

Two major national seed associations in Rwanda have been dissolved over a compliance issue to manage conflicts of interest, according to the leaked document obtained by 'Rwanda Dispatch' late Wednesday in Kigali.

This decision comes a few months after the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) unveiled in January 2025, a strategy to tackle the shortage of certified seeds, in partnership with the National Seed Association of Rwanda (NSAR) which among the two entities dissolved under the new resolution.

In an official letter sent to different Government, private and international agencies dealing with seeds production, Dr Mark Cyubahiro Bagabe, the Rwandan minister of Agriculture and Animal resources announced the creation of newly Seed Traders Association of Rwanda (STAR) as the sole unified National Seed Organization recognized by the Government and its partners.

"The co-existence of these many [seeds] entities had caused fragmentation and weakened seed system coordination, reads part of the letter signed by the top Rwandan Government official.

During the First General Assembly held on 22 October 2025, STAR's statutes were formally adopted, and its Board and Executive Committee were elected through a transparent and inclusive process. STAR now offers a cohesive and representative platform to drive the development of Rwanda's seed sector.

The ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources therefore recognizes STAR as the legitimate national seed umbrella organization, the letter said.

It said that the newly established institution is mandated to ensure a coherent seed system framework that promotes stability, sustainability, effective, regulation, and robust quality inspection and assurance, which is recognized by the Government.

In addition, the official correspondence encourages the competent authorities to proceed with formal de-registration of two existing seed association, as their merger into one single umbrella will strengthen sector cohesion and unity.

Senior executives of the two resolved seed associations in Rwanda were not immediately available for comment on the new decision.

Experts argue that Africa's failure to feed itself ranges from problems with insecure land tenure, to scant knowledge of improved farm practices, and limited access to

markets for agriculture commodities and crop inputs including especially new varieties of seeds.

According to the 2020 African Seed Access Index, satisfaction with efforts to combat fake seeds stood at 72%. Rwanda, which previously imported over 3,000 tonnes of maize, wheat, and soybean annually, now produces 9,000 tonnes locally, opening doors for potential exports.

The roadmap proposes establishing a National Seed Certification Agency to standardize and monitor seed quality.