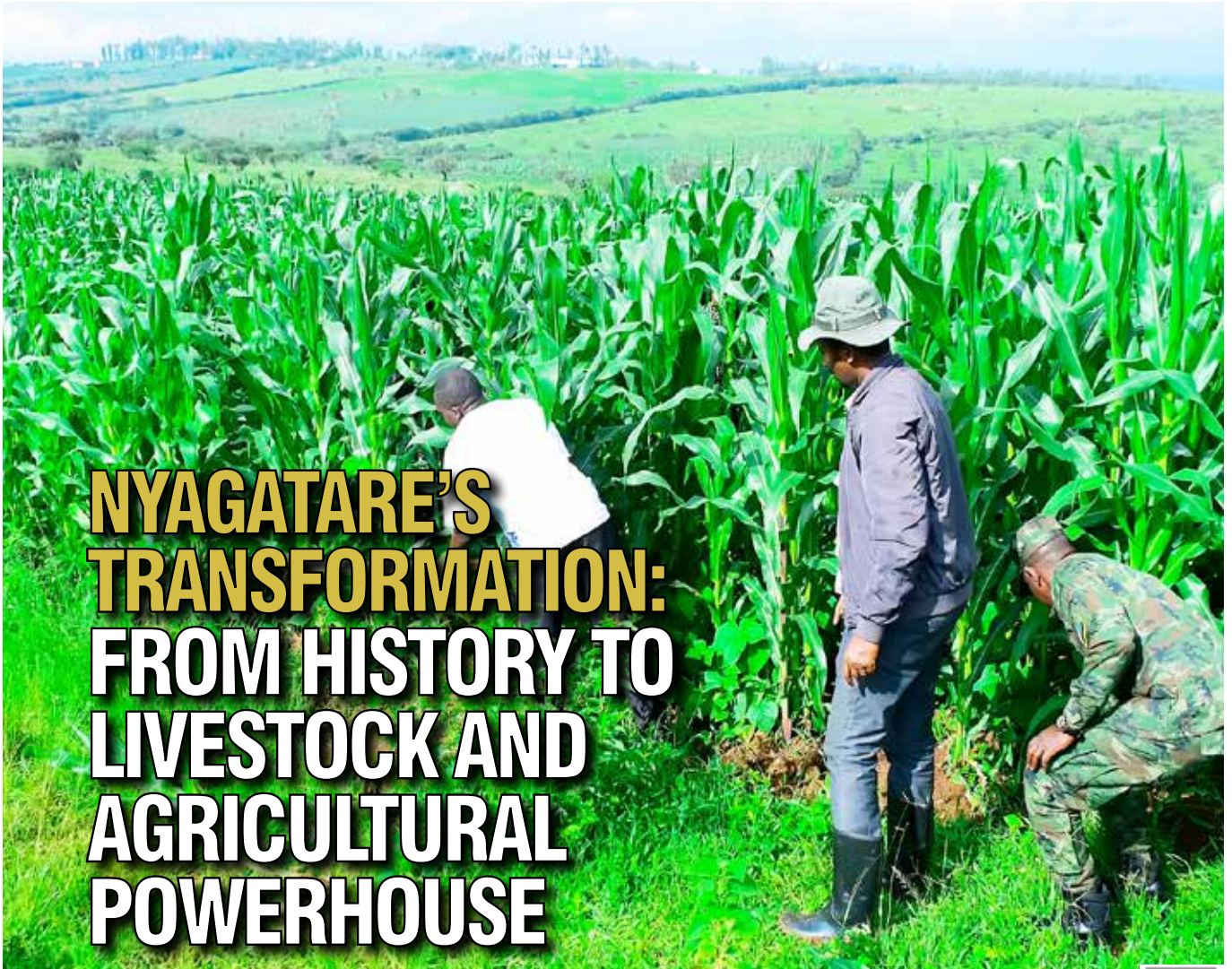


RWANDA Dispatch

AN INSIGHT INTO RWANDA

JAN - MAR 2024, ISSUE 79



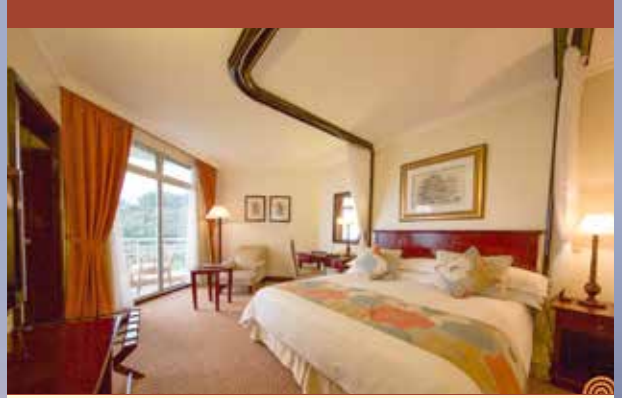
NYAGATARE'S TRANSFORMATION: FROM HISTORY TO LIVESTOCK AND AGRICULTURAL POWERHOUSE

NESTLED IN THE NORTHEAST OF RWANDA, NYAGATARE DISTRICT IS HOME TO A POPULATION SURPASSING 650,000, RENDERING IT A VIBRANT HUB AMONG RWANDA'S SIX SECONDARY CITIES. YET, BENEATH ITS BUSTLING PRESENT LIES A RICH AND STORIED PAST.



RULING RPF PARTY AWAITS SOFT LANDING IN 2024 POLLS | PG11

Rwanda's economy surges with 8.2% growth in 2023 | PG10



Lake Kivu Serena Hotel is located in the resort Rwandan town of Gisenyi, on the shores of Lake Kivu, the sixth largest lake in Africa. The hotel is ideally situated on a sandy palm lined beach, with the nearby Virunga Volcanoes providing a spectacular backdrop on one side and a panoramic view of the lake on the other.



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Publisher's Note

Since the outbreak of the Israel-Palestine war in early October 2023, nearly 30,000 lives, primarily women and children, have been lost, and tens of thousands have been displaced. The recent shooting of people awaiting aid by the Israeli army has been condemned by the international community as a grave violation of humanity.

The conflict escalated when Israel declared war on the Gaza Strip in response to an unprecedented attack by the armed Palestinian group, Hamas.

Despite ongoing international efforts, a comprehensive Gaza ceasefire deal with Israel seems distant, according to sources. Reportedly, Hamas is demanding a guarantee of "a total ceasefire and the withdrawal of Israeli forces."

Simultaneously, the African continent faces its own set of challenges, including civil strife. Burkina Faso, Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo have witnessed horrific scenes due to militias launching brutal attacks on civilians.

Ongoing clashes between FARDC, DRC's government forces and M23 rebels continue to result in loss of lives and displacement of thousands of Congolese people.

Meanwhile, Rwandans are gearing up for the 4th democratic general election scheduled for July 15.

Local observers predict that the ruling Rwanda Patriotic Front has a high chance of retaining power, building on the gains recorded in the last 30 years, similarly the outgoing 7-year term that began in 2017.

President Paul Kagame was endorsed at the party congress on March 9th by over 2,000 party cadres as the party's flag-bearer in the upcoming polls.

This issue explores success stories in the Nyagatare District, a region that was once characterized by uneven population distribution but is now emerging as the country's food basket. In Nyagatare, citizens acknowledge the authorities' dedication to creating an enabling climate and transforming lives through people-centered leadership. The number of people accessing essential services such as health care, water, electricity, and education is on the rise.

Enjoy the read

Editorial

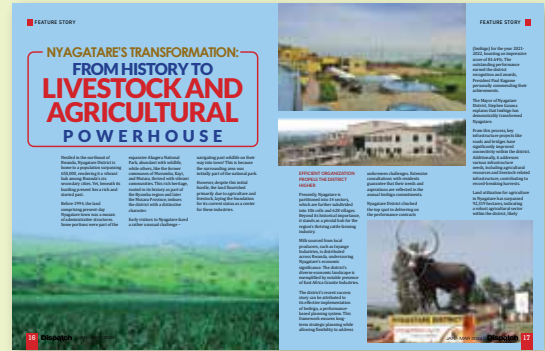


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IN CASE YOU MISSED THEM (QUOTES)



said and
Quoted



“Rwanda never created this war in DR Congo, in anyway.”
PRESIDENT PAUL KAGAME,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA



“We are committed to African unity and solidarity for shared prosperity and progress,”
RAILA ODINGA, FORMER
KENYAN PRIME MINISTER



“Make sure you like what you doing, put all your energy into what you are doing and make sure to have a vision.”
JEANNE FRANCOISE MUBILIGI,
CHAIRPERSON RWANDA
PRIVATE SECTOR FEDERATION (PSF)



“By voting, we add our voice to the chorus that forms opinions and the basis for actions.”
JENS STOLTENBERG, SECRETARY
GENERAL OF NATO



On the
scene **World**

Haiti Crisis: Gangs Rule, Chaos Reigns

Port-au-Prince is in turmoil as gangs control the streets, sparking fears of civil war. Protests demand the Prime Minister’s resignation, highlighting deep discontent. With governance faltering, swift action is crucial to prevent further chaos and alleviate the suffering of Haitians.

Numbers that speak volumes

3.9
persons

ONE VEHICLE FOR EVERY 3.9 LIBERIANS, THIS IS THE HIGHEST CAR TO PEOPLE RATIOS ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT, DESPITE LIBERIA BEING ONE OF THE POOREST COUNTRIES. THE RUBBER-POWERED ECONOMY ALSO HAS POOR INFRASTRUCTURE WITH LESS THAN 1,000KM OF PAVED ROADS. SOUTH AFRICA TAILS BEHIND AS THE SECOND WITH ONE IN EVERY FIVE PEOPLE OWNING A VEHICLE. THIS LARGEST VEHICLE MARKET ON THE CONTINENT SOLD MORE THAN 250,000 UNITS IN 2012 ALONE.

