

HOW CELESTIN TURIMUMAHORO TRANSFORMED LIVESTOCK FEED CHALLENGES INTO SUCCESS



Where others saw waste, **Celestin Turimumahoro** saw opportunity. Determined to solve a pressing problem for local farmers, he took a bold step to convert discarded agricultural residues into a life-changing solution for livestock nutrition in Nyagatare District. For years, local farmers struggled with feed shortages, especially during the dry season, while crop residues were routinely burned, harming the environment. Instead of accepting this as the standard, Celestin transformed waste into value, benefiting both farmers and the community.

Celestin, a graduate with a Bachelor of Science in Quantity Surveying, had always been involved in pig farming. Over time, he noticed a recurring challenge—not just for himself, but for neighboring cattle farmers: feed shortages that limited milk production. *“I realized that a lot of crop residues were being wasted or burned instead of being transformed into nutritious animal feed. I started researching how to convert them into high-quality feed for dairy cows,” he recalls.*

In 2023, Celestin officially launched his business, determined to provide affordable, nutritious feed while reducing environmental damage. *“I wanted to solve the feed shortage problem, improve milk production, and give agricultural waste a second life,” he explains.*

Starting out was far from easy. Fresh out of university, Celestin faced doubt from the community, who wondered why he wasn't pursuing conventional farming or surveying work. Limited startup capital also posed a challenge. But Celestin refused to give up. He sought guidance from Kilimo Trust, gaining training in animal nutrition and farm management, and participated in the Youth Connekt Award 2023, securing additional funding to launch his venture. *“With the right knowledge and support, I was able to turn my idea into a viable business,” he says.*

The results have been transformative. Celestin's factory, which started with modest equipment capable of processing 1.5 tons of feed per week, now operates at 8–12 tons per day using

electric-powered machinery. What began with a startup capital of 700,000 Rwandan Francs has grown into a thriving business valued between 43–50 million Rwandan Francs. He has transitioned from renting production space to owning his own factory building, and the impact on his community has been profound.

“Farmers now have easy access to nutritious feed for their livestock, and crop residues are no longer wasted. I've also been able to create jobs for youth, giving them hope and opportunities to thrive,” Celestin shares. Though challenges remain—like electricity shortages affecting production—he remains determined to expand and adapt.

Celestin's achievements have not gone unnoticed. He was awarded Champion of the Rwanda Youth Connekt Award 2023, recognizing his innovation, determination, and community impact. But beyond awards, his greatest pride comes from solving real problems for farmers and creating sustainable business growth.

Reflecting on his journey, Celestin emphasizes the lessons he's learned: perseverance, continuous innovation, and seeking advice from mentors. *“No matter the obstacles, don't give up. Always look for creative solutions and manage your resources wisely,” he advises young entrepreneurs.*

Looking to the future, Celestin has ambitious plans: expanding his factory to process up to 100 tons per day, employing 300 youth, and supplying feeds to 10,000 farmers within five years. His vision is clear—turn agricultural waste into wealth, empower communities, and create a sustainable model for livestock nutrition in Rwanda.

Celestin Turimumahoro is proof that vision, knowledge, and determination can turn challenges into opportunities—benefiting not just one entrepreneur, but an entire community.



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Driving Change Through Mechanization: *The story of Delphine Ikuzwe Changing Stereotypes in Employment*



Delphine, a determined young woman from Karengwe Sector in Rwamagana District, Eastern Rwanda, is redefining what it means to be a female agripreneur in a traditionally male-dominated field. Her journey from a beginner to expert farm machinery operator is a powerful example of how targeted youth empowerment can advance agriculture and uplift an entire community.

Her story began with a simple desire, to contribute meaningfully to her community and earn a living through agriculture. Like many young people, she lacked skills and information about available opportunities for employment. This changed when she joined the Rural Youth Employment Support (R-YES), a project implemented by Kilimo Trust in Rwanda with funding from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), BMZ and Visa Foundation.

Through R-YES, Delphine received hands-on training in Operation, Repair and Maintenance of Farm Machinery. She learned to operate farm machinery used in land preparation, planting, and harvesting. Her technical skills were complemented by mentorship, entrepreneurial skills to run a business and exposure to real-world farming challenges.

