



# RYAF

Rwanda Youth in  
Agribusiness Forum

## RYAF Quarterly Newsletter: January–March 2026



*Prepared by RYAF Communication and Public Relation*

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# RYAF NEWSLETTER

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rwanda Youth in Agribusiness Forum (RYAF) was established in 2016 to serve as a nationwide forum of youth involved in agriculture. Formed under the Government of Rwanda's initiative, RYAF, was founded through the collaboration of five key ministries: the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI), the Ministry of Youth and Culture (MYCULTURE), Ministry of Public Service and Labour (MIFOTRA), Ministry of Education (MINEDUC), and the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MINICOM) with support FAO.

### **RYAF Mandate**

RYAF was established to promote youth employment and entrepreneurship in agribusiness by offering a platform aimed at establishing business linkage opportunities and changing the youth's mind-set on agribusiness.

RYAF operation is based on coping with potential challenges hindering youth come and do profitable agribusiness, including limited knowledge, skills, information, and communication, limited access to finance to boost their investment, limited access to land to boost their production potential, limited access to market due to limited investment and quality compliance and so on. Most intervention goes on through practical advocacy and young people influencing in the agriculture policies review to create an enabling environment allowing young people to be strong and competitive market actors, after accessing all possible factors of production.

### Coverage area

RYAF operates in all 30 districts of Rwanda and brings together different youth organizations, individual young farmers and entrepreneurs engaged in agriculture sector; specifically, the youth in agriculture primary production, livestock production, agro-processing, inputs and agro-services and ICT for Agriculture.

### **Objectives**

1. Change youth mindset vis-à-vis opportunities in agribusiness for job creation and economic development,
2. Ensure development and promotion of youth in agribusiness sector at national and international level;
3. Facilitate and collaborate with youth operating professionally in the agribusiness sector across the country;
4. Ensure compliance with collective international agreements and conventions regulating agribusiness sector;

### Our Vision

A future where youth are inclusively leading agribusiness ecosystem at national and regional level.

### Our Mission

To sustainably promotes, informs, advocates, mobilizes and empower Rwandan youth to engage in agribusiness resulting on a stable food availability, market access, decent jobs and sustainable and inclusive development.

# RYAF NEWSLETTER

## MESSAGE FROM RYAF CHAIRPERSON

## YOUTH LEADING THE FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE

• INNOVATION • RESILIENCE • PARTNERSHIP  
FROM LOCAL IMPACT TO GLOBAL INFLUENCE

Dear Readers, I am delighted to welcome you to the RYAF Quarterly Newsletter for January–March 2026.

This edition celebrates the energy, creativity, and resilience of young Rwandans who are transforming agriculture into a dynamic engine for national development, climate resilience, and global impact. This quarter, we reached significant milestones across several key initiatives:

- Investing in Skills to Strengthen the Coffee Value Chain: Young agripreneurs are enhancing quality and adding value, positioning Rwanda's coffee sector as a competitive, innovation-driven industry.

- RYAF at the Africa Food Systems (AFS) Forum 2026 Launch: Our members joined continental leaders in Kigali to champion investments in agri-food systems, showcasing youth as the frontline of food security.

- From Youth Connekt to the Farm Vincent Nzayisenga's Journey: Stories like Vincent's illustrate how networking and mentorship can turn a sparked idea into a thriving agribusiness venture.

- Twizimbere Busasamana Youth Group improving lives through vegetables and fruit farming in Rwinkwavu, Kayonza District.

- The RDDP2 Campaign to Fight Mastitis: In Nyabihu, Musanze, and Rubavu, we partnered

with dairy cooperatives to improve hygiene and combat mastitis, ensuring high-quality milk production for the market.

These achievements prove that youth engagement in agriculture is about more than just a livelihood it is about creativity, value addition, and systemic change. I encourage all young agripreneurs to view challenges as opportunities to innovate boldly and collaborate widely.

Together, we can turn ideas into action and dreams into reality.