10
hour day

FRANCE ONCE ATTEMPTED TO CHANGE TO A 10-HOUR DAY. IN 1793, FRANCE SMASHED THE OLD CLOCK IN FAVOR OF FRENCH REVOLUTIONARY TIME: A 10-HOUR DAY, WITH 100 MINUTES PER HOUR AND 100 SECONDS PER MINUTE. THIS THOROUGHLY MODERN SYSTEM HAD A FEW PRACTICAL BENEFITS, CHIEF AMONG THEM BEING A SIMPLIFIED WAY TO DO TIME-RELATED MATH: IF WE WANT TO KNOW WHEN A DAY IS 70 PERCENT COMPLETE, DECIMAL TIME SAYS “AT THE END OF THE SEVENTH HOUR.” THE TRICK WAS THAT EVERY PERSON ALREADY HAD A WELL-ESTABLISHED WAY TO TELL TIME AND OLD HABITS DIE HARD. THE SYSTEM PROVED UNPOPULAR.

1
million tonnes

ANNUAL MILK PRODUCTION IN RWANDA REACHED MORE THAN ONE MILLION TONNES (ONE BILLION LITRES) IN 2023, REPRESENTING SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN THE DAIRY SECTOR, ACCORDING TO A 2022/2023 ANNUAL REPORT BY THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND ANIMAL RESOURCES (MINAGRI). MILK PRODUCTION STEADILY INCREASED FROM MORE THAN 121,400 TONNES IN 2005, TO MORE THAN 372,600 TONNES IN 2010, AND 891,326 TONNES IN 2020.

9.3
billion dollars

REMITTANCES FROM EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY (EAC) DIASPORA REACHED \$9.3BN ANNUALLY IN 2022 FROM \$5.7BN IN 2017. THE NEW DATA FROM WORLD BANK MAKES REMITTANCES THE LARGEST SOURCE OF EXTERNAL FINANCING FOR THE REGION. KENYA ATTRACTS THE BIGGEST SHARE WHILE RWANDA’S DIASPORA SENT HOME \$246M.



Dear Editor,

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the recent hike in transport fares implemented by RURA. This increase, for instance, the jump from 220 francs to 307 francs for a trip from downtown Kigali to Remera, translates to a staggering 624 francs per day for a round trip.

This disproportionately impacts low-income earners who rely heavily on public transport, especially considering the route from Nyabugogo to Remera.

While the introduction of 200 new electric buses with increased capacity is a welcome development, the coinciding fare hike raises concerns. Public perception suggests this move aims to recoup the investment in new buses rather than address the long-standing issue of limited public transport.

As a daily commuter myself, I believe transparency is paramount. Authorities must clearly explain the connection between the fare increase and operational costs. This will dispel the public's perception that the hike solely finances the new buses.

Secondly, government intervention is crucial. Implementing subsidies or tax breaks for public transport operators can alleviate the fare burden on commuters.

Thirdly, exploring fuel price control mechanisms can minimize the impact of rising fuel costs on operational expenses.

Finally, a partially deregulated transport sector could foster competition. Allowing private investment alongside government initiatives might improve service quality and potentially drive down fares in the long run. I believe that introducing new buses is commendable, but not at the sole expense of commuters.

Transport authorities need to ensure transparent fare adjustments and explore alternative solutions to ease the burden on commuters, RURA should consider implementing measures like exploring a regulated open market approach to encourage competition.

Clear explanations are needed from the authorities. We need to understand the connection between the fare hike and operational costs, dispelling the notion that it solely finances the new buses.

Making fares fairer: The government should explore ways to ease the burden on commuters. This could involve subsidies, tax breaks for public transport operators, or even exploring fuel price control mechanisms.

The rise in transport costs will make it harder for people to get around, especially those who don't have a lot of money. While adding new, bigger buses is a good step, the price increase hurts commuters.

Sincerely,
SIBOMANA JEAN

Follow us on Social Media
@rwandadispatch1

RPF endorses Kagame as Presidential Candidate



President Paul Kagame, Chairman of the RPF Inkotanyi party, was nominated as the party's presidential candidate for the upcoming July polls. Kagame received the endorsement at the party congress on March 9th, which brought together over 2,000 party cadres.

In his acceptance speech, Kagame expressed his recognition of the weight of responsibility in leading the country, likening it to a shock absorber against the daily challenges faced by Rwanda. He accepted the responsibility, albeit reluctantly, understanding the unique context of the nation, he remarked. He noted doing so with the hope of eventually passing on this responsibility to another capable leader.

At 66 years old, Kagame has served as president of Rwanda since 2000. He secured reelection to office in 2017, garnering a landslide victory with over 98 percent of the vote.

"I extend my gratitude to our

esteemed guests, including leaders from various political organizations and national leaders, for joining us here today. Your presence underscores the diversity we embrace as we continue our journey of national rebuilding," Kagame acknowledged.

During the congress, a list of 70 candidates contending for parliamentary seats was

presented and ratified, alongside the unveiling of the party's new five-year manifesto, which will serve as the foundation for the candidates' campaigns.

RPF Secretary General, Wellars Gasamagera, highlighted the party's accomplishments over the past seven years, noting that despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the party had largely delivered on its promises.



EmergeHer Business Conference Returns to Kigali in June

Mark your calendars for June 28th and 29th, 2024, as the second edition of the EmmergeHer Business and Leadership International Conference returns to Kigali. In 2023, the Business and Leadership International Conference debuted in Kigali with the aim of fostering business development and community engagement. A vibrant platform for African women and youth to convene, collaborate, and strategize on shared values and concerns pertaining to business. Last year's conference saw

participants exchanging ideas, sharing practical experiences, and engaging in a spirited business pitching competition. Christine Titih, the Founder & Executive Director of EmmergeHer, emphasized that the initiative aligns with the trajectory of shaping the future of businesses and leadership in Africa. By specifically targeting women and youth from diverse countries, the conference aims to empower and uplift these crucial demographics in the realm of entrepreneurship and leadership.



UN Tribunal to close Rwanda office following conclusion of Genocide trials

The International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (IRMCT) to Close Rwanda Office After Concluding Genocide Trials” IRMCT will be shutting down its field office in Rwanda on August 31st following the completion of genocide trials, as announced by Abubacarr Tambadou, the tribunal’s registrar, during a visit to Kigali. Established by the UN Security Council in December 2010 to finalize the remaining tasks of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, IRMCT has maintained a field office in Kigali.

Cuba and Rwanda strengthen health cooperation

Cuba and Rwanda solidified their commitment to enhancing collaboration in healthcare with the signing an agreement by Ministers José Ángel Portal of Cuba and Dr. Sabin Nsanzimana. The Cuban minister affirmed that Rwanda can always rely on the island’s support to enhance the quality of life for its citizens. He emphasized that the agreement sets the stage for future collaborative programs encompassing human resources training, healthcare system improvement, education, and research. Dr. Nsanzimana lauded the Cuban health system and hailed the fruitful relations in this sector. In November 2023, a delegation led by Cuban VP Salvador Valdés Mesa visited Rwanda with the aim of bolstering relations between the two nations.



RPF-Inkotanyi Congress | Kigali, 9 March 2024





Umushyikirano 2024 | Kigali, 23 January 2024



Rwanda Day | Washington D.C., 3 February 2024



State Visit of Andrzej Duda, President of the Republic of Poland | Kigali, 7 February 2024



ATP Challenger 50 Tour | Kigali, 2 March 2024



Meeting with President Salva Kiir of South Sudan | Kigali, 22 February 2024



11th World Governments Summit | Dubai, 12 February 2024



International Women's Day celebration | Kigali, 8 March 2024

Rwanda's economy surges with 8.2% growth in 2023

In 2023, Rwanda's economy exceeded expectations, boasting an impressive growth rate of 8.2%, surpassing earlier forecasts of 6.2%. Notably, the economy surged even further in the fourth quarter, achieving a remarkable 10% growth. Recent data from the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, shows growth was primarily fueled by various sectors: services led with a 44% contribution, followed by agriculture at 27%, industry at 22%, and net indirect taxes at 7%.

The robust expansion was largely attributed to the rapid development of industries and services, outperforming initial projections. However, the agriculture sector faced challenges such as droughts

and floods, resulting in a modest growth of only 2%. Nevertheless, livestock farming saw a more promising increase of 7%, offsetting a 4% decline in the production of export crops like tea and coffee. The industry sector experienced substantial growth at 10%, driven by strong performances in manufacturing (11%) and construction (12%). In the service sector, growth was equally impressive at 11%. Wholesale and retail trade increased by 9%, hotel and restaurant activities surged by 18%, and ICT (Information and Communications Technology) experienced a remarkable 35% growth. Transport also flourished, with air travel expanding by 29% and land travel by 9%.

Rwanda Regulates Online Forex Trading

Rwanda implemented its first regulations for leveraged foreign exchange trading, commonly known as online forex trading.

This move aims to protect investors, particularly young people, who were previously exposed to high risks due to a lack of knowledge about the legitimacy of trading platforms.

The Capital Market Authority of Rwanda (CMA) issued the new regulations, which will establish a framework for the industry to operate legally and grow responsibly. The regulations set a maximum leverage ratio of 100:1, meaning traders can trade up to \$100 for every \$1 they invest.

Gov't Enacts Bio-safety Law to Regulate GMOs

Rwanda has implemented a new law governing genetically modified organisms (GMOs). This law aims to ensure the safe handling, transfer, and use of GMOs in the country. The enactment coincides with ongoing trials on disease-resistant cassava and potato varieties.

The law establishes a framework for activities involving GMOs, including contained use, confined field trials, and commercialization. It mandates permits for these activities and outlines risk assessment and management procedures.

A National Biosafety Committee was established to review applications and advise authorities on GMO-related matters. The law also provides exemptions for low-risk GMOs from extensive assessments. The new legislation seeks to balance the potential benefits of GMOs with the need to protect biodiversity and human health.



RULING RPF PARTY AWAITS SOFT LANDING IN 2024 POLLS



BY GEORGE KALISA

Political temperatures in Rwanda are currently rising as countdown to the July 15 presidential and parliamentary polls nears. This will be the fourth democratic general election for the east African nation in a space of 30 years.

The first democratic elections took place in 2003 after the country had enacted the Constitution and breathed life into institutions that had suffered a huge blow during tyranny regimes that masterminded and executed the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi.