She credits R-YES for equipping her with the knowledge, tools, and support that opened doors she never knew existed. Delphine's work now covers all the districts of the eastern province of Rwanda especially Nyagatare, Kayanza and Rwamagana. She provides

plowing services that help farmers save time, reduce labor costs, and increase yields. Her impact is tangible. Fields that once took weeks to prepare, are now ready in hours. Beyond the soil, she is planting seeds of change in the minds of young women who see her as proof that agriculture is not limited by gender, it is open to anyone with vision and determination.

"I encourage fellow young ladies and women to join agriculture. It's a field that can change your life. Don't fear to explore different opportunities like what I do. Instead, find skills, use them, and lead with them."
Delphine advises

Beyond her technical contributions, Ms. Delphine has emerged as a mentor, entrepreneur, and a leader. She has created employment opportunities for fellow youth as operators, earned the trust of local farmers, and inspired a new generation particularly young women to pursue careers in agribusiness with confidence.

From an aspiring operator to an entrepreneur, Delphine's journey is a testament to what is possible when youth especially young women are empowered. Through R-YES, she is not merely plowing fields, she is paving the way for a more inclusive, efficient, and prosperous future in agriculture.

Delphine is one of the eighty-seven (87) youth currently employed in farm mechanization and offering mechanization services across different farming communities in the eastern province of Rwanda.



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Turning Passion into Profit: *Emmanuel's journey to Agriprenuership*



Emmanuel Ndayishimiye's journey began in Rukomo, Nyagatare District, where he once considered farming as simply a way to pass time. Like many of his peers, he saw agriculture as secondary to other pursuits until Kilimo Trust's Rural Youth Employment Support (R-YES) project introduced a new perspective. Through practical training focused on modern cultivation methods, vegetable production, and agribusiness management, Emmanuel discovered farming's true potential.

"After the training, I had the zeal to change how I farmed," says Emmanuel. "I expanded my land from 30 to 80 acres and moved from subsistence to business-oriented farming."

Equipped with new expertise, he more than doubled his cultivated land expanding from 30 to 80 acres and transitioned from subsistence plots to a thriving commercial enterprise. Today, he cultivates passion fruits, cabbages, and carrots, applying structured farming practices and post-harvest techniques that enhance both yield and product quality.

His farm has since become a local demonstration site, attracting youth and smallholder farmers interested in learning. *"Working on his farm has changed my life. I can now pay for my family's health insurance and have built a house," says Uwimana Marcel,* one of Emmanuel's trainees. At the same time, students from Rukomo TVET School gain

practical experience through internships that translate classroom theory into hands-on agribusiness skills. *"It has helped me put theory into practice. I now feel confident about pursuing agribusiness," reflects Charpine Umuhoza.*

Kilimo Trust's continued support has played a central role in Emmanuel's growth. The installation of a greenhouse, water-storage tank, sprayer, and pump system has enabled steady production of high-value crops throughout the year. Emmanuel has also brought on five full-time farm staff to maintain quality standards. *"This infrastructure support has strengthened my operations and given me the confidence to scale production," Emmanuel reflects.*

Looking forward, Emmanuel plans to expand his value chain by processing passion fruits into juice and jam for both domestic consumers and hospitality markets. *"By turning raw produce into value-added products, I aim to reach new markets and build lasting partnerships with leading hotels," he explains.* From a hesitant youth to a skilled agripreneur and mentor, Emmanuel's story highlights the meaningful impact of equipping rural young people with the right skills, resources, and market access.

Emmanuel is one of the one hundred fifty (150) youth currently employed in vegetable production and processing as producers of different horticultural products and workers on farms as wage earners.



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From Photography to Irrigating Farms: *The Inspiring Story of Uwiringiyimana Emmanuel*



What happens when a farmer's harvest depends on rainfall? In Bugesera District in Rwanda, where rainfall periods are short and drought longer, this frequently leads to irregular crop growth, reduced yields, and uncertain incomes for farmers. For Sunripe Farms, Bugesera was the right place to start a leading horticultural producer of french beans, cabbages, bell peppers, tomatoes, and chili. Their answer lied in reliable irrigation systems both on open field and controlled farming in greenhouses.

Among the team making this possible is Uwiringiyimana Emmanuel, an Assistant Irrigation Engineer whose journey into agribusiness began with curiosity, resilience, and a desire to solve real problems faced by farmers.

Emmanuel studied Mathematics, Economics, and Geography (MEG) in secondary school, but was unable to continue his education leading him into a self-taught photographer for a living. With photography and other casual jobs, Emmanuel's basic needs were not met and hoped for a better job.

