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Rwanda, Côte d'Ivoire, Burundi Lead Sub-Saharan Africa in Improving Business Regulation

Washington, D.C., October 29, 2013—A new World Bank Group report finds that Sub-Saharan Africa continues to record a large number of reforms aimed at easing the regulatory burden on local entrepreneurs, with 66 reforms adopted in the past year. Rwanda, Côte d'Ivoire, and Burundi were among the 10 economies globally improving business regulation the most.

Released today*, Doing Business 2014: Understanding Regulations for Small and Medium-Size Enterprises* finds that of the 20 economies improving business regulation the most since 2009, 9 are in Sub-Saharan Africa: Burundi, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Rwanda, Togo, Benin, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, and Guinea.

The report's data show that, of 47 economies in the region, 31 implemented at least one business regulatory reform in 2012/13. Rwanda implemented the most in the region, with reforms in 8 of the 10 areas tracked by *Doing Business*.

Three African economies made the biggest progress globally in an area measured by the report: Burundi in the ease of registering property, Benin in the ease of trading across borders, and Côte d'Ivoire in the ease of enforcing contracts.

"It is encouraging to see so many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa engaged in reforms aimed at reducing burdensome regulations and building up stronger legal institutions. In 2012/13, more than twice as many economies in the region reformed as in 2005," said Augusto Lopez-Claros, Director, Global Indicators and Analysis, World Bank Group. "Despite these achievements, more can be done to improve the quality of the rules underpinning the activities of the private sector, to ensure continued convergence toward the better practices seen elsewhere in the world."

For the first time, *Doing Business* this year measures business regulations in South Sudan, which gained independence in 2011. Despite the challenges of creating laws and regulations from scratch, South Sudan has already passed a company law, tax law, and insolvency law.

Singapore tops the global ranking on the ease of doing business. Joining it on the list of the top 10 economies with the most business-friendly regulations are Hong Kong SAR, China; New Zealand; the United States; Denmark; Malaysia; the Republic of Korea; Georgia; Norway; and the United Kingdom.

In addition to the global rankings, every year *Doing Business* reports the economies that have improved the most on the indicators since the previous year. The 10 economies topping that list this year are (in order of improvement) Ukraine, Rwanda, the Russian Federation, the Philippines, Kosovo, Djibouti, Côte d'Ivoire, Burundi, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Guatemala. Yet challenges persist: five of this year's top improvers—Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, the Philippines, and Ukraine—are still in the bottom half of the global ranking on the ease of doing business.

About the *Doing Business* report series
The joint World Bank and IFC flagship *Doing Business* report analyzes regulations that apply to an economy's businesses during their life cycle, including start-up and operations, trading across borders,

paying taxes, and resolving insolvency. The aggregate ease of doing business rankings are based on 10 indicators and cover 189 economies. *Doing Business* does not measure all aspects of the business environment that matter to firms and investors. For example, it does not measure the quality of fiscal management, other aspects of macroeconomic stability, the level of skills in the labor force, or the resilience of financial systems. Its findings have stimulated policy debates worldwide and enabled a growing body of research on how firm-level regulation relates to economic outcomes across economies. This year's report marks the 11th edition of the global *Doing Business* report series and covers 189 economies. For more information about the *Doing Business* reports, please visit doingbusiness.org and join us on doingbusiness.org/Facebook.

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