President Paul Kagame, Chairman of the ruling Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) won the previous election with 98.7% while independent candidate Philippe Mpayimana and leader of Democratic Green Party of Rwanda (DGPR), Frank Habineza trailed with barely one per cent.

Now, there is widespread opinion that RPF will win both presidential and parliamentary polls come July. The opinion is grounded in gains from RPF-Inkotanyi led government in accordance to the seven-year National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) adopted in 2017.

The Government set out plans for achieving Vision 2050 for economic development based on lessons learned, successes and challenges met in the 2010-2017 medium-term development strategies.

Despite RPF's clean record in the socio-economic transformation, the opposition continues to put dents in Kagame's administration citing continued breach of democracy.

Habineza who started DGPR in 2009 told reporters in a presser that after his nomination as a flagbearer in the upcoming election that stifling of fundamental human rights including free media has characterized the ruling party. The party's congress nominated Habineza unopposed last May.

"We will continue our struggle for democracy, freedom of speech, free media, and human rights," remarked Habineza.

Victoire Ingabire, leader of Dalfa Umurinzzi, one of a dozen of unrecognized political parties ran to the High Court in Kigali early this year to request be exonerated and cleared in

LEAD STORY

order to restore all her rights as a citizen.

Commenting on her latest move, Ingabire said that she will face Kagame in the upcoming polls if court positively considers her petition. She remains under the judicial eye and illegible for any public office following her criminal record.

“If the court decision is positive then I will consider my participation in the elections this year,” she said.

Court’s ruling is due March 13, 2024.

Ingabire was arrested in 2010, and sentenced to eight years in jail, stretched to 15 years after appeal. She walked out of prison in September 2018 after a presidential pardon with over 2,000 other prisoners, and has determination to swim against turbulent political tides.

A GLANCE AT THE OUT-GOING 7-YEAR TERM

Political pundits contend that the RPF envisaged victory will ride on the back of gains registered in the last three decades it has been in power. More vividly, the seven-year term ending soon has some concrete evidence the party will have a soft landing in coming elections.

NST1 (2017-2024) laid down goals in the spheres of economic transformation; social transformation and transformational governance that the government has been implementing in the last seven years.

At least 91 per cent of the medium-term development strategies have successfully been implemented, a credit that may win support for the current



government in the upcoming elections.

According to Prime Minister Édouard Ngirente, winding NST1 has not been all roses as the Rwandan government like others globally encountered unforeseen problems including Covid-19, climate change, natural catastrophes altogether leading to economic downturn that led to deleterious economic effects.

While addressing the 19th National Dialogue known locally as Umushyikirano this last January, Ngirente blamed the inadequacy in achievements on global challenges that were beyond their control, and reiterated government’s commitment to continue implementing the rest of the strategies until targets are met.

ECONOMY REVIVED FOLLOWING SLUMP

In spite of the global challenges alluded to such as COVID-19, the government of Rwanda launched several measures with focus on mitigating particularly the adverse economic effects linked to the pandemic, which included supporting key sectors like manufacturing, agro-processing and real estate.

Owing to the pandemic, the country’s economy sank from 8 per cent to -3.4.

Between 2021-2023, government implemented a two-year Manufacture and Build to Recover Programme (MBRP) to boost economic recovery efforts,

which extended the time it was set to close. Through MBRP, investments were mobilized totaling \$1.75 billion and created over 36,000 jobs as of 2022 exceeding the targets by 150% and 132% respectively.

With such interventions the country maintained economic growth of 6,9 per cent from 2017 up to the third quarter of 2023.

To mitigate effects of rising commodity prices on the international markets caused by high prices of petroleum, government provided subsidies on petroleum products and public transport alongside subsidizing industrial fertilizers.

Relatedly, government purchased 200 buses, 100 of them arrived recently to address the shortage of buses that affected public transport, and the programme that started in the City of Kigali will roll out to provinces revealed Ngirente.

AGRICULTURE

The last seven years have seen Rwanda invest massively in Agriculture, the main economic activity to larger proportion of the population. And, it will be far-reaching to uplift the living standards of her people without directing ample resources into the sector.

“**Between 2021-2023, government implemented a two-year Manufacture and Build to Recover Programme (MBRP) to boost economic recovery efforts, which extended the time it was set to close. Through MBRP, investments were mobilized totaling \$1.75 billion and created over 36,000 jobs as of 2022 exceeding the targets by 150% and 132% respectively.**”





To this effect, cultivatable land increased to 71,000ha up from 48,000ha in 2017. Investments in commercial modern farming like Gabiro Agribusiness Hub, Nasho and Mpanga irrigation schemes in the Eastern Province are some of the initiatives that account for the rise in arable land.

The amount of fertilizers used per hectare annually rose in the last seven years to 70.3Kgs up from 32Kgs in 2017, and the rise translated in increase in productivity per unit of land, placing Rwanda in the lead in Sub-Saharan Africa where 25Kgs are used per hectare annually.

The fertilizer blending plant in Bugesera with a capacity of producing 100,000 tons complements other fertilizers' factories in ensuring sustainable supply, and the country stopped importing hybrid seeds in 2021.



Efforts meant to fight soil erosion were heightened during the seven-year term leading to completion of terraces covering 1,147,434 hectares. The shortage in milk production was substantively narrowed and currently more than one million liters up from some 700,000 in 2017, and a milk processing plant

with a 650,000 litre capacity per day was constructed due to open.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

To boost the movement of goods and people, the Infrastructure Ministry presided over the construction over 1,600Kms of roads connecting provinces. In addition, some 237Kms of new roads were constructed in the City of Kigali and secondary cities.



About 3,700 Kms of feeder roads, above the target of 3,000Kms, were constructed to help mostly farmers access markets across the country. While floodlights were installed along more than 2,160Kms of roads in cities falling below the target of 2,400Kms but the programme is ongoing, the Premier told over 1,500 delegates at Umushyikirano.

During the implementation of NST1, over 1.5 million new households accessed electricity increasing accessibility by household from 34.4% to 74%. And, in effort to increase to safe and clean water, seven processing



plants were constructed including Nzove Kanzenze, Gihira, Kanyonyomba, Mwoya, Nkombo and Nyankora which nearly doubled water supply.

Meanwhile, access to internet services increased following an increase in the kilometres of Fiber optic cable from 3,300 Kms in 2017 to 15,000.

Other key sectors that registered milestones in the last seven years include Health, Education and Manufacturing.

By and large, the RPF-Inkotanyi led government is likely to ride on the back of the gains it recorded in nearly all the key sectors between 2017 to 2024 in its drive to cause socio-economic transformation.

Relatedly, Rwanda's President and liberator Paul Kagame has always maintained his political stance that utterly differs from the mode of democracy the West upholds, by putting home-grown solutions on course. Kagame's leadership style is hugely dictated by the country's bad past and a replica of Western democracy has not solved problems in poor countries even in nations where they follow it to the letter.

During the implementation of NST1, over 1.5 million new households accessed electricity increasing accessibility by household from 34.4% to 74%.

The resilient nation enacted the 2003 Constitution giving new life to institutions that had suffered a huge blow during the genocide regimes that perpetuated the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi.

More than one million Tutsi were brutally killed by the government backed militias known locally as Interahamwe and Hutu extremists in the space of 100 days, and the economy was left in shambles. This genocide was stopped by Rwanda Patriotic Army (RPA) under Kagame's command.

ONE-ON-ONE

WITH MAYOR GASANA - NYAGATARE DISTRICT

Nyagatare District has undergone a remarkable transformation in recent years. Once sparsely populated, it is now a thriving hub of agriculture, industry, and education. Rwanda Dispatch sat down with Mayor Stephen Gasana to discuss his vision and progress of the district.

Qn: Mayor Gasana, can you tell our readers about yourself and the journey to leading the district?

Mayor: I am Stephen Gasana, father of three children and a law graduate from the University of Rwanda. I have worked in civil service positions for several years before I was elected Mayor of Nyagatare District in November 2021.

Qn: What do you find most rewarding about Mayorship?

Mayor: One rewarding aspect in my role is the collaborative spirit I encounter. Residents, partners, and staff are genuinely supportive of good ideas. This enthusiasm for positive initiatives is truly inspiring.

However, managing expectations can be challenging. While we strive to fulfill residents' aspira-

tions for development, achieving everything at once is difficult.

Qn: How do you ensure development of the District?

Mayor: We base our development on planning. Each year, we have performance contracts (Imihigo) that outline specific goals. Extensive consultations with residents across the district are a key part of this process.

Administratively, our district comprises 628 villages, 106 cells, and 14 sectors. During the planning phase, we visit every village to gather residents' needs and aspirations for inclusion in the Imihigo process. We prioritize them collaboratively with residents before incorporating them into the final document.

Qn: Last year, Nyagatare was ranked the best performing district in IMIHIGO, what did you do differently?

Mayor: Three factors were key. First, our staff's strong commitment and efficiency ensured successful execution of performance contracts. Second, the contracts themselves addressed a diverse range of areas, fostering a comprehensive approach. Finally, effective communication led to strong community ownership of the Imihigo goals.



We greatly appreciate the government's Imihigo initiative and we commend HE the President for adopting this effective planning approach.

Qn: What is spurring development in your district

Mayor: Agriculture is our primary economic activity, with a focus on large-scale production of maize, rice, beans, and cassava. We are the largest producer of maize, beans, and milk in Rwanda.

Several large-scale projects are underway, including the Gabiro Agribusiness Hub Project (GAHP) encompassing 5,600 hectares in its first phase and the Muvumba multipurpose dam which will facilitate irrigation across 9,640 hectares.

As a secondary city, Nyagatare boasts a developing industrial zone with several key industries, including near-completion Inyange milk powder plant, East African Granite Industries, Nyagatare maize processing plant, and Nyagatare rice factory.

Beyond industry, Nyagatare also prioritizes education, offering residents access to two universities, over 200 primary and secondary schools.

Qn: What are you doing to attract new investments?

Mayor: Working in partnership with organizations like the Joint Action Development Forum we host exhibitions to showcase Nyagatare's vast potential and diverse opportunities. The district is also actively planning an investment forum which will showcase the dynamism of the private sector.