As our country marks the 100 days of remembering the 1994 Genocide against the

Tutsi, I call upon Rwanda's youth engaged in agriculture activities to actively participate in #Kwibuka32 events across the country. Let us

work together and continue to promote unity, saying "Never Again."



Sakina Usengimana /RYAF Chairperson



# RYAF Quarterly NewsLetter

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### Investing in Skills to Strengthen the Coffee Value Chain

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### From YouthConnekt to the Farm: Vincent Nzayisenga's Journey

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### RYAF and RDDP2 Campaign to Fight Mastitis

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### Twitezimbere Busasamana Youth Group Improving Lives Through Vegetable and Fruit Farming in Rwinkwavu, Kayonza

Twitezimbere Busasamana Youth Group Improving Livesthrough



### RYAF Highlights Women's Impact in Agribusiness

During March 2026

Highlighting the vital role and achievements of women in agribusiness.



### RYAF and TradeMark Africa Empower Youth Agripreneurs through Strategic Market Linkages

## OUR COMMITMENT



### RYAF continues to:

- ✓ Empower youth to see agriculture as a profitable business
- ✓ Strengthen agribusiness networks and partnerships.
- ✓ Promote innovation, sustainability, and climate resilience in agriculture.

## *Investing in youth skills to strengthen Rwanda's coffee value chain*

Twenty young women and men have successfully completed a six-month Coffee Skills Program aimed at strengthening youth employment and entrepreneurship within Rwanda's coffee sector. The program was implemented by Coffee Connect Centre Ltd, a member of the Rwanda Youth in Agribusiness Forum (RYAF), under the Skills Development Fund in partnership with the Rwanda TVET Board.



*Group photo of Twenty young women and men have successfully completed a six-month Coffee Skills Program*

The graduation ceremony, attended by RYAF CEO Rwiririza Jean Marie Vianney, took place on 27 February 2026 at the National Agricultural Export Development Board (NAEB). The initiative focused on hands-on, industry-based training to equip youth with practical skills across the coffee value chain and respond to the growing demand for professional baristas and coffee specialists in Rwanda.

The cohort included 20 trainees 14 women and 6 men selected through an inclusive approach in collaboration with partners such as NUDOR, UNHCR, the National Youth Council, NAEB, and Impanuro Girls Initiative. This ensured participation of youth from diverse and vulnerable backgrounds.

Over six months, trainees received both practical and theoretical training in key areas including coffee agronomy, processing and green coffee handling, quality control and sensory analysis, roasting, barista and brewing skills, as well as entrepreneurship development.

The program has already produced promising results. Four trainees have secured employment, while twelve others are undertaking ...

industrial attachments across the coffee value chain. In addition, trainees formed seven project groups and developed business concepts, two of which were selected under the AGUKA Program and received USD 3,000 each to support implementation.

The Coffee Skills Program demonstrates how inclusive, industry-based training can empower youth, create employment opportunities, and contribute to the growth of Rwanda's coffee value chain.



*KARANGWA Félice the Founder & CEO, Coffee Connect Centre.*



*RYAF CEO Rwiririza Jean Marie Vianney joined other distinguished leaders in awarding certificates at the graduation ceremony held on 27 February 2026.*

## RYAF at the AFS Forum 2026 Launch Ceremony



*Group photo of youth, leaders, and participants at the #AFSForum2026 Launch under the theme: "Investing in Africa's Agri-Food Systems to Nourish Nations, Grow Jobs, and Build Resilience."*

April 2, 2026, RYAF members joined the official #AFSForum2026 Launch Ceremony in Kigali, standing alongside leaders to drive job creation and climate resilience. At the heart of the forum is the belief that youth are not just the future; they are the frontline of food security.

Delivering his keynote, Minister Dr. Telesphore Ndabamenye underscored that investing in Africa's agri-food systems is a sovereign responsibility. "Investment in food systems is not optional; it is a sovereign responsibility, as Africa is not short of capital. What has been missing is the will and the right frameworks to channel that capital into transformative food systems investments," he stated, calling for bold, coordinated action.

