

# INTEGRATED YOUTH AGRIBUSINESS HUBS

Creating Employment Opportunities for Rural Youth in Africa

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Rwanda  
R-YES PROJECT

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BMZ

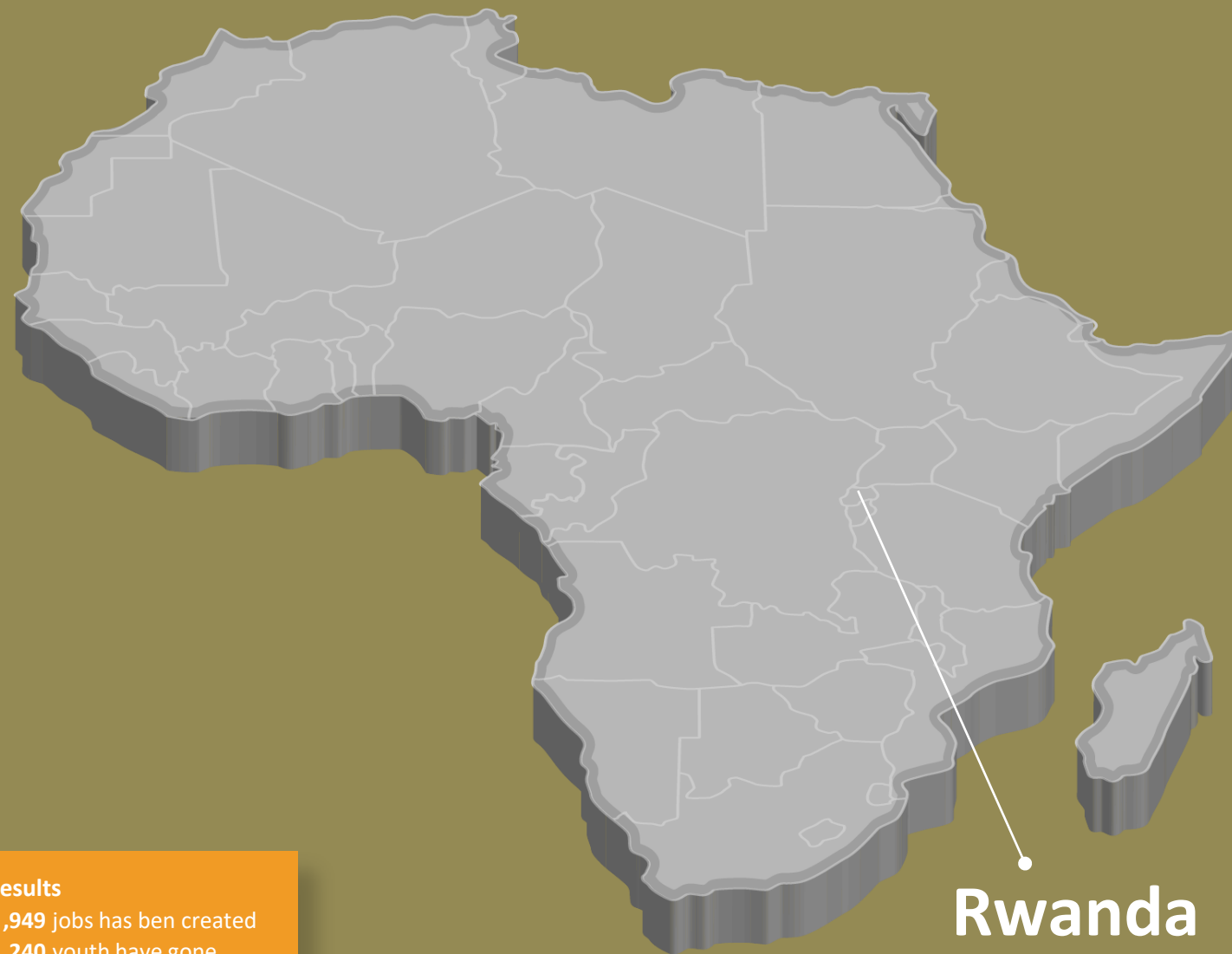


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# SCOPE OF THE PROJECT



## Results

3,949 jobs have been created  
1,240 youth have gone under trainings  
180 companies have been engaged  
17 Competence best Curriculums have been developed under R-YES project

## R-YES Project

### Project Overview

R-YES is a 5-year project (July 2020 - Dec 2024) implemented in Rwanda to create employment opportunities for youth in agribusiness as wage earners or commercial providers of services.

### Key roles and responsibilities

R-YES project is implemented by a consortium led by Kilimo. Other consortium partners include Rwanda Youth in Agribusiness Forum (RYAF) and Rwanda Polytechnic - with Integrated Polytechnic Regional Colleges (IPRCs), Rwanda TVET Board through TVETs, and Agribusiness Industries as centers of technical training.

### Objective

R-YES project builds technical skills and provides business development support to create decent employment (self and wage) for youth in various agribusiness options. The project goal is to create sustainable employment opportunities for 3,000 youth (50% female) in agribusiness (1,200 direct and 1,800 indirect).

### Interventions

- Vocational training through technical colleges (IPRCs and TVETs).
- Experiential work-based learning through agro-industries,
- Agribusiness development support for youth start-ups.

### Milestones

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1,240 youth have gone under trainings

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17 Competence best Curriculums have been developed under R-YES project

# JOB CREATION INITIATIVES - RELEVANCE

Among the various areas, the country specific Job Creation Initiatives have proved to have strengths in:

- Private sector
- Joint initiatives with other development actors
- Investment promotion

## This has been achieved focusing on

- Strategic **partnership with private companies and public institutions** enabled significant upskilling, mentorship, certification, and exposure of youth to the world of work
- Collaboration with **accredited institutions** of government in TVET training to build hands-on skills and certification helped to turn unemployable rural youth into a reputable workforce
- A special program set aside to **support learning and mentorship of youth with disabilities** helped to create new direct jobs for persons with hearing impairment.
- Leveraging resources of other development organizations such as FAO, Government of Rwanda, and USAID helped to deepen impact.
- An online platform ([www.r-yes.com](http://www.r-yes.com)) was developed to link rural youth and employment opportunities.