His life took a better turn later when he received training through the Kilimo Trust's Rural Youth Employment Support (R-YES) project that opened his eyes to new opportunities including a job at the sunripe farms in 2022. *"The training gave me confidence and broadened my vision," he recalls. "I realized that I could not only work for others but also use my knowledge to create solutions."* **Inspired**, he took his first steps into entrepreneurship in 2023.

When Emmanuel ventured into irrigation services, he was driven by two main goals: to advance his knowledge and to generate income while solving farmers' pressing needs. Many smallholder farmers around him lacked reliable irrigation systems, yet irrigation was essential for consistent yields. Having foundational expertise, he knew he could bridge this gap.

Choosing irrigation was not accidental—it was a service in high demand and one that Emmanuel both understood and felt passionate about. Encouraged by colleagues already in the field and motivated by farmers seeking his services, he turned his skills into a business opportunity.

The journey wasn't without obstacles. Emmanuel began with limited equipment and often struggled to communicate with potential clients. At times, he doubted whether his knowledge

was enough. But instead of giving up, he committed to continuous learning, seeking information wherever possible, and refusing to be discouraged.

His perseverance soon paid off. What began as work within his own farm gradually expanded as other farmers sought his services. Word of mouth spread, and Emmanuel began building a network of satisfied clients who trusted his reliability.

Today, Emmanuel has grown beyond his initial beginnings. He not only contributes to Sunripe's success but also supports other farmers independently, helping them manage irrigation systems that boost their productivity. *"Every time a farmer thanks me for supporting them, I feel proud of what I do," he shares.*

His achievements extend beyond the field. With the income from his work, Emmanuel has managed to support his family and provide for his needs, a step that gives him both independence and hope for a bright future. These milestones, though modest, represent the steady transformation of a young man building a foundation for greater success.

Emmanuel's services are making a tangible difference in his community. Farmers who once struggled with water management now see increased yields, leading to better household incomes. In addition, Emmanuel occasionally creates job opportunities, bringing in others to assist with his irrigation projects. For him, this is just the beginning of making agriculture both sustainable and profitable for more people.

Through his entrepreneurial journey, Emmanuel has learned valuable lessons: never give up, deliver quality, and always seek knowledge. He emphasizes that humility, patience, and respecting clients' time are the cornerstones of a strong business.

"If I were starting over, I would spend even more time researching modern practices and building client relationships early on." His adaptability and openness to learning continue to be his greatest strengths.

Emmanuel's vision stretches far beyond Bugesera. His dream is to expand to other districts, helping more farmers with irrigation services to thrive in farming. He also hopes to mentor and train other young people, passing on the knowledge and resilience that shaped his own path.



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FROM HOUSEHOLD CHORES TO POULTRY CHAMPION:

ESTHER'S RISE IN AGRIBUSINESS



From Gicumbi District, **Uwizeye Esther** has become more than just a poultry farmer but an inspiration in her community to youth.

Like many young women in her village, Esther once spent her days at home doing regular household chores, with no source of income. That changed the day she saw an announcement from Kilimo Trust about a youth training opportunity under the Rural Youth Employment Support (R-YES) project. Among the training options was poultry farming—something that instantly caught her attention.

“I chose to study poultry farming, and after completing my training in Gishari, I didn't wait. I immediately put what I learned into practice,” **Esther shares.**

She was not just raising chickens—she was building a profession.

Unlike others who start poultry farming without knowledge, Esther came equipped with hands-on skills in feeding, disease management, and even feed formulation. *“I treat my chickens myself. I don't incur costs to hire that service because I learned this during the training,”* **she says proudly.**

The impact of her transformation didn't go unnoticed. In her community, Esther has become a go-to poultry expert. Neighbors come to her for help diagnosing sick birds, writing poultry business plans, measuring chicken coops, sourcing quality chicks, and even accessing the right medicine.

Her credibility has grown so much that her savings group—once hesitant to lend her even 100,000 Rwandan francs—now trusts her with up to 500,000 in loan, confident in the sustainability of her project.

“I take my eggs to the market and pay the loans back with no problem. They now trust me because they can see my business is thriving.”

Today, Esther is scaling up in a major way. With support from Kilimo Trust, she has got a large chicken coop that will house between 700 to 1,000 egg-laying hens—more than ten times her initial capacity.

“Before, my clients couldn't find enough eggs. But now, with this bigger coop, I'll be able to meet demand and even expand my market.”