MoS Dr. Solange Uwituze highlighted Rwanda's focus on food security, export growth, and youth job creation, aligned with PSTA5 & NST2. She called on partners to mobilize toward an action-driven summit this September. This sentiment was echoed by Amath Pathe Sene, who noted: "If you want to bring the youth on board, you have to make agriculture sexy, cool, and appealing. It shouldn't be seen as a 'misery type' of business."

As AGRA President, Alice Ruhweza noted that the next chapter cannot be built on the same approach. "The Summit in Kigali this September must be a different kind of convening.

We must come up with delivery plans, implementation pathways and be ready to deliver accountable, measurable impact." AGRA commits to ensuring that what is agreed in Kigali is tracked and delivered to build credibility.

The transformation requires farming to move from subsistence to viable businesses. Productivity must increase without sacrificing soil health, with governments and the private sector operating as co-drivers of transformation.



**MINAGRI ministers, AGRA and AFS Forum leaders, and other guests at the #AFSForum2026 launch in Kigali.**

## Twitezimbere Busasamana Youth Group Improving Lives Through Vegetable and Fruit Farming in Rwinkwavu, Kayonza



*Twitezimbere Rubyiruko Busasamana Youth Group, members*

RWINKWAVU, KAYONZA, Twitezimbere Rubyiruko Busasamana Youth Group, based in Rwinkwavu Sector of Kayonza District, is making a significant impact by promoting vegetable and fruit farming to improve the livelihoods of its members and the surrounding community. Formed on January 12, 2022, with a total of 20 members comprised of 13 females and 7 males the group works toward a common goal: creating jobs through horticulture, supporting at-risk young mothers, and working to combat malnutrition.

The decision to form this group stemmed from the need to find a solution to poverty amongst young people through a government initiative aimed at giving youth the opportunity to try their hand at investing in agriculture and livestock. The members agreed to begin small by saving 1,000 Rwandan Francs each per week. In the last three years, notable advancements have happened. They created more jobs for youth, produced vegetables and fruits for improved nutrition, assisted young mothers, and increased agriculture in the community. Specifically, each young woman in the group's community purchased a sewing machine to earn an income, while the young men bought land and began construction on affordable rural housing.

However, some issues remain, including limited access to reliable market outlets, the impacts of variations in weather, and limited ..

equipment available to grow local food. Additionally, they face little or no training in growing vegetables or fruit, few means to irrigate their crops, and an insufficient capacity to assist all young mothers in the community who require assistance.

To overcome these challenges, members contribute individually to ensure produce reaches the market, track the weather to farm effectively, and cooperate with investors and knowledgeable individuals. They also work with other groups to access training and are farming as close to water as possible to irrigate their crops.

Looking ahead, the group is searching for opportunities to increase productivity by developing skills through training programs, study tours, and participating in agricultural expos like those in Mulindi. They aim to obtain better farming tools, develop market connections, and build relationships to motivate the young mothers involved in agricultural development. The success of the Twitezimbere Rubyiruko Busasamana project shows how youth can positively impact an agricultural program's success and community development by working together effectively.



*Members of Twitezimbere Rubyiruko Busasamana in Rwinkwavu, Kayonza, working together to irrigate their crops.*

## From Youth Connekt to Farming: Vincent Nzayisenga's Journey in Agriculture



*Vincent Nzayisenga, a 23-year-old from Mukingo sector, Nyanza District*

NYANZA, RWANDA, Vincent Nzayisenga, a 23-year-old from Mukingo sector, Nyanza District, is a clear example of how youth forums and training result in real-world, viable projects. As a trained agronomist from ES Kinazi and a member of the Duhuzimbaraga Nyamigogo Cooperative, Vincent sought to move beyond total dependency on a single salary. His journey toward entrepreneurship took a decisive turn after attending the Youth Connekt forum at the Kigali Convention Centre (KCC) in November 2025.

Inspired by networking opportunities at YouthConnekt, Vincent made an RWF 500,000 investment on January 16th to commence a combined poultry and fruit farming project. To date, he is raising 50 layers and 100 broilers. While his original intention was to focus on fruits, the high-quality manure produced by the poultry allowed him to boost the productivity of his guava and other fruit trees.

