

AJPRODHO-JIJUKIRWA, a youth-focused NGO, is helping Rwandan graduates transition from internships to full-time employment by strengthening workplace learning systems.

The initiative, launched on Friday in collaboration with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and Never Again Rwanda, brings together government officials, private sector representatives, academics, civil society actors, and development partners.

The committee aims to address long-standing challenges in internships and apprenticeships, including limited opportunities, under-equipped companies, insufficient mentorship, and a lack of standardized programs. By aligning workplace learning with labor market needs, the initiative seeks to equip graduates with practical skills recognized through the National Skills Training Policy (NST2).

“Strengthening workplace learning is key to ensuring inclusive employability in Rwanda,” said Julius Kwizera, Executive Secretary of AJPRODHO-JIJUKIRWA. “It allows young graduates, including persons with disabilities, to gain relevant skills and transition smoothly into the workforce. By coordinating government, private sector, and civil society efforts, we can bridge the gap between education and employment and contribute to Vision 2030.”

Kwizera emphasized the importance of partnerships. “Working with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and Never Again Rwanda ensures that our interventions are strategic, inclusive, and sustainable. Together, we can create a system that benefits all youth and strengthens Rwanda’s labor market,” he said.

Gihoza Marie Claire, a recent graduate, joined CND Industries on an internship while continuing her studies. She now works full-time and trains other students about internship opportunities. “This program allowed me to gain experience while continuing my education and eventually secure employment,” she said.

Innocent Ndayisenga, another beneficiary, said, “It’s not easy to find internships, and I am grateful to CND for giving me this chance.”

Companies are seeing benefits too. Richard Rukuundo, Human Resource Manager at CND Industries, said the committee will help coordinate efforts to build a skilled workforce. “By including youth and persons with disabilities, we strengthen our workforce and contribute to national growth,” he said.

AJPRODHO-JJUKIRWA has long promoted youth empowerment through enterprise development, life skills training, and policy advocacy, influencing government policies such as restoring scholarships, reversing increased court fees, and improving gender-based violence community mechanisms.

The technical committee will develop a roadmap, define roles and responsibilities, and foster collaboration among stakeholders to make workplace learning programs accessible, inclusive, and aligned with Rwanda's economic priorities.

Through this initiative, AJPRODHO-JJUKIRWA aims to make internships a reliable stepping stone to employment and sustainable growth for Rwanda's youth.