In 2014, Ernest Muragije officially launched Nezerwa Project Ltd to start making alcoholic beverages, strategically setting up a factory in Rusizi District to produce ginger flavoured drinks which became his signature product. This has gained ground in Rwanda and is exported to neighboring Bukavu in DRC and Burundi.

The geographical position of Rusizi District makes it one of the rare strategic regions of Rwanda.

In business the area has a big market potential both locally and as a neighbour to two countries to the west and south which are Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Burundi respectively.

Rusizi's potential in commerce includes the available market locally and the good road communication between the towns of Bukavu & Uvira (DRC) and Bujumbura (Burundi) as well good linkage through Lake Kivu, accessing Karongi and Rubavu towns in the North West of the country, and to Goma (DRC).

The strategic location of Rusizi is one the main reasons Ernest Muragije established Nezerwa Project in the district to tap into the local market as well as the export market to the neighboring countries.

According Muragije, the Chairman of Nezerwa Project, as an entrepreneur the district presented a business opportunity as a virgin region with availability of agricultural raw materials and wide market stretching beyond borders.

Muragije was equally inspired to be enterprising by the economic progress and development of Rwanda facilitated by visionary leadership. The political will of the country make investments thrive and gives confidence to young entrepreneurs.

Located 24 km from Rusizi city in Karenge, Rwimbogo Sector of Rusizi District, Nezerwa Project is developing the area at a rapid speed. The residents are employed and many now have a steady market for their produce.

Brewing Ginger Flavored Drinks

Nezerwa Project has a factory that makes different alcoholic beverages, practices

modern farming and owns a hospitality establishment, the only of its kind in the area, this includes a restaurant, bar and lodges.

The Chairman says that they choose to make the drinks because of the importance of ginger to people's health, the demand and the availability of agricultural the raw materials in Rusizi.

Nezerwa Project's premier product is INEZA 'Ginger Flavoured' drink that are in different packages like bottles of 750ml and 330ml as well as drinks in cans of 500ml. The latest drink is Ikara Wine made from sugarcanes that are abundant in Rusizi.

INEZA drinks are available countrywide with distribution outlets in Kigali and Rusizi. The factory currently produces 3,000 to 5,000 litres per day and has production capacity to produce more given the market demand.

Muragije explains that the factory has capacity to increase production but had scaled down due to the effects of Covid-19. He says that they are able to increase production depending on the market and they are ready to satisfy any demand.

When the factory started, as an agro processing unit it had waste materials that are used as fertilizers. This encouraged the founder to put this to use, thereby starting farming activities that would as well supplement in providing the factory with raw materials.

The farming activities have became very beneficial to the neighboring communities since most are farmers, Nezerwa Project introduced modern farming techniques and provided training to willing farmers to raise their productivity both in quantity and quality.

The neighboring community has not only benefited in improving agriculture but vulnerable families are given livestock by Nezerwa project (when they produce they are given to their neighbors), built houses for the vulnerable households, market for their produce and employment to the residents.

The development of Karenge has a lot to credit Nezerwa Project, the area had no

hospitality services until it was established and anyone who wanted to go out or stay a night had to travel to Rusizi city.

Muragije notes that they have a vision to develop the place as much as it has its own potential but has limited means for some developments. The road to the area is still poor which requires the intervention of the district as the area can attract more tourists and investments.