

Nuclear technology is being considered for wider use in Rwanda, including agriculture, healthcare, food production and research, as the country moves to put its nuclear programme into practice.

State Minister for Infrastructure Armand Zingiro said Rwanda sees nuclear science and technology as an important part of its long-term development plans and is preparing the infrastructure and skills needed to use it in different sectors.

“Our nuclear energy programme has moved beyond the policy stage and we are now trying to put it into practice,” Zingiro said during the International Atomic Energy Agency’s 70th General Conference in Vienna, Austria.

He said the technology could help Rwanda increase energy supplies, improve healthcare, boost food production and strengthen research and industry under the country’s Vision 2050 development strategy.

The government expects the country to have a nuclear power plant generating electricity by 2030, while preparations are also focusing on the infrastructure and regulatory requirements needed for safe and sustainable use of nuclear technology.

An IAEA assessment of Rwanda’s preparedness has provided recommendations for the next phase of the programme, Zingiro said.

“The assessment gave us a picture of where Rwanda stands in building the infrastructure needed to begin using nuclear energy safely and sustainably,” he said.

From July 13 to 21, Rwanda hosted an IAEA review known as the Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review for Research Reactors. The review examined the country’s capacity to establish a proposed Centre for Nuclear Science and Technology, which is expected to cost \$500 million.

The centre is intended to support nuclear research, provide training and produce specialists who can help Rwanda develop and apply nuclear science and technology.

The nuclear programme comes as African countries face rising demand for energy. At the Vienna meeting, Zingiro called for practical measures to turn the continent’s interest in nuclear technology into projects.

Rwanda hosted the Nuclear Energy Innovation Summit for Africa, or NEISA 2026, in Kigali in May, bringing together discussions on nuclear innovation and Africa's energy needs.