Nyagatare has many potentials in tourism, though not fully exploited. But in partnership with Rwanda Development Board (RDB), we are working to develop more tourism products like Gikoba and mapping more historical sites. Plans have also been set to include the private sector in these endeavors.

The district thrives in tourism, due in part to its proximity to Akagera National Park. This renowned park not only attracts visitors but also generates direct and indirect job opportunities for the local population. Opportunities also extend to sectors like hospitality, as evidenced by the district's four- and three-star hotels.

Qn: Tourism is an important engine for development, how is this sector performing in Nyagatare?

Mayor: The district thrives in tourism, due in part to its proximity to Akagera National Park. This renowned park not only attracts visitors but also generates direct and indirect job opportunities for the local population. Opportunities also extend to sectors like hospitality, as evidenced by the district's four- and three-star hotels.

Besides, Nyagatare has its own unique historical sites and a liberation trail on the liberation of Rwanda, this starts at Kagitumba border. Guides are already available at most of these sites, and development is ongoing.

Plans are also underway to create a natural forest on over 400 hectares of land with partners. We're also exploring tourism based on the unique Inyambo Cows. Sites for such experiences have already been identified.

Qn: Nyagatare was previously uninhabited, what has changed?

Mayor: Infrastructure development has significantly transformed Nyagatare District. We have a network of roads in Nyagatare town, connecting it to other sectors of the district.

Our district has invested in improving internal connectivity through the construction of several key roads, including the Nyagatare-Karama, Nyagatare-Rukomo,

Our district has invested in improving internal connectivity through the construction of several key roads, including the Nyagatare-Karama, Nyagatare-Rukomo, Nyagatare-Matimba, Nyagatare-Ryabega, and Karaganzi roads.

Nyagatare-Matimba, Nyagatare-Ryabega, and Karaganzi roads.

Qn: As a dry region, what do you do to improve the situation?

Several ongoing projects, including "Transforming Eastern Province through Adaptation," "National Adaptation Program," and collaborations, aim to significantly increase tree cover. Efforts are not only focused on planting, but also on ensuring successful growth.

Additionally, the district actively promotes alternative cooking methods, such as gas and improved cook stoves, to minimize firewood consumption and protect existing trees.

Previously, open grazing practices exacerbated the district's vulnerability to climate change due to water and food scarcity. To combat this issue, a significant shift has been made towards zero-grazing practices within the livestock sector.

Qn: What tends to slow your development initiatives

Mayor: Previously, uneven population distribution across the district led to infrastructure development gaps in some regions. However, the district is now making significant strides in expanding utilities, including electricity and water shortage among other things.

Qn: Where do you see the district in the next ten years?

Mayor: Nyagatare will be a thriving district in ten years, focusing on three key sectors: agriculture, livestock, and infrastructure. We anticipate significant growth in agricultural productivity, with crop yields exceeding five or more tonnes per hectare due to ongoing irrigation projects. Livestock sector is expected to flourish, driven by increased milk production per household and improved breed quality.

NYAGATARE'S TRANSFORMATION: FROM HISTORY TO LIVESTOCK AND AGRICULTURAL POWERHOUSE

Nestled in the northeast of Rwanda, Nyagatare District is home to a population surpassing 650,000, rendering it a vibrant hub among Rwanda's six secondary cities. Yet, beneath its bustling present lies a rich and storied past.

Before 1994, the land comprising present-day Nyagatare town was a mosaic of administrative structures. Some portions were part of the

expansive Akagera National Park, abundant with wildlife, while others, like the former communes of Muvumba, Kayi, and Mutara, thrived with vibrant communities. This rich heritage, rooted in its history as part of the Byumba region and later the Mutara Province, imbues the district with a distinctive character.

Early visitors to Nyagatare faced a rather unusual challenge –

navigating past wildlife on their way into town! This is because the surrounding area was initially part of the national park.

However, despite this initial hurdle, the land flourished primarily due to agriculture and livestock, laying the foundation for its current status as a center for these industries.



(Imihigo) for the year 2021-2022, boasting an impressive score of 81.64%. The outstanding performance earned the district recognition and awards, President Paul Kagame personally commending their achievements.

The Mayor of Nyagatare District, Stephen Gasana explains that Imihigo has demonstrably transformed Nyagatare.

From this process, key infrastructure projects like roads and bridges have significantly improved connectivity within the district. Additionally, it addresses various infrastructure needs, including agricultural resources and livestock-related infrastructure, contributing to record-breaking harvests.

Land utilization for agriculture in Nyagatare has surpassed 92,319 hectares, indicating a robust agricultural sector within the district, likely

EFFICIENT ORGANIZATION PROPELS THE DISTRICT HIGHER

Presently, Nyagatare is partitioned into 14 sectors, which are further subdivided into 106 cells and 628 villages. Beyond its historical importance, it stands as a pivotal hub for the region’s thriving cattle farming industry.

Milk sourced from local producers, such as Inyange Industries, is distributed across Rwanda, underscoring Nyagatare’s economic significance. The district’s diverse economic landscape is exemplified by notable presence of East Africa Granite Industries.

The district’s recent success story can be attributed to its effective implementation of Imihigo, a performance-based planning system. This framework ensures long-term strategic planning while allowing flexibility to address

unforeseen challenges. Extensive consultations with residents guarantee that their needs and aspirations are reflected in the annual Imihigo commitments.

Nyagatare District clinched the top spot in delivering on the performance contracts



FEATURE STORY

contributing to increased milk production.

Nyagatare boasts a substantial milk production output, exceeding 20 million liters annually. While milk production may have fluctuated over the past three years, in 2020, the district witnessed its highest output at 23.9 million liters.

Farmers in Nyagatare District now have a guaranteed market for their maize harvest thanks to the operational Rwf1.35 billion maize processing factory.

This collaborative effort between the district and Nyagatare Union of Maize Farmers' Cooperative (UNICOPROMANYA) directly meets the demand for locally produced maize flour.

Equipped with a daily processing capacity of 30 tonnes, the factory makes a substantial contribution to Nyagatare's food security and economic progress. District data indicates that maize production in Nyagatare ranges between 130,000 and 140,000 tonnes annually.

Nyagatare stands as a pivotal player in Rwandan maize production, yielding an output that underscores its significant contribution, comprising nearly a quarter (25%) of the country's total maize production. In 2021, Rwanda's maize production surpassed 482,000 tonnes, as reported by the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda.



ENGAGING PARTNERS IN A COLLABORATIVE STRATEGY

At the heart of Nyagatare's development approach lies community ownership. By fostering effective communication channels, residents are empowered to engage actively in performance contracts, understanding their significant impacts on vital sectors like healthcare. This shared sense of ownership nurtures a collaborative spirit, where each individual is dedicated to propelling the district forward.

Furthermore, tourism emerges as a pivotal contributor to Nyagatare's growth, capitalizing on its strategic location adjacent to Akagera National Park and featuring historical landmarks alongside a liberation trail. These attractions offer visitors an immersive journey through the district's diverse history, showcasing not only its present

dynamism but also its rich tapestry of heritage.

Looking ahead, Mayor Gasana underscores the district's dedication to drawing in residents by forging fresh opportunities. "We're striving to establish inlets or outlets," he elucidates, alluding to enticing employment or entrepreneurial prospects. An imminent investment forum and exhibition are poised to spotlight the district's expansive potential and varied avenues, reinforcing its stature as a focal point for economic expansion.

The Mayor points out that sustainability is key focus for Nyagatare, the district champions a decade-long history of tree planting initiatives and actively promotes alternative cooking methods like gas and improved cook stoves to minimize firewood consumption. This commitment to environmental responsibility





ensures a sustainable future for the district and its residents.

Recognizing the challenge of droughts, several irrigation projects are underway, consolidating land for efficient water usage.

While the district continues to grapple with clean water shortages across various sectors, ongoing projects are actively addressing this pressing issue.

The district has historically been susceptible to droughts, but has fortunately not experienced them in the past two years. To address this ongoing challenge and mitigate the effects of climate change on crop production, several irrigation projects are underway. These projects consolidate land for efficient water use, with more than 3,000 hectares dedicated to well-planned rice production.



Furthermore, some Sectors like Matimba, Museri, Karangazi, Katabagemu, Muvumba, and Gabiro are implementing irrigation on consolidated agricultural land. This widespread effort ensures food security and economic stability for the district.

In the realm of environmental initiatives, a diverse range of programs such as “Transforming Eastern Province through Adaptation” and the “National Adaptation Program,” coupled with partnerships with organizations like World Vision, aim to achieve a substantial increase in tree cover.

Mayor Gasana points out that these efforts extend beyond planting to ensure successful growth, with increased commitment, follow-up, and resource allocation promising a dramatic transformation of the district’s forest landscapes.





supporting rice farmers to increase production.

For Nyagatare Rice Company, founded by four visionary farmers the solution was not in cultivating or acquiring more land but value addition and empower existing rice cooperative farmers.

Laurent Basabira, the Founder and Managing Director of Nyagatare Rice Company notes that as rice produce increased, farmers faced a problem of where to process their harvests and would end up selling unprocessed rice.

Unreliable transport options was a big challenge to farmers and a whole chain of other adverse effects led to high costs that ultimately paid meagre incomes to farmers.

When Nyagatare Rice Company was established, it started working with four local rice cooperatives in the district and extended a helping hand. The company started with providing farmers with agricultural know-how, offering agricultural inputs like improved seeds, fertilizers and pesticides among other things.

Farmers were offered training and the company established direct links with farmers through cooperatives to ensure better coordination and offered higher prices.

The impact was profound. Yields soared, and more farmers wanted to establish working relations with the company. Today, Nyagatare Rice Company works with five cooperatives and the factory has also upgraded

Nyagatare Rice Company: A story of shared growth in Rwandan fields

BY ROBERT MUGABO

In the fertile marshlands of Nyagatare District in the Eastern Province, whispers swirled around the Nyagatare Rice Company. Some lauded it as champions of farmers, while others questioned their motives. One thing was certain - they had shaken up the local rice industry.

