



Republic of Rwanda

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
and International Cooperation

CHINA BUSINESS GUIDE

1. Basic Information

Country: The People's Republic of China

Population: 1.4 Billion

Capital City: Beijing

Other big cities: Shanghai, Shenzhen, Hong Kong, Guangzhou

Language: The main language is Mandarin

GDP: USD 15 trillion

Economy: Manufacturing, digital technologies, energy, agricultural industries, etc.

Currency/Exchange rate: Chinese Yuan (CNY/RMB), 1CNY ≈143 RFW

Preferred cities by Foreign Traders: Guangzhou, Yiwu, Foshan, Shenzhen, etc.

Religion: 73.6% No religion , 15.8% Buddhism, 5.5% Salvationist sects, 3.6% Christianity, 1.5% Islam

2. What you should know when doing business with Chinese companies

a. Exports

- With 1.4 billion people, China is the largest consumer market in the world; it's a suitable destination for any company with export-oriented business.
- Some of the main products currently being exported from Rwanda to China include agricultural products (coffee, tea, chili, etc.), minerals, skins and hides, handcrafts, etc.
- Make sure the Chinese buyer is a registered company with import qualifications for the type of product you want to export. Without those qualifications, it would not be possible to do customs clearance for the product in question.
- Incentives under the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation allow several agriculture products like coffee and tea and raw materials to be exported to China duty free.
- Make sure the product you want to export has already been cleared by the Chinese General Administration of Customs.
- Most agriculture products require certification approval before being allowed into the Chinese market.
- For agriculture products, always check the requirements with the National Agricultural Export Development Board (NAEB) before taking any further steps. For more information on export requirements and documentation, visit; <http://rwandatrade.rw>
- The following products have already been approved for export to China: coffee (green and roasted), tea, processed chili, fresh cut roses.
- The Government of Rwanda is applying for the following products to be approved for export to China: Fresh and dried chili, dried fruits, stevia leaves, avocados, honey and green beans.
- For detailed information on the laws and regulations of the Chinese customs visit

b. Imports : What to consider

- China which has become the “World’s Factory” is home to millions of companies, which means there are more than a thousand companies for any type of product. Make sure you get quotations from different suppliers before you make a decision.
- Different products can have similar English names. Where it’s not possible to visit factories and conduct inspections, always make sure you request samples of the products before you make any payment.
- Always request a business registration form from the manufacturer to double check the status of the companies.
- Always sign a contract to ensure you’re protected in case of disputes. The contract should include detailed specifications of the commodity you’re purchasing, the quality standards, warranty period, terms of dispute resolutions, etc.
- In case you have doubts on the suppliers or for contracts of large sums of money, always double check with institutions which offer services of conducting due diligence on Chinese companies like the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), the Council for Promotion of South-South Cooperation (CPSSC), China-Africa Business Council (CABC), etc.
- Where necessary, the Embassy of the Republic of Rwanda in China can also assist in conducting due diligence.
- Letter of Credit (LC), Telegraphic Transfer (TT), Western Union and MoneyGram are the most common modes of payment in China, but some suppliers accept PayPal as well.
- Always double check the suppliers account details before making payment and avoid using untraceable wire service transfers with suppliers you do not know well– these are highly risky and susceptible to fraud.
- Avoid Chinese holidays when placing orders, especially the Chinese New Year Holiday (Spring Festival) which falls on a date between January 21 and February 20. In all, the holiday can disrupt production and shipping schedules for up to 3 weeks or more and can cause increased freight costs and longer transit times if there is a delay at the port or a container is not loaded on its intended vessel.
- You might need a translator especially when travelling to smaller towns. Even though English is being taught in Chinese schools, there are a large number of Chinese who are not very fluent in English.
- There are four primary ways to resolve a commercial dispute in China: negotiation, mediation, arbitration and litigation. Experience shows that most Chinese companies prefer to resolve disputes through negotiation. It is the least expensive and it can preserve the working relationship of the parties involved.
- In cases where negotiation and mediation have failed, arbitration is the next method. Majority of Chinese companies don’t accept to settle disputes in arbitration courts outside China.
- There are two main arbitration bodies for handling cases involving at least one foreign party: China International Economic and Trade Arbitration Commission (CIETAC) and, for maritime disputes, China Maritime Arbitration Commission (CMAC)

