

At least 158 Farmer Field Schools (FFS) facilitators graduated at an event held on 8 February 2024 in Rubavu District, Northwestern Rwanda.

With the purpose to scale-up regenerative agriculture practices in the western province, this batch of graduates comprises of lead farmers from four districts in Western Rwanda including Ngororero, Nyabihu, Rubavu and Rutsiro.

All farmers were trained in the first and second cohort between 2021 and 2023 as part of the first ever graduation.

Agricultural revolution

The programme was conducted under the REALMS Project implemented by RDO and Imbaraga Farmer's Organisation with support from SNV Rwanda and funding from IKEA Foundation.



Patrick Uwihoreye, Vice Mayor of Ngororero District awarding the best FFS facilitator from Rubavu

Officiating at the event, Patrick Nathan Uwihoreye, the Vice Mayor in charge of Economic development in Ngororero District pointed out that Rwanda has embarked on an agricultural revolution and farmers are very critical in this journey.

He urged farmers to adopt modern agricultural practices and stop the traditional practices, this is meant to enhance production and to commercialize agriculture in sustainable ways.

Coping with climate impacts

The senior local administrative official also applauded regenerative agriculture practices implemented by REALMS Project which aims at restoring and improving soil health, enhance biodiversity, and mitigate climate impacts for sustainability.

Currently the project is helping farmer in Western Province to cope with the impacts of climate change in this mountainous region where soil erosion remains a major challenge affecting agricultural productivity.



Eugene Rwibasira, the Executive Secretary of RDO

Eugene Rwibasira, the Executive Secretary of RDO thanked the new graduates for their tireless dedication to improve farming. He told them that the country looks up to farmers to feed the nation.

Rwibasira pointed out that regenerative agriculture is critical as it helps grow crops without necessarily relying on inorganic fertilizers and unpredictable rainfall, which can ensure food security.

He said that all those who had been awarded certificates now have the skills to make food accessible, available and affordable by increasing crop production.

“Land degradation and climate change affect food production, but now you have the skills to revert this and make us food secure,” Rwibasira told the group of farmers.

Regenerative agriculture practices

The graduation event also attracted different stakeholders where many talked about the slow deterioration of soil healthy which now presents an opportunity for innovative practices like regenerative agriculture to improve the soils.

Through evaluations conducted that led up to the graduation of FFS facilitators, best performers were identified. In each district, three FFS facilitators with outstanding performance in adopting and implementing regenerative agriculture practices were selected.

The three top performers in each of the four districts were awarded with different prizes, the first was awarded a brand new bicycle, the second received a wheelbarrow and sprayer pump, the third was given a sprayer pump and larger bucket.

At the event, some model farmers and SMEs working with SNV had the opportunity to exhibit some of the practices in a mini expo showcasing regenerative agriculture products and services.



Farmers exhibiting regenerative agriculture products and services at the sideline of

the graduation event at Hill View Hotel in Rubavu