

For months, Rayon Sports FC have been playing with a financial handbrake on, every step heavy, every mistake costly. This week, however, a long-awaited lifeline arrived, and at Murera, the air suddenly feels lighter.

Tension had hung over the club for far too long. Unpaid salaries, boardroom wrangles and uncertainty off the pitch had become familiar headlines around a club whose history and fan base demand better. But in recent days, the mood has shifted — noticeably so. The storm, at least for now, has eased inside the Rayon dressing room.

Fans and management alike finally caught a breath after the club sealed a five-year kit sponsorship deal with Tanzanian company JayRutty. The agreement, set to run from the 2026–27 season, will inject over \$700,000 (approximately Rwf 1.2 billion) annually into Rayon Sports. In a league where financial certainty is rare, that figure feels like more than just a new kit, it feels like oxygen.

The deal may not fix everything, but it has stopped the bleeding.

The timing could hardly have been better. Barely days after news of the partnership broke, Rayon returned to winning ways, registering their first league victory in a month, edging rivals SC Kiyovu. It was more than three points; it felt like relief. Players celebrated with visible freedom, fans rediscovered their voices, and for the first time in weeks, football — not finance — took centre stage.

Inside the club, there is quiet acknowledgement that the sponsorship has lifted morale. When wages are uncertain and futures unclear, performances suffer. When stability appears, even briefly, confidence follows. This week's result underlined a simple truth many in Rwandan football know too well: money problems don't stay in the office; they walk onto the pitch.

Rayon's troubles are well documented. The club has battled unpaid arrears, disputes with players, and FIFA sanctions linked to unsettled dues owed to former staff. Not long ago, the team was running on fumes, surviving one fixture at a time. Confidence drained from the squad long before the points did, to the extent that players abandoned training for several days in protest over unpaid salaries.

At one stage, transfer bans threatened to derail the season entirely. Those issues are not solved overnight, but the JayRutty agreement offers something Rayon has lacked for a while; a foundation. Something solid to build from, rather than another

short-term patch.

The deal also fits into a broader pattern. Tanzanian companies have quietly left their mark on Rwandan football before. A few years ago, AZAM TV reshaped the local game through a major broadcast agreement that boosted visibility and revenue across the league. JayRutty's move feels like a continuation of that regional investment, proof that Rwandan football still holds commercial appeal beyond its borders.