

The Government of Rwanda and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) have signed a \$78.5 million (over 114.7 billion Rwandan francs) agreement to strengthen the country's agriculture and livestock sectors.

The funding will support hillside irrigation in Kayonza District and promote value addition in small livestock farming. Officials said the initiative aims to reduce poverty, improve food security, increase climate resilience, and boost incomes for rural households.

IFAD, established in 1978, has long supported agriculture and livestock projects worldwide, working closely with Rwanda's Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI).

Among IFAD-backed programs is PRISM, which focuses on small livestock development and building infrastructure such as veterinary clinics, markets, and fattening facilities. Launched in 2020/2021, PRISM operates in 15 districts, including Huye, Gisagara, Nyaruguru, Nyamagabe, Karongi, Rutsiro, Musanze, Burera, Gicumbi, and Gakenke. The project helps communities increase productivity and overcome poverty.

Another initiative, the Rwanda Dairy Development Project (RDDP), supports cattle farmers in improving milk collection, processing, and distribution to generate higher profits. Large and small milk collection centers have been built across the country to facilitate this work.

The Kayonza Irrigation and Integrated Watershed Management Project (KWIIP) targets irrigation in drought-prone areas such as Ndego and Kabare sectors, with plans to expand to additional areas.

Officials said the projects will improve food production, ensure steady household incomes, and strengthen Rwanda's resilience to climate change. "These investments will modernize farming, support smallholder farmers, and boost economic growth," a government spokesperson said.

IFAD's partnership with Rwanda aims to ensure sustainable access to food and livestock products while fostering rural development, income growth, and a stronger, climate-resilient agricultural sector.