services. These services can be offered in *two or more categories* so that each PSO can choose the level of required assistance and related subscription rate.

Additional services to members will be charged on as go basis in line with the published price list. These additional services could for example consist of tailor-made training, assistance in acquiring project finance, coordinating specific PSO studies or engaging in advocacy channel on behalf of the PSO to advocate on the issue that falls out of their subscription package.

The RAM relation to the PSF should be based on the same principles as where the RAM subscribe a clearly defined standard set of services and pays additional fees for special assistance or products. As a part of the implementation of this Strategy the RAM will design and propose a membership relation to PSF.

International cooperation programmes and donor/investor relations

By developing international cooperation programmes and closer and business like relation with the donors and investors, the RAM could create significant flow of additional financial resources and in-kind services for its own operations and to its member PSOs.

To increase the international cooperation, the RAM will design a *schedule* for developing and extending contacts with manufacturing associations and chambers of commerce in foreign countries and participate in the available international programmes. Many of these programmes provide project finance for development of business networking, trade development and investment promotion.

In parallel the RAM will design a *programme for developing active donor and investor relations*. In relation to donors the objective is to grow in a credible partner and manager of manufacturing related projects. The investors in manufacturing sector should be supported in cooperation with the relevant government department for investment promotion. In such a partnership the government would organise general investment promotion and investor support services and the RAM could offer assistance in local project management and facilitation.

3.2   Priority sector issues addressed and resolved

3.2.1   Advocacy Programme

The RAM Advocacy Programme is the main pillar of the association operation. For this reason the RAM have to ensure that the key issues affecting businesses are well researched and presented and raised through formal communication channels at all levels of the government and with social partners. The RAM will work together with the PSF Secretariat to raise more complex cross-cutting issues and with member association on advocating on more specific sub-sector and association issues.

The key elements of the strategy under Advocacy Programme include:

- Opening effective communication channels with the government
- Increasing quality of the advocacy proposals
- Building capacity of member PSOs to effectively advocate on specific sub-sector issues

The main advocacy channel for the RAM will be Manufacturing Advocacy Platform. The Platform will be organized in a form of public-private dialogue including government and member association representatives and other relevant stakeholders. The platform concept is based on the idea that advocacy process is essentially a form of structured dialogue. A structure is provided by introducing regularity in its operation and set of agreed processes for identification, formulation and resolution of the advocacy issues. Alternatively, the RAM could use the existing and future PSF Advocacy Platform on taxes, standards and environment.

Other advocacy channels include direct communications with the responsible government department, organisation of advocacy events such as workshops, seminars and conferences and active participation in government organised events relevant for RAM issues.

Regional advocacy is important aspect of the RAM activities and in this respect the Chamber will participate and closely cooperate with the East Africa regional organisations established to foster private sector interest and participation in the East African Community (EAC) integration process.

3.2.2   Advocacy research

Increasing the quality of advocacy proposals will come through better organised research and prioritisation of advocacy issues. The RAM will introduce a system of processing the existing and new advocacy issues received from members. These issues will be discussed with members and then described in a standard Advocacy Brief format. Advocacy Briefs will be filled in the RAM filing system for further handling and published on-line on the RAM web-site. In addition each Advocacy Brief will be assigned a priority level based on the RAM Prioritisation Criteria. Such criteria will be agreed with member associations and published.

Advocacy Briefs will be a basis for establishing Position Papers on priority issues. For those issues that are identified to require more detail analysis then available through the standard Brief will be nominated for further research. For each research topic the RAM will prepare the Terms of Reference in a standard format, detailing the content, method and expected results of the research. The research will be organised either through the member organisations providing that they have required expertise or through outsourcing.

Some of the issues currently identified to be addressed under Advocacy Programme include:

- Cost of electricity the highest in the EAC
- Interest too high of finance and offered maturities
- Cost of transport by road and see too high
- Cost of relocation and operation of SEZ too high
- Ban on plastic packaging increase cost
- Spreads on FOREX too high
- VAT tax administration not properly managed
- Consistency of supply of electricity
- Lack of skilled people
- Consistency in application of taxes
- Access to finance for SMEs in industrial sector

- Security of transport in corridors
- Long approval times for loans
- Illicit trade
- NTBs along transport corridors
- Simplification and clarity of tax administration

3.3   Effective services provided to members

3.3.1   Training Programme

The training programme will be designed and implemented in cooperation with the PSF and other Associations and will include areas such as:

- Running small business operation in Rwanda
- Manufacturing standards and in the EAC and Great Lakes region context
- Selling in EAC and abroad
- Tax seminars
- Investing in Rwanda
- Effective business management

3.3.2   Investors Services

The RAM will establish an Investors Club that will service current and future investors as information and networking platform. In addition to information of investing in specific manufacturing sectors, the Club will provide support to new investors by:

- Offering productive partnerships in existing businesses
- Offering advice from members experienced in investing and managing business in Rwanda.

3.3.3   Market information

The market information programme includes development and operation of Manufacturing Information Data Base and Access to Finance Tool-Kit.

Market Information data base will build on already developed PSF Resource Centre that provides up-to-date information on markets in Rwanda and other business information. The PSF in cooperation with RDB is developing an Export Portal that would provide information on procedures, documents and export markets. The materials available from these sources will be packaged and extended to include up-to-dated information on regional markets specific to manufacturing sector needs, current product prices, trading opportunities and other relevant information.

Access to Finance tool-kit will be a practical guide for companies on sources of finance, eligibility criteria and application procedures and preparation of company profiles and financial information. The tool-kit will be available on-line and will include detail instructions for users, templates for application, examples of documents and other relevant information. It will also provide links to organizations providing finance and contact information on business advisors in the region.

4 Strategic 3-year Action Plan for implementation of the RAM Strategy

To be finalised in line with the final discussion with the RAM