Since its inception in 2011, Nyagatare Rice Company has been instrumental in jobs creation in the district and maximizing the potential of rice production by processing, packaging and selling while



When Nyagatare Rice Company was established, it started working with four local rice cooperatives in the district and extended a helping hand. The company started with providing farmers with agricultural know-how, offering agricultural inputs like improved seeds, fertilizers and pesticides among other things.



It is this knowledge that empower farmers, as evidenced by their beaming faces and the golden, high-quality rice they produce.

Basabira notes that their collaboration extends beyond technical assistance, they ensure prompt payment upon rice delivery to the factory for processing, this eliminates waiting period, and has built trust as well as financial stability for farmers.

Additionally, an incentives program has rewarded top-performing farmers with prizes like livestock, bicycles, and other valuable contributions, fueling a spirit of healthy competition and shared achievement.

The managing director of the company acknowledges there are some challenges like low rice production in the country, unpredictable weather conditions, market fluctuations, and import competition. Yet, his optimism is unwavering.

Basabira envisions a future where rice production per hectare increases from current 5 to 8 tons per hectare this can allow the company to operate at full capacity. He sees vast potential in Nyagatare's fertile marshlands, urging other investors to join the district's development journey.

Nyagatare Rice Company's story is not just about profits and production. It's about a community thriving together, fueled by shared goals, mutual trust, and a deep respect for the land. It is the power of collaboration where a helping hand sows the seeds of hope, prosperity, and a brighter future for everyone.



its production capacity from the original processing of 2.5 tons to 5 tons per hour.

The authorities saw the potential of collaboration and encouraged the company to share ownership with the cooperatives, creating a deeper bond and sharing the benefits of value addition.

Today, the company stands tall as a symbol of this collaboration, producing Umuyange Long grain rice and Umuyange Short grain rice, and sells its products to wholesalers and retailers countrywide.

To ensure quality and increased production, the company hired and pays 30 agricultural extensionists who are dispatched to the cooperatives, each has five while the bigger cooperative has 10 extensionists



to guide farmers in every aspect of rice cultivation, from pest control to harvesting techniques.

These extensionists encourage knowledge exchange between farmers through training, field visits, and farmer-to-farmer learning programs. They assist farmers in the proper use of agricultural inputs and harvest handling process.

FROM GUEST APPRECIATION TO PROGRESS: HOW MOON CHARITY HOTEL MAKES A DIFFERENCE



“Before going private,” he tells Rwanda Dispatch, “I worked tirelessly for Kacyiru from 1995 to 2001, and as Vice Mayor for Economic Development in the Eastern Province in 2006.”

But the entrepreneurial spirit flickered within, urging him not just write policies, but actively build bridges for his people.

In 2019, this vision materialized as Moon Charity Hotel, a beacon of empowerment, hospitality, and self-growth was opened. It’s not just a catalyst for Nyagatare’s progress; it’s a thriving enterprise constantly striving for improvement.

The hotel has revitalized the town, offering crucial jobs for vulnerable groups like widows, orphans, and youth. Its conference rooms, buzzing with business events, foster community spirit and economic growth.

But within Moon Charity’s Hotel walls, progress blossoms too. The hotel invests heavily in employee training, ensuring staff are equipped to deliver exceptional service and grow alongside the business.

Nkubiri understands the transformative power of tourism, and Moon Charity Hotel welcomes both domestic

BY JEJJE MUHINDE

Nestled amidst the emerald hills of Nyagatare, shines Moon Charity Hotel, a beacon of hospitality that casts its warmth far beyond its welcoming facade.

Its architect! Charles Nkubiri, is a former government official who swapped boardrooms for hotel suites.

Nkubiri’s story embodies dedication, evolution, and an insatiable drive for positive change.



His years in public service, shaping Kigali’s Kacyiru sector in late 1990s instilled in him a deep understanding of community needs and a yearning to create tangible opportunities.



HOSPITALITY

But here's the twist: this warmth isn't just outward-bound; it illuminates the hotel itself.

Guest feedback and the joy of exceeding expectations fuel the hotel's continuous improvement, ensuring its service and offerings evolve alongside the needs of its patrons.

Nkubiri's journey is an inspiration to aspiring entrepreneurs. He urges the youth to embrace their dreams, formulate clear goals, and develop a business plan.

"In business," he emphasizes, "a clear objective and taking your environment and community into account are vital for success."

His story goes beyond individual triumph; it's a testament to the power of a thriving enterprise that invests in both community and own growth.

So, whether you're a local seeking employment, a tourist yearning for adventure, or an entrepreneur chasing your dreams, Moon Charity Hotel welcomes you with open arms.

Come, experience its radiance, feel the pulse of guest appreciation, and witness the impact it offers.



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Beside, the hotel's magic structure and opportunity. Its walls hum with the whispers of guest appreciation, as attentive service, genuine smiles, and personalized touches create an atmosphere of true Rwandan warmth.



and international guests eager to experience Rwanda's beauty.

Its proximity to Akagera National Park and the Ugandan border makes it a perfect base for exploration, but Moon Charity Hotel doesn't just offer a stunning location; it also strives to be a responsible tourism player. Through eco-friendly practices and cultural initiatives, the hotel minimizes

its environmental impact and celebrates the richness of Rwandan traditions.

Beside, the hotel's magic structure and opportunity. Its walls hum with the whispers of guest appreciation, as attentive service, genuine smiles, and personalized touches create an atmosphere of true Rwandan warmth.





YAHSHUA MEDICAL CLINICS SETS HIGH STANDARD FOR HEALTHCARE IN NYAGATARE

BY ROBERT MUGABO

The journey from Nyagatare to Kigali for medical care etched countless stories for the residents, which became another chapter in their struggle for a health and better life.

Witnessing this first hand, Emmanuel Sagisengo, a son of this very soil and businessman, felt a responsibility ignite within him. He wouldn't let his people be defined by miles traveled for healthcare.

On a momentous Sunday, May 4th, 2023, Sagisengo materialized his dream – Yahshua Medical Clinics was officially opened, a precursor to enhanced community well-being rising from a Rwf.500 million investment.

According to Sagisengo, Founder and Managing Director of Yahshua Medical Clinics, investing in the wellbeing of Nyagatare's residents is more than just building a clinic.

"This' rewriting a narrative of healthcare."

"No more will our community endure exhausting journeys for basic healthcare. The clinic will offer modern treatment, delivered with dignity and compassion, right here in their hometown. We envision a space where patients feel empowered, not burdened, a source of pride for Nyagatare, and a beacon of hope for a healthier future," he notes

Inside the clinic, the activeness of diagnostic equipment now replaces

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"No more will our community endure exhausting journeys for basic healthcare. The clinic will offer modern treatment, delivered with dignity and compassion, right here in their hometown."

the echo of distant ambulances, offering solace and expertise where once there was only longing.

The clinic offers general medical services including among others: laboratory tests, Dentistry, Pediatrics care treatment and Gynaecology services to patients among others.

Yahshua Medical Clinics boasts rapid results for basic blood tests by qualified medical lab techs, providing patients with answers in just 30 minutes, reducing unnecessary waiting time and anxiety.

Further, Sagisengo says that meeting the Ministry of Health's rigorous standards is important, but the real validation comes from patients' continued support.

"They see the difference Yahshua Medical Clinics makes compared to long delays in laboratory or check-ups known in the past," he notes. This emphasizes their commitment and resonates with the desire for efficient healthcare.

President Kagame's call for high-quality services in Rwanda, is the clinics' guiding principle. At Yahshua Medical Clinics, management strives to embody that vision, offering accessible, patient-centered care that sets a new standard for Nyagatare and beyond. This links their efforts to a larger national agenda and adds a sense of purpose.



Sagisengo, Founder and Managing Director of Yahshua Medical Clinics



dignified healthcare they deserve.

Thankfully, government programs and policies alongside responsible financial planning, made the expansion of the clinic a reality. Now, residents of Nyagatare and neighboring communities no longer face arduous journeys for healthcare.

While Yahshua Medical Clinics' expansion faced an unexpected bump in the road – figuring out how to make sure everyone's healthcare bills got paid. It wasn't just about modern equipment or skilled doctors but also stable healthcare system.

There have been some bumps along the road, Sagisengo acknowledges. "But unlike most new ventures, Yahshua Medical Clinics' biggest challenge wasn't finding qualified staff or acquiring equipment. It was navigating the complex insurance procedures.

While navigating the intricacies of insurance procedures presented a significant hurdle, it didn't dampen their resolve.

The journey travelled is a testament to the power of vision and dedication. Join them in rewriting the narrative of healthcare, one heartbeat at a time.

For Sagisengo, the journey is still long, having started with general clinic, they now work with different medical insurance companies, RSSB and in progress to also work with the Military Medical Insurance (MMI).

With a team of qualified professionals at the helm, Yahshua Medical Clinics ensures accurate diagnoses and effective treatment plans for every patient.

Recognizing the immense challenges many mothers face in Nyagatare, Yahshua Medical Clinics is boldly embarking on an exciting expansion to offer comprehensive healthcare services.

Soon, management points out that mothers will have access to everything under one roof: prenatal care, maternity facilities equipped with modern technology, dedicated midwives, and even on-site CT scans and X-rays.

This expansion promises a complete spectrum of care at the clinic, ensuring mothers and newborns receive a seamless and



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".....
Recognizing the immense challenges many mothers face in Nyagatare, Yanshuwe Medical Clinics is boldly embarking on an exciting expansion to offer comprehensive healthcare services.
....."





Model Farmer John Mujarugamba ventures into service sector

BY INNOCENT CAMARADE

John Mujarugamba is a name synonymous with agricultural innovation in Nyagatare District and is more than just a farmer. He's visionary, a community pillar, and a testament to the transformative power of perseverance.

His journey started after returning to his motherland following the liberation of the country and fell in love with Nyagatare, at the time the region had barely nothing but a big farming potential.

His success in farming ignited business ideas and he established Mujarugamba

Business and Trading Company (MBTC). His entrepreneurial story spurns into farming hospitality and service sector.

