

Prime Minister Justin Nsengiyumva has urged farmers to maintain irrigation infrastructure, warning that neglected facilities could reverse gains in agricultural productivity.

Nsengiyumva made the remarks on October 10 while meeting farmers in Nyarububa wetland in Rulindo District during activities marking the 2027A farming season.

He raised concerns over an irrigation system reportedly established through a Rwanda Social Security Board (RSSB) project but which farmers said was no longer functioning.

The Prime Minister urged farmers to work with relevant authorities to maintain the facilities, saying investments in agricultural infrastructure would have limited value if they were allowed to deteriorate.

“You told us that this wetland was developed by an RSSB project that provided you with irrigation facilities. But you also said the system was no longer working. How did it fall into disrepair?” he asked.

Nsengiyumva warned that losing access to irrigation could push farmers back to lower production levels, citing a comparison between yields of two tonnes and six tonnes per hectare.

“If such infrastructure is provided, we must all make an effort to ensure it does not fail. When it fails, we return to where we started, producing two tonnes per hectare when we had reached six,” he said.

Meanwhile, Agriculture and Animal Resources Minister Telesphore Ndabamenye joined farmers in Bugarama Sector, Rusizi District, for activities marking the same farming season.

Ndabamenye urged farmers to focus on increasing yields from existing farmland rather than expanding cultivated areas, citing population growth and declining land availability.

He said agriculture should provide enough food for households while generating income and producing surplus crops for the market.

“We must farm upwards rather than continue expanding horizontally,” he said,

calling for greater productivity from the land available.

Rwanda expects to cultivate approximately 765,000 hectares during the 2027A season, according to figures reported by local media citing the Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB).

The season is one of the country's main planting periods, with agricultural productivity depending partly on the effective use of available land and the maintenance of infrastructure supporting farmers.