

The European Union (EU) has committed €40 million (Rwf67.8 billion) to support Rwanda's efforts to develop climate-resilient agriculture, as the country seeks to improve farm productivity and protect food production from the effects of changing weather patterns.

The financing agreement, signed on Tuesday by Rwanda's Finance and Economic Planning Minister Yusuf Murangwa and EU Ambassador to Rwanda Belén Calvo Uyarra, will fund the second phase of the Climate-Smart Agriculture Budget Support Programme.

The programme aims to strengthen agricultural policies, improve institutional capacity and expand climate adaptation measures designed to benefit farmers, rural communities and future generations.

"Through this programme we are further strengthening our partnership in addressing climate change and supporting our shared goals of advancing climate-related initiatives and the agricultural sector," Calvo Uyarra said.

She said the initiative reflected the EU's confidence in Rwanda's National Strategy for Transformation (NST) and its commitment to supporting the country's development priorities.

Rwanda's agriculture sector has faced increasing pressure from climate-related challenges, including droughts that have affected production in parts of the Southern and Eastern provinces.

Agriculture Minister Dr. Telesphore Ndabamenye said the funding would help expand irrigation, increase yields and promote farming practices better suited to changing climate conditions.

"We need to increase agricultural productivity per hectare. Some districts have been affected by drought, so small-scale irrigation programmes need to be expanded," Ndabamenye said.

The project will support agricultural consolidation areas through measures such as soil conservation, erosion control, agroforestry, the use of climate-resilient seeds and tree varieties, as well as greater investment in research and innovation.

Rwanda has identified 13,379 agricultural consolidation areas across the country, covering more than 495,000 hectares. Each area has undergone an assessment of

farmers' needs, with agronomists assigned to provide technical support.

Ndabamenye said agricultural development must go hand in hand with environmental protection, calling for wider adoption of affordable irrigation systems, agroforestry and sustainable farming practices.

The agreement forms part of the EU's broader partnership with Rwanda under the 2021-2027 Multiannual Indicative Programme, through which the bloc has committed €390 million to support key areas including education, skills development, youth employment, green economic growth and governance.

The latest funding comes as Rwanda works to transform agriculture into a more productive and resilient sector while supporting the livelihoods of millions of people who depend on farming.