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Mujarugamba believes in the district's potential, his ambitions extend far beyond hospitality and is a firm believer in the power of agriculture to drive economic growth and social well-being.
.....

MBTC operates a popular motel an restaurant in the centre of Nyagatare city. Traveling to Nyagatare, very few people can miss the popular restaurant with delicious African dishes.

Mujarugamba believes in the district's potential, his ambitions extend far beyond hospitality and is a firm believer in the power of agriculture to drive economic growth and social well-being.

His love for cattle farming runs deep, stemming from his family's generations-old tradition. He sees livestock not just as a source of livelihood, but a key player in the ecosystem. From providing milk or meat for consumption, manure as fertilizers, hides and horns for fashion design, every part holds value.

"Cattle means wealth," he observes, "if you take care of your livestock farm properly. It's like any other investment which can earn you good proceeds."

The Rwandan government recognizes the crucial role





can provide much-needed support to farmers like him, who are crucial partners in food security and economic development.

But challenges never deter Mujyarugamba, "I plan to expand my agricultural ventures to create more jobs, and to continue playing a key role in Nyagatare's development."

of individual farmers in development, Mujyarugamba is a living example. He owns a thriving farm in Tabagwe of Nyagatare District, selling milk, growing crops like maize and rice as well as animal feeds.

Macadamia, a high value crop known for its delicious flavour and nutritional value is among the crops Mujyarugamba grows on 2ha.

His banana plantation further diversifies his agricultural portfolio and the journey is far from over. He has come a long way, and his dreams remain ambitious.

Referring to his own ongoing farm expansion, he is building a silo to facilitate storage of hay, an expensive venture estimated at over Rwf 32million and is growing fodder on 5 hector piece of land.

The livestock farm is also undergoing construction of kraal that can accommodate at least 200 heads of cattle, at a cost of over Rwf 68 million, an already costly venture that will also require more investment into machinery.

Mujyarugamba's commitment extends beyond his own farm.

.....
"Cattle means wealth," he observes, "if you take care of your livestock farm properly. It's like any other investment which can earn you good proceeds."

He employs over 50 workers, who grow, chop the fodder, feed the cattle and provides them with a steady income thus contributing to the local economy.

However, there are challenges inherent in farming, the high cost of agricultural inputs, access to stable markets, storage or paddock construction, requires significant investments.

As a suggestion, he believes more government intervention

In collaboration with other farmers, they work closely with the local authorities to ensure development and support communities. MBTC has contributed in uplifting vulnerable communities such as support to building of houses or contributions to medical insurance schemes.

Mujyarugamba is not just an entrepreneur but a model farmer, a symbol of hope and progress, paving the way for a brighter future of his community and the nation in general.



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MBTC operates a popular motel and restaurant in the centre of Nyagatare city. Travelling to Nyagatare, very few people can miss the popular restaurant with delicious African dishes.



From humble beginnings to household name: The Rise of Tebuka Bakery

BY INNOCENT CAMARADE

Forget gleaming kitchens, Tebuka's story starts on village streets. Taking over from his father in 2003, Cleophas Nsazimana the man behind the magic, saw not just a business, but a canvas for innovation.

Initially, the company pedaled warm loaves in wicker wooden boxes. His ovens were makeshift, and he faced plenty of challenges, but he put his heart into every bake.

Today, under his leadership, the bread company has blossomed,



its aroma wafting beyond Nyagatare district, reaching towns and districts across Rwanda.

But Nsazimana never forgot his roots. Young hands in the community learned to bake, and the Tebuka bakery became a community beacon in the Eastern Province of Rwanda.

Presently, Tebuka Company stands tall, a symphony of flavors. Beyond bread, the company's ovens birth flaky pastries, wholesome cereals, and decadent cakes in different shapes, structures and at affordable prices, catering to every craving.

But the heart remains: community, tradition, and the belief that a shared loaf rises to something extraordinary.

With flour-dusted cheeks and a smile in his bakery, Nsazimana encourages bakers to embrace their stumbles and move on to a bigger, better loaf if they don't give up. His philosophy is simple: dedication, focus, and a sprinkle of unwavering belief.



just sustenance but a sense of normalcy, a reminder of shared comfort in the face of hardship.

“The company was our lifeline during the lockdown,” says John Nsabimana, a father of three. “They kept their doors open, they helped the community in need and their bread kept our spirits high. It was a small comfort, but it meant the world to us during the pandemic,” notes Nsabimana.

Nsabimana acknowledges the government’s role in his success. He says that the RPF government transformed the landscape, most of Nyagatare once a national park but was given to the community, now it has provided space for Tebuka’s growth.

“They built the infrastructure like roads which we use for distribution. We also have available utilities like water and electricity which keep the oven humming. The district also offered us trainings to hone our skills as bakers, ensuring consistent quality” he points out.

The company’s commitment to the community runs deep. Tebuka employs local talent, offering not just jobs but skills and a sense of belonging.

The flour is sourced within Kigali’s Gasabo district, supporting local transport companies and weaving their success into the regional fabric.

“The first time I bit into Tebuka bread, it was like a burst of sunshine,” “The crust crackles, the inside is soft, and the flavor... It’s like nothing I had ever tasted before.” says local resident Marie Mukamwezi in Nyagatare district.

“Tebuka is more than bread,” he beams. “It’s about rising together.” And as long as the ovens stay warm and hearts open, Tebuka will continue to be a household hero, one delicious bite at a time.

Tebuka’s magic lies not only in its time-honored recipe, but also in the whispers of improvement passed down from generation to generation.

The bakery has built a distribution system that serves as the backbone of the wholesale bakery business, ensuring that freshly baked goods reach distributors, retailers, and consumers in a

timely and efficient manner.

“The first time I bit into Tebuka bread, it was like a burst of sunshine,” says local resident Marie Mukamwezi in Nyagatare district. “The crust crackles, the inside is soft, and the flavor... It’s like nothing I had ever tasted before. Most importantly, the package is good and my children love it.”

Tebuka’s impact extends beyond the taste buds. During the Covid-19 storm, when fear and uncertainty swirled, the bakery became a beacon of hope. The company kept their ovens roaring, providing not





BRIGHT ACADEMY

ILLUMINATING THE FUTURE OF RWANDA



Following the harrowing aftermath of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, Rwanda encountered an immense challenge.

Schools stood vacant, classrooms resonating with the silence left by educators who had fled, perished, or were incapacitated by trauma.

Amidst the trials facing the public education system in the post-war era, private schools emerged as beacons of hope. Forward-thinking Rwandans embarked on establishing educational institutions to broaden access to learning.

It was within this context of a nation in recovery that Bright Academy, a private day and boarding school, emerged in Nyagatare in 1996. Driven by a determination to rebuild, Bright Academy commenced its journey as a modest coaching center.

The school was initially founded by Emmanuel Saruhara, who served as the Legal representative. Following his tenure, the mantle was passed

on to Dr. Amos Mugisha, the current Legal representative, with his partner Claude Niyitanga. Under their stewardship, Bright Academy has continued its mission of providing quality education and shaping the future of Rwanda.

The two educators, Dr. Mugisha and Niyitanga, jointly manage different sections of Bright Academy. Dr. Mugisha oversees the Day Care to O-Level sections, while Niyitanga is responsible for TVET.

Solomon Bukenya, the School Principal elucidates the vision of Bright Academy: "To prepare

.....
Amidst the trials facing the public education system in the post-war era, private schools emerged as beacons of hope. Forward-thinking Rwandans embarked on establishing educational institutions to broaden access to learning.

children to pursue their aspirations and contribute to the world for God's Glory."

Bright Academy runs on a foundation of Seventh Day Adventist.

Over the years, Bright Academy has metamorphosed into a bastion for nurturing young intellects. Presently, the school provides a comprehensive educational journey spanning daycare, nursery, primary, O-level, A-level, and TVET programs, supplemented by a boarding section for Secondary, TVET or Short courses.

TVET programs bear trades like Multimedia production, Software development, Masonry-Building construction and Automobile Technology.

Through this holistic approach, students not only acquire academic proficiency but also cultivate practical skills and ethical principles.

With unwavering dedication to excellence, Bright Academy has consistently delivered high-

Solomon Bukenya, the Principal - Bright Academy



EDUCATION



administration acknowledges the influence of the surrounding environment, emphasizing their dedication to shaping students into “better people” despite external factors.

Bukenya reaffirms this dedication, stating, “As a school, we embrace students from diverse backgrounds and behaviors. Our commitment is to foster their holistic development, notwithstanding the external milieu.”

Bright Academy takes pride in its role in Nyagatare’s developmental trajectory, actively contributing to the district’s academic prowess through initiatives such as “Imihigo” (performance contracts).

Furthermore, the school fosters a sense of community by engaging former students and collaborating with local institutions. Beyond academics, Bright Academy champions sports participation, exemplified by its involvement in events like the Kagame Cup, underscoring its commitment to nurturing talents and fostering positive character traits.

Acknowledging the pivotal role of the Government of Rwanda, the school administration underscores the significance of creating an enabling environment for private-public collaboration in the country’s socio-economic advancement.

They express profound gratitude for the substantial support received from the government through the district, attributing a significant portion of their success to this fruitful partnership.



quality education, molding the minds of countless students. This commitment is evidenced by its perennial ranking among the nation’s top schools and remarkable achievements, such as a student securing the top position in national examinations in 2012.

“We believe that every student is capable of success. Through devotion and extracurricular activities, we guide them on a transformative journey,” proudly asserts the Principal.

Bukenya underscores Bright Academy’s preparation of students to compete on a national scale,

including in the capital city, Kigali. He emphasizes that prioritizing quality education is paramount, as it serves as the cornerstone of success. With inclusivity at its core, the school offers affordable access to premium education, empowering students from diverse backgrounds to emerge as future leaders.

The school’s journey hasn’t been without challenges. The

“We believe that every student is capable of success. Through devotion and extracurricular activities, we guide them on a transformative journey,” proudly asserts the Principal.





