

Over 1,000 young entrepreneurs in Rubavu, Rusizi, Muhanga and Nyagatare are set to benefit from employment-readiness skills and accelerator programmes offered in the new incubation hubs “HANGA Hubs”.

The Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (Minecofin) and the European Union (EU) in Rwanda recently signed a grant contract to support and increase digital based employment opportunities in high potential economic sectors through these hubs. This is financed from the EU’s programme to support private sector development and job creation in Rwanda adopted in 2020.

HANGA Hubs will provide space and support for young labour market entrants and start-ups to adopt innovative technologies to enhance productivity, competitiveness, and growth.

“Start-ups can significantly transform and strengthen the economy. They may be small, but they are dynamic, flexible and able to react to market demands. Going by its meaning, HANGA or “Create” hubs will be the home for creative, innovating start-ups, where aspiring young entrepreneurs will find support and help of other entrepreneurs, role models, mentors and fellowships along their journey.” said Ambassador Nicola Bellomo, Head of Delegation of the European Union to Rwanda.

The HANGA hubs project will be implemented by the Rwanda Information Society Authority (RISA) in close collaboration with ICT Chamber and several other players in the ecosystem. This project will address gaps in Rwanda’s innovation ecosystem limiting the pipeline of start-ups and innovations, namely lack of tech-entrepreneurship support and access to services for tech-based innovative start-ups.

“This intervention is timely and aligns well with our Government efforts to strengthen and expand the tech-enabled innovation ecosystem in Rwanda. This initiative seeks to ensure that opportunities for tech-innovation and start-up incubation are made easy and equally accessible for all young innovators regardless of where they are located in the country. The project will target potential entrepreneurs with constructive ideas and solutions in key sectors of the economy such as health, agriculture, financial services, tourism and hospitality, construction, education, and many others. ” ”Said Honorable Paula Ingabire, Minister of ICT and Innovation.

Hanga Hubs Project is expected to support over 768 young Innovators to undergo a

9-month incubation program, which will result into creation of 192 start-ups.

Support services that would be offered to innovators in the 4 HANGA Hubs will range from business support; market and customer validation support ; B2B matching; networking and exposure trips to allow incubated start-ups to attain an early growth stage that could trigger investment.