# APPROACH'S EFFECTIVENESS

## Micro level

- Youth onboarding process; A call for youth application is developed in both English and the local language (Kinyarwanda), clearly highlighting application procedure and selection criteria for interested youth, published in newspapers, website, WhatsApp groups, radio, and community gatherings. While responding to the call, the applicants mention the reason of choosing what they want to study
- Youth after induction sessions signed commitment form to undergo and completing both collage and company trainings
- Trainers and mentors are engaged in the preparation of project implementation activities i.e. curriculum development, onboarding and follow up of youth at the training centers

## Meso level

- The identified and engaged public and private sector signed agreements with Kilimo Trust to provide training, mentorship and employment opportunities to rural youth and each entity appoint focal person to easier collaboration during implementation of project activities

## Macro level

- Strengthened collaboration with local government authorities (especially districts) expanded support to youth and created more employment opportunities for youth from those districts i.e. Youth graduations preparations are owned and done at district level.
- Collaboration with the National Artificial Insemination (AI) Center under Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB) enabled the hub to equip youth with hands-on skills on artificial insemination which could not be done in any college of private company.
- Leveraging resources of other development organizations such as FAO, Government of Rwanda, and USAID helped to deepen impact.
- Youth under Agri-Hub participates in Annual National Agricultural Show to showcase acquired skills for the jobs opportunity and partnerships purpose

# EXAMPLE: PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

## Overview of partnerships with key stakeholders.

A total of 180 private and public sector partners are actively participating in the Rwanda Agribusiness-hub as centers of specialized training, employers, implementing partners, and mentors. As of now, partners onboarded including Government institutions, Youth forums, Grain milling factories, Milk collection centers, Model Farmers, the National Women Council with its women centers, Technical colleges and Agribusiness companies.

## Collaboration strategies and outcomes.

- R-YES project teams held physical meetings with government officials in all the 16 target districts that are working with project. The awareness campaign aimed at introducing R-YES project to the district officials for their inputs, recommendations, and involvement in the implementation
- Through stakeholder identification and profiling exercise, agribusiness companies were identified and selected based on their capacity and readiness to participate in the agribusiness hub as centres of work-place learning and employment opportunities for R-YES beneficiaries
- Project team undertook a detailed **Institutional Capacity Assessment (ICA)** of technical training centres, after a detailed assessment institutions were selected and engaged as primary centers of in-college training for RAH beneficiaries

# LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Strategic partnership with private companies and public institutions enabled significant upskilling, mentorship, certification, and exposure of youth to the world of work.

2

A special program set aside to support learning and mentorship of youth with disabilities helped to create new direct jobs for persons with hearing impairment.

3

Collaboration with accredited institutions of government in TVET training to build hands-on skills and certification helped to turn unemployable rural youth into a reputable workforce.

4

Strengthened collaboration with local government authorities (especially districts) expanded support to youth and created more employment opportunities for youth from those districts

## Recommendations

The program could be scaled up to reach a larger number of youth. This may involve identifying and training additional mentors, expanding partnerships with companies and institutions, and developing a replicable model for implementation in other regions

# Navigating Challenges and Opportunities: Strategies for Success

## Challenges

Restrictions brought about by COVID 19 preventive measures (especially closure of schools and colleges) delayed upgrades and youth onboarding process. To mitigate the risk, R-YES established strong linkages with many colleges and agribusiness industries to accommodate a big number of youths at once

Youth employments (jobs) do not happen immediately upon completion of training. It is a continuous process and some youth of the first cohort may get jobs during implementation of the second cohort or later. To ensure that youth are created we settled the platform for following up the youth from their localities and linking them with employers.

## Opportunities

Identifying areas of complementarity and signed MoU with Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (**RAB**) and the Single Project Implementation Unit (SPIU) of IFAD-funded projects where an opportunity for projects to leverage on the activities of each other

Upon completion of training, youth are certified by competent institutions of the Ministry of Education namely Rwanda Polytechnic (for youth who trained in Integrated Polytechnic Regional Colleges – IPRCs) and Rwanda TVET Board (for youth who trained in TVETs). This increases youth employability potential, and they can easily compete on the labor market

The use of online application portal to onboard youth was very valuable and friendly to youth because the link easily accessible through social media and youth were given the opportunity to choose agribusiness opportunities they wished to pursue

Strong Partnership with public and private sector to use the facilities for equipping youth with technical and entrepreneur skills to compete on labor market

# DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

The Rwanda Agri-Hub project has demonstrably achieved significant success in empowering Rwandan youth for agribusiness careers. By exceeding its initial job creation target and exceeding 1,200 youth trained, the project has made a substantial impact.

The initiative's focus on partnerships with public and private stakeholders has been a key strength, fostering a comprehensive approach that equips youth with technical skills, business penetration, and workplace experience.

Looking ahead, the project's established partnerships and commitment to continuous improvement position it well for continued success. Collaboration with the Public and private partners presents exciting opportunities to further equip graduates. The emphasis on youth with disabilities and leveraging online tools for outreach ensure inclusivity and accessibility.

Though challenges like COVID-19 disruptions and ensuring immediate job placement for all graduates remain, the R-YES project has proven its effectiveness. The project's model offers valuable insights for future initiatives aimed at empowering youth for agricultural entrepreneurship and economic development.

# THANK YOU!

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