

In 2015, Mukantwali Pascaline's aspirations of completing her education were abruptly halted when she dropped out in Senior Two. At just 21 years old, she faced formidable challenges as a young mother of three in Gatsibo District. With no formal qualifications, subsistence farming, growing maize and beans for survival, was her only option. Yet, seven years later, Pascaline has transformed into a thriving agripreneur, thanks to an opportunity that changed her life.

In 2022, her life took a remarkable turn when she joined the "Future is Green! Promoting Youth Agri-Preneurship in Rwanda" project. This initiative provided entrepreneurship training and modern agricultural techniques, equipping young people with the skills needed to succeed in today's labour market.

"I received technical training in both livestock and agricultural farming," Pascaline explained. "I was selected because of my visible efforts to cultivate vegetables. The training helped me transition from subsistence farming to agripreneurship through modern agricultural practices."



Mukantwali owns two pieces of land, each measuring 30 by 25 meters. To further expand her agribusiness, she leases two additional plots of land

Although initially hesitant, Mukantwali's determination, coupled with family support and encouragement from her community, propelled her forward. Today, she owns two plots of land, purchased at Rwf 500,000 and Rwf 450,000, respectively. She also leases two additional plots, one located near a swamp for vegetable cultivation using reliable irrigation, and another for maize farming, significantly boosting her yields.

In addition to farming, Mukantwali demonstrates exceptional financial management skills, saving Rwf 15,000 weekly after meeting her family's needs. Her entrepreneurial efforts yield substantial returns, with an expected seasonal income of Rwf 700,000.

Mukantwali has also become a mentor, guiding over 10 young people in cultivating demonstration gardens, sharing her knowledge, and inspiring them to launch their own agribusinesses.

Across Gatsibo District, numerous young people are benefiting from hands-on training in modern farming techniques, such as efficient fertiliser use and irrigation.

They have also gained insights into value chain management, labour market dynamics, safeguarding practices, and the prevention of abuse, positioning themselves for a brighter future.

Emmanuel Munyabugingo, 29, is another testament to the project's transformative power. Despite being visually impaired, he has shown remarkable resilience and determination. After earning his secondary school diploma, he struggled to find work, battling a lack of confidence stemming from his disability. However, training in agripreneurship gave him the skills and confidence to improve his livelihood and mentor others.

"I learnt modern farming techniques, agribusiness, and financial management, enabling me to maximise the benefits of each season," Emmanuel said. "Previously, I practised basic farming, growing crops like beans and maize together, which led to low yields. With the training, I now properly space maize plants, optimise fertiliser use, and employ the correct pesticides to care for crops like tomatoes."



Despite his visual impairment, Munyabugingo Emmanuel, was trained in modern farming techniques, agribusiness, and finance by the Future is Green project

Munyabugingo's efforts have yielded impressive results. He now grows a variety of crops, including maize, beans, vegetables such as cabbages, carrots, and tomatoes, as well as fruits. Leasing land remains a challenge, but the skills acquired through the project have significantly improved his quality of life.

During the harvest season, Munyabugingo collects over 400 kilograms of maize and anticipates earning more than Rwf 500,000 from vegetable sales. He attributes his success to meticulous planning and preparation. Acknowledging the impact of climate change, Emmanuel employs drip irrigation during dry periods and adopts soil erosion control measures, such as terracing and tree planting, during the rainy season.

"Despite my impairment, this project gave me the opportunity to thrive. Empowering more youth in agriculture can play a significant role in addressing food security challenges. Agriculture has the potential to supply both local and international markets," Emmanuel emphasised. He added that youth-oriented initiatives should equip participants with the skills to create opportunities rather than rely on external support.

The “Future is Green! Promoting Youth Agri-Preneurship in Rwanda” project, implemented by Plan International Rwanda in partnership with African Evangelistic Enterprise (AEE) and Inkomoko Entrepreneur Development, was launched in 2022. Operating across Nyaruguru, Bugesera, and Gatsibo Districts, it has engaged over 1,009 youth, including 336 in Gatsibo. Each Agent of Change mentors 13 to 15 young people, delivering training in modern agriculture and entrepreneurship.

The project has collaborated with 10 technical vocational education centres and 10 farmers’ cooperatives, prioritising gender-inclusive approaches, with 60% female and 40% male participation. It aims to empower and economically integrate rural youth, especially young women, into the world of agriculture, working with local services to provide and improve market-driven agriculture and entrepreneurship training, that is gender-responsive and youth-friendly, and creates opportunities for youth employment.