SEEDS OF HOPE: CO-DERVAM COOPERATIVE THRIVED AGAINST ALL ODDS

BY JEJJE MUHINDE

Born in 1987 with a handful of members cultivating small plots, CO-DERVAM Cooperative in Nyagatare District has defied the odds.

Today, it boasts over 1,350 members tilling 400 hectares, a symbol of their unwavering spirit and strategic vision.

CO-DERVAM's journey wasn't always easy. Early years were marred by crippling debt, fueled by poor management and unprofitable investments.

Aisha Umurerwa, the Manager of CO-DERVAM recalls the dark days marked with disorganization and then came the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. These difficulties with meager harvests plunged the cooperative into deep waters, leaving a staggering Rwf.400 million debt in its wake.



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Amidst the challenges, a lifeline emerged from government support. The allocation of additional land fueled a surge in production, while a dedicated network of management experts provided crucial guidance.
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Amidst the challenges, a lifeline emerged from government support. The allocation of additional land fueled a surge in production, while a dedicated network of management experts provided crucial guidance.

This potent combination empowered CO-DERVAM not only to survive but thrive, laying the groundwork for a future brimming with possibilities. Notably, debt relief eased financial pressure, allowing the cooperative to focus on growth.

Refusing to be cowed, members implemented a lean inventory system, slashing waste and

increasing rice production. Regular community meetings fostered unity, culminating in successful debt-reduction initiatives. Shared burdens and unwavering purpose paved the path from despair to triumph.

As if that was not enough, financial recovery began with a crucial step: a six-month budget crafted in 2012. Identifying financial missteps, ineffective management, and the limitations of manual labor and unreliable irrigation as their Achilles' heels, they embarked on a comprehensive restructuring.

"Preserving the legacy of 'CO-DERVAM' became a rallying cry," Umurerwa notes. Drawing strength from their past successes, they chartered a course towards financial stability and diversification.

She affirms that their collective efforts shine through exciting projects, members have pooled savings which now totals over Rwf.87 million.

Recognizing the importance of health, the cooperative pays health insurance for all members, ensuring access to medical care. Members are also extended support during difficult times when they lose a member or family members





in the past, CO-DERVA is now poised for a significant leap forward with the construction of its own state-of-the-art rice factory.

Internally, the management operates efficiently with a core team of seven permanent employees supported by additional personnel. Centralized operations, including partnerships with financial institutions, ensure smooth payment processes for farmers.

Looking ahead, CO-DERVA plans to further change its role as a community pillar. Initiatives like tackling teen pregnancies and constructing a hotel in the Nyagatare district showcase their dedication to holistic development.

Through determination the cooperative has written a new chapter. It has set an innovative approach, including planned separation of rice farming from other ventures for dedicated management, which promises to pave way for long-term success and inspire others to follow their resilient path.

The Manager credits this resilience to a culture of respect for the board's decisions. "Our governance structure is transparent and democratic, where members' voices are heard. As a result of this, trust is fostered and decisions are based on well informed choices."

Planting the seeds of tomorrow, CO-DERVA cultivates a legacy of resilience and togetherness, planting seeds of inspiration that will continue to blossom for generations to come.



into the business by building a gas station. This strategic move not only generates additional income but also strengthens local presence and plays a role in development of the area.

CO-DERVA's commitment extends beyond profit. They make high-quality rice accessible to community selling at Rwf.1,500 per kg, significantly this is lower than local market rates countrywide.

Community development is becoming part of this cooperative, by venturing into the agro-industry, focusing on fruit cultivation and other agricultural activities, these efforts are run through a partnership with the district.

And the future promises even greater strides. Working with a lower capacity processing facility

and also support with burial expenses.

Beyond that, in partnership with the Rwanda Agriculture Board (RAB), the cooperative now produces basic rice seeds for other farmers, playing a vital role in the rice ecosystem.

With new investments, the cooperative has diversified and some of these include venturing

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FROM WAITER TO HOTELIER: HABERA'S JOURNEY IN RWANDA'S TOURISM INDUSTRY



BY JEJJE MUHINDE

Imagine a lone seed, cradled in the cracked earth of a war-torn landscape pushing tenaciously through hardened soil but fueled by the sun's warmth and the promise of rain, it grows.

Like the seed, Telesphore Habera from a young age, nurtured a dream amidst challenges. Held within him was the unwavering potential for growth and resilience.

His journey began not in fertile fields, but in the bustling hospitality halls of Burundi and Uganda. Each experience, from the polished halls of Novotel Hotel in Burundi to the vibrant Sheraton Hotel in Kampala, was like a nourishing drop of water, germinating his skills and his vision.

Reclaiming his roots and ready to walk the journey to his dreams, Habera returned to his homeland, Rwanda following the liberation of the country.

His initial steps were tentative, like a young sprout testing the winds. He started small, renting

people's houses to establish his business, "Demi Sheraton," a name echoing his aspirations. Yet, the Rwandan soil, though scarred, held untold potential. Local authorities, recognizing this potential, provided him with land, fertile ground for his dream to truly take root and flourish.

But the journey wasn't without its thorns. Doubts, like harsh winds, threatened to uproot his resolve. Yet, Habera persevered, his determination echoing the seed's unyielding grip on the earth.

As Nyagatare transformed, so did his vision. Today, Demi Sheraton stands tall, its an ambiance restaurant and bar, with its fragrant garden and lively terrace, welcomes guests like a haven of shade and sustenance. The comfortable rooms, equipped with modern amenities,

offer a peaceful respite, a sanctuary from the outside world.

Habera's commitment extends beyond providing mere shelter. He holds a valid tourism operating license by Rwanda Development Board (RDB), ensuring safety and quality, like a seed carefully nurtured to blossom into a healthy plant.

Like a sunlight, this establishment collaborates with others, fostering fair competition and growth within the industry. It has even branched out, establishing an outside catering department, offering specialized dishes beyond the hotel walls, like a seed dispersing its pollen, spreading its influence.

Infrastructure development in Nyagatare, like improved roads and access to water, has further



Today, Demi Sheraton stands tall, its an ambiance restaurant and bar, with its fragrant garden and lively terrace, welcomes guests like a haven of shade and sustenance.



HOSPITALITY



seeking guidance and support from local authorities and private sector organizations.

Habera's commitment to the community extends beyond hiring local youth. He sources his hotel requirements like meat and milk from Nyagatare farms, his roots intertwined with the local soil, fostering its growth and prosperity.

"You just have to be prepared for these challenges," Habera says, "It doesn't mean you should give up. Having the district authorities and the Private Sector Federation closer and in touch is very important because they guide us on how we can go about our business." he adds.

Telese Habera's story is not just about building a hotel; It's a story of a seed that weathered harsh conditions to thrive into a vibrant symbol of hope and possibility.

His journey serves as an inspiration to all who dare to dream and, like him, plant their own seeds of hope in even the most challenging landscapes.





East African University Rwanda: Cultivating Knowledge, Character and Opportunity

The East African University Rwanda operates Nyagatare and Remera (Kigali) campuses.

BY STEVEN NSAMAZA

Before 2015, students in Eastern Rwanda seeking a higher education option had to look beyond their region. This changed when East African University Rwanda (EAUR) opened its doors in Nyagatare, becoming the first private university in the area.

Driven by a vision to invest in the region's development, EAUR meticulously crafted courses and programs designed to empower graduates to contribute meaningfully to sustainable progress.

This pioneering initiative was spearheaded by education professionals, led by Prof. Badru D. Kateregga, an esteemed academic and trailblazing entrepreneur with family roots in Nyagatare.

Considering that any form of development depends on education, the entrance of EAUR to Nyagatare brought enthusiasm for a new era of development.

Prof. Callixte Kabera, the Vice Chancellor of EAUR observes that the university's genesis is a desire to invest in and catalyze the development of Nyagatare District.

Recognizing the evolving needs of the labor market, EAUR carefully formulated courses and programs designed to empower graduates to contribute meaningfully to sustainable development.

According to Prof. Kabera, they introduced practical studies and programs that were most needed in Nyagatare District and throughout the Eastern Province.





“EAUR campuses will be housed in their own state-of-the-art buildings.”

BUILDING A HUB FOR APPLIED SCIENCES:

EAUR is steadfastly building a university focused on applied sciences. Its programs are designed to equip students with practical skills needed to tackle real-world challenges within their communities. This hands-on approach ensures graduates are prepared to contribute to problem-solving and development upon graduation.

The programs have direct close ties to the industry and services the labour market, ensuring their relevance and value. Students from the university are already serving the labour market with graduates from the Faculty of Leisure, Tourism & Hotel Management contributing their expertise to popular hospitality establishments in Nyagatare.

In Nyagatare city centre, a popular restaurant which welcomes everyone is operated by the university through the faculty of Leisure, Tourism & Hotel Management. At the Kigali campus, another restaurant has been established and is dedicated to offering superb services.

Furthermore, the university offers a workshop for students in Industrial Art & Design, where



The university started with six broad faculties including; Faculty of Education, Faculty of Business Administration, Faculty of Mass Communication, Faculty of Film Making & Production, Faculty of Industrial Art & Design and the Faculty of Leisure, Tourism & Hotel Management.

The university's programs were deliberately designed to include pioneering offerings not available elsewhere in the country, aiming to diversify the economy and create new off-farm job opportunities.

AMBITIOUS AND THIRSTY FOR KNOWLEDGE

Born out of dreams, aspirations and the desire to expand university education in the region, the East African University brand operates and connects through 'BDK Network' named after the co-founder 'Badru Dunga Kateregga'.

First, Prof. Kateregga co-founded Kampala University in Uganda in February 1998, The East African University (TEAU) in Kenya followed in 2005 and later EAUR, opening the first campus in Nyagatare and expanding with another campus in Kigali in 2021. There are plans in the pipeline to take the university to Tanzania.

The BDK Network is a strategic initiative to share resources among universities like the library and research among other things.

Prof. Kabera has announced exciting news of establishing another campus in Rusizi, South-western Rwanda. Additionally, EAUR is undertaking significant infrastructure development at its existing two campuses. Land has been secured in Nyagatare's Mugiporoso area, and similar efforts are underway in Kigali.