Vincent finds his roles as a cooperative agronomist and an independent farmer to be perfectly compatible. "Because of their scope of work being ..

manageable, I can do this work by also being a full-time worker.

The quick and abundant produce from poultry, as well as the manure they produce, contribute to increasing my output of fruit crops," he explains.

His initiative demonstrates how agricultural education translates into practical applications that benefit both the individual and the community. Vincent now encourages other young Rwandans to look beyond their monthly salaries. "My advice to my fellows, especially those already in the labor force, is to put your hands in the dirt and get involved in something," he says, echoing President Paul Kagame's call that great success is achieved through hard work. Vincent's commitment shows how young Rwandans can lead the transformation of agriculture by leveraging small opportunities into successful, sustainable projects.



*Nzayisenga a young Agripreneur from Mukingo Sector, Nyanza District*

## RYAF and RDDP2 Campaign to Fight Mastitis in Nyabihu, Musanze, and Rubavu Districts

RYAF team implementing the second phase of the Rwanda Dairy Development Project (RDDP2) has carried out awareness campaigns aimed at improving milk quality and combating mastitis in dairy cows.



*At CODERU, Ingabire Alice (RYAF-RDDP2 Operation manager) shares key messages on fighting mastitis.*

At the end of March 2026, the campaign reached Nyabihu, Musanze, and Rubavu districts, focusing on changing the mindset of farmers and herders regarding animal hygiene and health.

In collaboration with the CEZONYI Cooperative in Nyabihu District, the RYAF team was given a platform during the cooperative's general assembly to deliver key messages on preventing mastitis. To safeguard milk quality and fight mastitis in dairy cows, the campaign activities were conducted in Gishwati and its surrounding areas, implemented by RDDP through RYAF and continuing under RDDP II. We sincerely thank CODAMIN and CODERU cooperatives in Rubavu District for providing a space in their general assembly to share messages on preventing mastitis.

The campaign emphasized the critical role of herders in maintaining hygiene during milking, milking twice a day, milking all teats, and complete milking practices to prevent leftover milk in the udder that can cause disease. These measures will help improve milk quality and reduce mastitis in milk delivered to collection centers.

Most importantly, after understanding the issue and its impact on milk production, the farmers themselves committed to improving hygiene and milking practices.



*CEZONYI members receive guidance on mastitis prevention from Ingabire Alice (RYAF-RDDP2 Operation manager).*

We appreciate the farmers who agreed to supervise their herders to implement strategies that prevent subclinical mastitis, ensuring higher-quality milk and increased reliable yields.



*Ingabire Alice Ingabire Alice (RYAF-RDDP2 Operation manager) engages farmers at CODAMIN on mastitis control*



*RYAF team follows up with a herder in Gishwati pastures to check if he learned how to detect mastitis*

## RYAF Highlights Women's Impact in Agribusiness During March 2026

Throughout March 2026, Rwanda Youth in Agribusiness Forum (RYAF) joined the global community in celebrating International Women's Month by highlighting the growing role of young women in transforming Rwanda's agriculture sector.

### International women's Day



This International Women's Day, we celebrate the amazing young women in agriculture. Your hard work and innovation are shaping a brighter, more sustainable future. Thank you for all you do!

#IWD26

8 March  
International Women's Day



Through a series of stories and engagements shared across its platforms, RYAF showcased how young female agripreneurs are driving innovation, creating jobs, and contributing to sustainable development in agriculture.

Among the featured stories was that of Sylvine Ishimwe, Managing Director of Smart Women Farm Ltd, who has built her career around fruit tree multiplication and farmer advisory services. Her journey reflects how agriculture can serve as a foundation for both personal growth and national development.