c. Sourcing products during COVID-19

- As the physical movement of goods and people is restricted due to COVID-19, many traders are using digital trade, keeping things flowing virtually.
- Useful websites for online sourcing of commodities include: alibaba.com, aliexpress.com, MadeinChina.com, jd.com, tmall.com, taobao.com.
- Always select suppliers who have been verified by online shopping websites.
- Be careful when engaging with suppliers online or through emails. Some scammers imitate emails of the suppliers, sending you wrong accounts for payment.
- Having a video call with the supplier to double check all the information before payment can also be very helpful.
- Using the services of the Rwandan business community in China: There is a Rwandan business community in China, mainly in Guangzhou city with members familiar with the Chinese market and fluent in the Chinese language. Using their services can greatly improve communication with the suppliers and reduce the risks of being cheated or being supplied with wrong products.
- Use the services of Rwandan-owned companies operating in China like Heart of Africa Trading Ltd, Sourcing International, Speed Cargo International, etc.
- There are also Chinese companies like Zhejiang China Commodities City Group who can help you source high quality products at the factory price without you having to travel to China.

3. Investment & Business opportunities in China

- With the existing good relations between Africa and China and the continuously increasing economic ties, China is emerging as an attractive business destination for Africans.
- There are several investment and business opportunities for Rwandans in China especially in the service sector.
- Most of the Rwandan-owned companies currently operating in China are engaged in trade, logistics and consultancy.
- Other opportunities are available in restaurant & catering business, sales of Made in Rwanda products (coffee, chili, handcrafts, etc.), outbound tourism, partnership with Chinese companies in processing of Rwandan agricultural products (coffee, chili, etc.).
- In 2019 China adopted its first unified foreign investment law which became effective on 1 January 2020.
- This new investment law covers several key topics, from investment promotion to legal obligations.
- For more details on the Chinese investment law please visit the link below:
<http://govt.chinadaily.com.cn/index/specials/foreigninvestmentlaws>
or <http://mg2.mofcom.gov.cn/article/policy/China/201909/20190902898870.shtml>

4. Some information on the cost of doing business

- **Average cost of shipping from Rwanda to China:** USD 5500 per 20ft container and USD 6500 40ft container
- **Average cost of shipping from China to Rwanda:** USD 6000 per 20ft container and USD 7200 per 40ft container
- **Average cost of registering a company in Guangzhou:** USD 5000
- **Average cost of renting a 20sqm working space in Guangzhou:** USD 2000 per month
- **Average cost of renting an apartment in Guangzhou:** USD 1000 for a 2 bedroom apartment

5. Useful contacts

- Embassy of the Republic of Rwanda to China
Tel: +86 10 6532 2193 | **Email:** ambabeijing@minaffet.gov.rw
- Office of the Commercial Attaché
Tel: +86 150 1158 1547 | **Email:** sabikunda@minaffet.gov.rw
- China Council for the Promotion of International Trade
Tel: +86 10 88075631
- China-Africa Business Council
Web: www.cabc.org.cn | **Email:** cabc@cabc.org.cn, **Tel :** (8610) 6409 4600
- Council for Promotion of South-South Cooperation:
Tel: +86-10-65280465 **Email:** nnhzcjh@sina.com
- Heart of Africa Trading Ltd
Tel: + 250 788318778, +86 132 6828 500 | **Email:** heartofafricatradingletd@gmail.com
- Other Rwandan companies and members of the Rwandan Community in Guangzhou City, Diaspora Committee members:
Sourcing International: Uwonkunda Placide **Tel:** +86 135 8050 9050 **Email:** uplacide2000@yahoo.fr
Pivot Yard Logistics: Nzamwita Vianney | **Tel:** +86 139 2227 2110 | **Email:** upson24@hotmail.com
Speed Cargo: Shyaka Bruce | **Tel:** +86 132 8861 9866 | **Email:** bruceshyaka.speedcargo@gmail.com)
- **Emergency numbers in China:** Police (110), Fire brigade (119), Ambulance (120), Traffic accident (122)