By 2026, Prof. Kabera affirmed,

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Prof. Kabera has announced exciting news of establishing another campus in Rusizi, South-western Rwanda. Additionally, EAUR is undertaking significant infrastructure development at its existing two campuses.



EDUCATION

they hone their skills and unleash their creativity, producing unique chairs, traditional art, and Rwandan-made clothing for sale.

Mass communication graduates and students are actively engaged in the media sector, working with local stations and online platforms.

Ines Girihirwe, a film student at EAUR enthusiastically shared, "There are so many amazing things about my time at EAUR, like the incredible knowledge of our lecturers. The challenges, like using a camera for the first time, were also exciting and rewarding. Independence at university allows me to focus on my studies, and the lecturers are always available to answer questions."

To support students throughout their academic journey, the university offers a dedicated career development center. This center helps students chart their course, guiding them in choosing appropriate programs and navigating their education, career, and personal development, ultimately preparing them for success in the global workforce.

OPEN DOORS AND CONTINUOUS GROWTH

Recognizing the value of accessibility, EAUR offers convenient admission intakes three times a year: January, May, and September, allowing students to choose the option that best suits their needs.

The university continues to attract students from across the country and the region, with its current enrollment exceeding 2,500.

Approximately 1,200 students study at Nyagatare Campus



while Kigali boasts over 1,300 students. The university's alumni is also growing with more than 2,000 and the university is preparing for its 5th graduation in May 2024.

In academia, EAUR relates well with local universities, regional higher learning institutions and the Vice Chancellor of EAUR is the current Chair of the East African University Council which brings together 145 universities.

Prof. Kabera emphasizes a role they have to play as a higher institution of learning to undertake bridging and narrowing the gap between academia and industry. He notes that EAUR fits well with the country's broader development agenda of building a knowledge-based economy.

VISION

Our Vision is to become a

leading academic institution of higher learning of first choice in the provision of relevant vocational skills, professionalism and affordable market oriented quality education for sustaining professionals in their various fields.

MISSION

To transmit quality knowledge and skills, conduct research, and provide community service to the region and the world at large.

EAUR CORE VALUES

- Excellence,
- Integrity,
- Professionalism,
- Teamwork,
- Diversity,
- Leadership,
- Responsibility and
- Innovation to guide the promotion of student learning and success.

OUR CAMPUSES

1. NYAGATARE CAMPUS
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+250 782 310 262
2. KIGALI CAMPUS
Gisimenti KG17 Ave,
Near Airtel headquarters
+250 786 976 616
Email: infos@eur.ac.rw
Website: www.eaur.ac.rw

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Rwanda's Cycling Triumph: Beyond the Finish Line

The cheers have faded, but the echoes of the 16th edition of Tour du Rwanda, concluded on February 25th, 2024, continue to resonate, celebrating Rwanda's spirit, talent, and potential.

While Joseph Blackmore's victory secured his place in cycling history, the true impact extends far beyond the podium. Rwandan riders like Eric Manizabayo and Dawit Yemane impressed, showcasing the nation's rising talent.

"The Tour du Rwanda is not just about the competition; it's about showcasing our talent, our beauty, and our spirit to the world," said Samson Ndayishimiye, President of Rwanda National Cycling Federation.

With breathtaking landscapes serving as the backdrop, the

Tour wasn't just a sporting event; it was a visual journey for both participants and viewers, fostering tourism and showcasing Rwanda's diverse beauty.

The event also generated economic benefits, with local businesses like hotels, transportation services, restaurants experiencing a surge in activity. Spectators lined the streets, cheering for riders and creating a sense of shared passion that transcended age, ethnicity, and background.

According to reports, Tour du Rwanda 2024 cost Rwf1.2 billion, with government contribution covering 40% and sponsorships 60%.

More importantly, the Tour fostered a spirit of unity, bringing together people from all walks of life in



their shared passion for cycling. While celebrating the present, the event serves as a springboard for the future.

Rwanda's ambition to become a global cycling hub is fueled by initiatives like youth development programs and infrastructure improvements. By investing in the next generation and creating a supportive environment, Rwanda can solidify its position on the world cycling map.

Tour du Rwanda is not just a sporting event; it now showcases the nation's beauty to the world, unites its people, and lays the foundation for a brighter future in the world of cycling.

As the echoes of the race fade, the lasting impact of the Tour continues to inspire and propel the nation forward.

"The Tour du Rwanda is not just about the competition; it's about showcasing our talent, our beauty, and our spirit to the world."



Partnerships: A Key to Local Clubs' Financial Future and Success

Rwandan football is brimming with potential! Picture passionate fans cheering, talented players scoring goals, and the entire country dreaming of big wins.

However, a significant hurdle exists: some clubs

are grappling with financial difficulties, experiencing frequent leadership turnovers, and are confined to outdated operational methods.

To many observers, these challenges are hindering the

“The Tour du Rwanda is not just about the competition; it’s about showcasing our talent, our beauty, and our spirit to the world.”

advancement of Rwandan football. The absence of diversified ownership models is stifling progress. It is imperative to transcend mere adjustments to ownership structures and instead adopt a multi-faceted approach for sustainable success.



Even big clubs like Kiyovu SC face these issues. Remember last September, Kiyovu Sports president Juvenal Mvukiyehe resigned from his position citing personal reasons. Since then, it has been a roller coaster.

Well, members of SC Kiyovu then elected Jean François Regis Ndorimana for a new three-year term as club president, however that has not changed anything, the club is struggling to even pay staff.

Head coach Petros Koukouras mutually agreed with the team to leave the club after

only five months in order to relieve the budget from his contract due to the financial problems the club is facing this season.

For most local clubs, a change of leadership has always created a sense of unease and vulnerability about job security and fair treatment during difficult financial times.

These changes at the top of football clubs make it hard to plan for the future, and they have made it hard for teams like Kiyovu Sports.

What this has shown is that

relying only on fan ownership isn't always the answer, especially when money is tight.

Instead of just arguing about who owns the clubs, Rwandan local football clubs need to change course to fix everything that's wrong. Sure, finding good owners is important, but that's not enough.

Clubs like Kiyovu SC, Bugesera FC, Amagaju, Sunrise, and Musanze FC who rely on district funding face a dual challenge.

Relying solely on district funding is a recipe for financial vulnerability, as evidenced by Kiyovu SC's current struggles. This is the reason why most of these local clubs end up in huge debts. Embracing diversified ownership models offers a pathway towards financial stability.

Imagine Rayon Sports FC with fans cheering alongside partners like Skol as a stakeholder, while smart investors help build world-class facilities and attract talented players.

This is the future Rwandan football deserves – a future where passion, vision, and strategic partnerships

propel the country's clubs to continental glory.

Additionally, expanding on the benefits of fan co-ownership explains how fan investment provides a financial buffer, local knowledge, and marketing potential.

The other key point is that collaborating with socially conscious businesses like Skol as stakeholder in the club, isn't just about financial support. It can create a partnership aligned with strong values and opens doors to new networks, fostering long-term growth.

The third point is that, apart from Rayon, others clubs like Kiyovu, Sunrise FC to mention but a few can carefully choose local or international investors that can bring capital and business expertise to the table.

Today, the world of sports is witnessing a surge in celebrity ownership and investment, with figures like LeBron James actively participating in both American and international soccer teams.

Similarly, Rwandan singer-songwriter Bruce Melodie recently secured an investment in the UGB

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basketball team, demonstrating the growing trend of local celebrities contributing to the sports landscape.

Leveraging the expertise of co-ownership can unlock strategic investments in infrastructure development, player acquisition, and other key areas.

This synergistic approach can lead to improved facilities, attracting higher-caliber players, and ultimately, increased competitiveness on both the domestic and continental stages.

Remember what happened to Tanzania's Simba FC? They got a strong leader, invested wisely, and now they're doing great! Rwandan clubs can do the same.

Tanzania's richest man, Mohammed Dewji, made a \$10 million bid to acquire a controlling stake of at least 51% in Simba SC, today, it is one of the most successful soccer clubs in the Tanzanian Premier League.

Simba hires high quality players and they've invested in key infrastructure – including a \$2.5 million modern Simba SC stadium and training ground in Bunju, located on the outskirts of Dar es Salaam.

Private ownership often leads to the appointment of professional management with expertise in the sports



industry. This has brought greater efficiency, strategic planning, and business acumen to Simba's operations.

Well, clubs like APR FC or Police FC have the resources, they have been successful because they receive funding from institutions like the army or police. However, they too face drawbacks.

This can be seen in the reduced fan and community influence over the club's decision-making processes and priorities. They face uncertainty in the future like

ownership changes, or management reshuffles.

Don't let anyone tell you there's just one solution. Fixing club football takes teamwork! Fans, leaders, investors, and everyone in between needs to work together.

By doing this, Rwandan football clubs can make sure they have good leaders, enough money, and happy fans. This will lead to Rwandan football shining on the big stage!



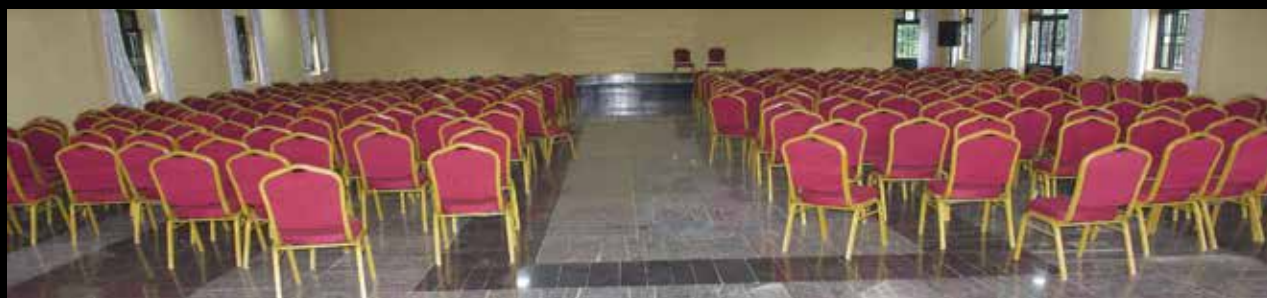
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