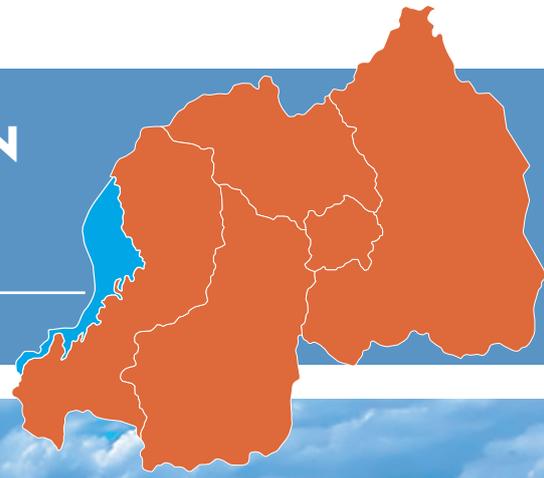




KWIHAZA - TRANSFORMATION TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

RWA/025



SECTOR | Food security

DURATION | 48 months (January 2023 - December 2026)

TARGET GROUPS

Cooperatives, producer groups, and SMEs and entrepreneurs, with a particular focus on youth and women

SECTORIAL POLICIES AND REFERENCE STRATEGIES

- Rwanda's Vision 2050;
- National Strategy for Transformation;
- Strategic Plan for Agriculture Transformation.

INSTITUTIONAL ANCHORAGE

- main: Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources of Rwanda (MINAGRI);
- other institutional partners: Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board, Rwanda Inspectorate, Competition and Consumer Protection Authority, National Agricultural Export Development Board, Rwanda Standard Board, University of Rwanda.

BUDGET | EUR17.5 million (Luxembourg contribution : EUR7.5 million; EU contribution: EUR10 million).



Kwihaza, a 4-year, EUR17.5 million project funded by the European Union and the Government of Luxembourg, and implemented by Enabel, is a transformative initiative for aquaculture and horticulture value chains. Rwanda's agricultural sector is vital for the country's economy, employing 70% of the workforce and contributing over a third to the GDP.

OBJECTIVES

This project is designed to enhance the aquaculture and horticulture value chains. The project targets cooperatives, producer groups, and SMEs and entrepreneurs, with a particular focus on youth and women. It aims to increase production and income in these sectors while increasing the national per capita consumption of the products from the two value chains.

Kwihaza follows a multi-faceted approach focusing on:

- capacity building, improving the quality and quantity of product, minimising post-harvest losses, adopting climate smart practices, and increasing access to local and regional markets;
- support for SMEs and young entrepreneurs to facilitate productive investment and create decent jobs;
- fostering a conducive environment for sustainable food systems, including the development and enforcement of standards and regulation, as well as initiatives to change consumer behaviour to boost consumption.

For the aquaculture value chain, the critical needs in animal feed quality and quantity represent the main issue. Also, a comprehensive farm-to-fork approach will be adopted to ensure value chain resilience, food safety and environmental protection.

In the horticulture sector, the project focuses on the reduction of post-harvest losses and on value addition for local and international markets, contributing to the overall efficiency and sustainability of this sector.

BENEFICIARIES

The primary beneficiaries of the Kwihaza project are cooperatives and producer organisations of smallholders involved in the horticulture, aquaculture, and fisheries sectors, especially those targeting regional and domestic markets.

SMEs operating at various stages of these value chains, including intrants and inputs (such as animal feed, fertiliser, seedlings, etc.), production, processing, logistics, transport, and distribution, are also key beneficiaries, with a particular emphasis on women and youth-led businesses.

Additionally, the project aims to benefit consumers, sector organizations, federations, farmer unions, and key public institutions.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Contribution to the socially and environmentally inclusive transition of the food systems by:

- increased production, consumption, income and jobs in aquaculture and horticulture value chains;
- reduced post-harvest losses and improved market access, through improved capacities of smallholders and producer groups;
- strong and sustainable private sector, promoting income generation and job creation;
- innovation and improved regulatory environment for sustainable food systems.

MAIN ACTIONS

- research and analysis to inform effective interventions;
- financial support mechanisms for SMEs, including direct grants, access to finance and insurance;
- implementing efficient, climate-smart, and sustainable agricultural practices;
- building capacities of the value chain actors, both in technical and management skills;
- addressing the challenge of availability of animal feed in quality and quantity, which are critical for aquaculture and other livestock enterprises;
- creation of market linkages and development of infrastructure at cooperative level, for value addition through the processing of products (cooling, drying, cleaning, or else).

ACHIEVEMENTS AND NEXT STEPS

The project assessed the fisheries and aquaculture value chains, focusing on market demands, production costs, the needs of value chain actors, and the challenges of the fish feed provision. Results highlighted that existing fish feed processing facilities are underutilized, while storage for major grains like maize and soy is insufficient.

To address the challenges of intensified aquaculture, which can lead to disease and pollution, the project developed a National Aquaculture Environment and Biosecurity Plan.

Suitability assessments for fish farming sites, particularly around Lake Muhazi, were conducted to guide future developments while minimizing environmental impacts. The insights gained will help select beneficiaries for farm extension support.

The project also promoted aquaculture best practices through model farms and supported SMEs. The Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Board (RAB) provided technical assistance and subsidies for feed and seedlings to boost aquaculture production. Additionally, a fish breeding center is being established to improve genetic stock and reduce disease risks.

The project, in collaboration with the National Agricultural Export Development Board (NAEB), has developed cooperative aggregation models and provided post-harvest handling tools to horticulture producers to improve market access and reduce post-harvest losses. A sector coordination platform was established to facilitate collaboration among value chain actors.

In partnership with institutions like the Rwanda Standards Board (RSB) and the Rwanda Inspectorate, Competition and Consumer Protection Authority (RICA), the project is enhancing standards and technical specifications for aquaculture and horticulture products.

Finally, the project is facilitating access to finance for private actors in the aquaculture and horticulture sectors through various financial instruments. A financial support mechanism is being established by Access to Finance Rwanda (AFR), offering matching grants and loans at reduced interest rates, with capacity-building support from Appui au Développement Autonome (ADA) and business development services from a Rwandan consultancy company.

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