Kwizihiza ukwezi kwaharizwe umugore

### Ishimwe Sylvine

Umuyobozi wa Smart Women Farm Ltd

Ibyo bakora :

- Ubutubuzi bw'ibiti by'imbuto
- Ubujyanama ku bahinzi

"Mu murima ni ho nubatse inzozo zanjye; aho nateye imbuto zahindutse icyizere, akazi kanjye kakaba umusanzu wanjye mu kubaka igihugu."

#MarchForWomen #WomenInAgriculture #IWD



In the field is where I built my dreams; where I planted seeds that turned into hope. My work is my contribution to building our nation," she shared.

In Rwamagana District, Niyitanga Grace demonstrated the power of agribusiness in job creation. Starting with only 10 workers, her enterprise has grown to employ 50 young people, showing how youth-led initiatives can expand opportunities within local communities.

### Celebrating women's Month

#### Niyitanga Grace

a young agripreneur, from Nzige Sector, Rwamagana District



"As we celebrate women's month, i am proud to share my journey. the opportunity to engage in agriculture has transformed my life. Today, i am not only improving my own livelihood, but also creating jobs for young people. I began my farming activities with 10 workers, and as the business has grown, i now employ 50. "

~Niyitanga Grace.

#MarchForWomen #WomenInAgriculture #IWD #IWD26



"Today, I am not only improving my own livelihood but also creating jobs for other young people," she noted.

The campaign also featured Mutoni Goodluck, founder of Kura Hair Products, highlighting the importance of value addition in agriculture.

### Celebrating women's Month

#### Niyitanga Grace

a young agripreneur, from Nzige Sector, Rwamagana District



"As we celebrate women's month, i am proud to share my journey. the opportunity to engage in agriculture has transformed my life. Today, i am not only improving my own livelihood, but also creating jobs for young people. I began my farming activities with 10 workers, and as the business has grown, i now employ 50. "

~Niyitanga Grace.

#MarchForWomen #WomenInAgriculture #IWD #IWD26



"With the right support, young women can turn simple resources into opportunities that change their lives and contribute to national growth," she emphasized.

RYAF empowers youth, especially women, in agribusiness through mentorship, networking, and building a strong agri-food system.

## RYAF and TradeMark Africa Empower Youth Agripreneurs through Strategic Market Linkages



*Group photo of participants*

KIGALI, Rwanda, On March 26, 2026, the Rwanda Youth in Agribusiness Forum (RYAF), in partnership with TradeMark Africa (TMA), hosted a high-impact Peer-Learning and Market Linkage Workshop at the Park Inn Hotel. Held under the VIBE (Value-added Initiative to Boost Employment) program, the event served as a vital bridge between emerging youth-led enterprises and established market players.

### Connecting Startups to Big Buyers

The workshop convened 80 participants, including ambitious startups, seasoned MSMEs, and major institutional buyers such as Simba Supermarket, Park Inn Hotel, and Solid Africa. The primary goal was to demystify market requirements and create direct supply chain opportunities for youth in the horticulture and livestock sectors.

### Knowledge Exchange & Scaling Strategies

Through interactive panel sessions and "success story" pitches, the event provided:

- Peer-to-Peer Mentoring: Experienced exporters shared practical tips on navigating regulatory hurdles with NAEB, RICA, and RSB.
- Product Showcase: A dedicated exhibition allowed young agripreneurs to present their products directly to procurement heads.
- Import Substitution: Discussions focused on how local youth-led businesses can fill the gaps in domestic supply chains.

### The VIBE Vision

This initiative is a core component of the VIBE program (2023–2028), a collaborative effort ..

by TMA and the International Trade Centre (ITC), funded by the Mastercard Foundation. VIBE is dedicated to creating dignified employment for youth with a specific focus on women (70%), refugees, and persons with disabilities.



*RYAF members actively participating in the one-day peer-learning and market linkage workshop, engaging with experienced MSMEs, buyers, and partners to strengthen youth-led agribusinesses*

### A Commitment to Growth

By fostering these connections, RYAF continues to champion a systemic transformation in Rwanda's agriculture sector. This workshop reaffirmed that when young agripreneurs are equipped with the right mentorship and market access, they become the primary drivers of a resilient national food system.



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