A group of 33 young Rwandans is stepping into the future with a major boost to their agricultural and livestock projects. The group of both young men and women, has been awarded Rwf.170 million to help expand their businesses.

This opportunity comes after more than a year of specialized training abroad, where they learned valuable skills in countries like Israel and China. The training, which covered various aspects of farming and animal husbandry, was organized by the Government of Rwanda in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

After returning home, those trained were eager to put their new knowledge into action. They launched projects designed to boost their livelihoods and contribute to the country's agricultural growth. From the 33 proposals, the best projects were selected and awarded seed funding of Rwf.170 million to bring their ideas to life.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) sees great potential in these projects. Most of them introduce innovative methods that were learned during their time abroad. The funding will be distributed based on the specific needs of each project.

On January 30, 2025, the youth received their cheques, and the excitement was palpable. Despite the knowledge they gained, many admitted that accessing enough capital had been a struggle. Now, with this financial support, they are ready to take their projects to the next level.

Susan Mukangenzi, from Huye District, is one of the young entrepreneurs benefiting from the program. After 11 months of training in Israel, she started a business selling agricultural inputs and animal feeds. She learned new techniques that have already made a difference in her community.

"Before, the feeds we had wasn't always suitable for different animals. Now, I can provide balanced feeds based on the needs of the animals," Mukangenzi explained. "It's helping farmers improve their yields and avoid crop failure."

Mukangenzi's business is growing, and the funding she received will allow her to meet the growing demand from her clients. "I wasn't able to satisfy all the needs of clients before," she said. "Now, with this funding, I can expand and offer more."

In Rubavu District, Aisha Mutoni has also set her sights on the future. She chose to start a mushroom farming project, which is both eco-friendly and quick to grow. Mutoni's motivation is personal: she wants to help fight malnutrition, especially in children.

"Mushrooms are a great source of nutrition, and they don't require much space," Aisha explained. "In the Western Province, we have high levels of child malnutrition. I believe mushroom farming can help improve children's diets, especially in local nurseries."

Aisha's training has given her the knowledge and confidence to move forward. She believes that with this support, she can make a real difference in her community.

Olivier Kamana, the Permanent Secretary of MINAGRI, sees these projects as key to Rwanda's agricultural future. The youth's innovative ideas are exactly what the country needs to overcome challenges like climate change and increase agricultural productivity.

"We expect a lot from these projects," Kamana said. "They not only bring new ideas but will also help us adapt to climate changes and improve yields. We are seeing more and more youth interested in agriculture and livestock, and these young entrepreneurs are proof that with the right support, they can lead the way."

The Government of Rwanda's ongoing partnership with Israel, particularly in agricultural training, has already shown great success. Many youth-led agricultural projects across the country are proof of the value of this collaboration.