Esther's journey—from a young woman with no income to a confident poultry farmer, mentor, and entrepreneur—is living proof of how access to training and the right support can unlock potential and transform communities.

Her message is simple: *“When you believe in your project and take action, people will believe in you too.”*

Esther is one of the seventy-nine (79) youth thriving in poultry farming across the country, all thanks to the R-YES project training that aimed to create employment opportunities for youth in agribusiness in Rwanda.



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Building a Dairy Dream in the Hills of Rwanda



When **Jackson Sebahungu** first began making yogurt during his college days in Kinigi, Musanze District, it was a humble attempt to build something of his own. He had little in the way of resources, but a strong sense of purpose and a deep belief that dairy could change his future.

Then a friend shared a link about a youth agribusiness program. Curious, Jackson applied.

"I learned about R-YES through a friend who shared a link. I saw it as an opportunity to grow my business, so I applied and I was selected." **Jackson says.**

That decision became a turning point. Through the Rural Youth Employment Support (R-YES) project, Jackson gained practical training in operating, repairing and maintaining industrial machines as well as business development skills, marketing, and how to build the support systems a small enterprise needs to grow.

"R-YES was a game changer for me. I gained all-round skills that are needed for any start-up to grow. Since I had already started my business in milk processing, I knew that the skills I will gain in industrial machines operation, repair and maintenance would help me to know which machines I needed in my factory and I would not have to hire an operator until I was able to afford them." **He adds.**

After completing his studies, Jackson returned to Musanze and put his training into action reviving his

business, expanding operations, hiring staff, and strengthening ties with local milk suppliers. Today, his company produces yogurt and fermented milk with the help of a growing team.

The business now creates jobs for youth, supports cooperatives, and reinvests in community wellbeing from supplier training to health insurance.

"Life has changed in many ways since R-YES became a partner in my journey. We now have the means to pay health insurance not only for my family but also my employees and farmers I work with. We have created jobs for youth, supported local cooperatives, and trained the people we work with to deliver better-quality milk." **Jackson says**

But his ambitions don't end here. He dreams of building a state-of-the-art dairy facility one that processes a wider range of products, empowers more young people, and strengthens Rwanda's local dairy sector. From a student side hustle to a community-driven enterprise, Jackson's journey is proof that when youth are equipped and believed in, they do more than survive. They lead.

Jackson is one of the seventy three (73) youth currently employed in operation, repair and maintenance of industrial machines offering services in milling factories, garages among others across the country.



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employee and provides peer mentorship to visiting youth. The company has gained visibility through participation in local exhibitions, receiving consistently positive feedback from clients.

Kilimo Trust continues to provide technical support, including advanced training in quality assurance and certification through partnership with the Rwanda Standards Board (RSB) under their Zamukana Ubuziranenge program that supports youth to acquire certification of their products. This has enabled Tumukunde to understand and meet national food safety standards. *“Kilimo keeps supporting us. I now understand what’s required to meet quality standards and how to get certified,” she explains.*

Looking ahead, Ms. Tumukunde plans to expand her company across Rwanda and into regional markets. *“We have seen it’s possible. Now we want to grow and inspire others,” she affirms.*

Her message to fellow youth is clear and direct: *“Agriculture and livestock farming offer real opportunities. It’s not just about planting or rearing animals. There’s value in processing, packaging, and branding. That’s where jobs are created and profits grow.”*

Tumukunde is one of the one hundred seventy-four (174) youth currently employed in milk processing with thirty-six (36) operating their own milk processing units and one hundred thirty-eight (138) working as wage employers across the country.



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Earning stability as an agripreneur: *The Success Story of Migabo Eric*



In Rwanda's Kirehe District, a young man has shaped his future from ground up, thanks to the Rural Youth Employment Support (R-YES) project trainings. **Migabo Eric's** story exudes a good example of how structured youth empowerment programs can unlock potential and transform livelihoods. His story reflects resilience, vision, and the catalytic role of the R-YES project in shaping agripreneurship pathways for young people.

Before his engagement with the R-YES project, Eric's life lacked stability and a clear professional direction. He survived on casual and informal jobs like painting in military camps and working at gas stations without a permanent source of income. *"To be honest, before R-YES, I didn't do anything substantial. I relied on odd jobs and sometimes on my parents for survival," he recalls.*

Migabo first learned about R-YES through a radio broadcast while visiting a friend in a neighboring district, Kibungo. Remarkably, it was the final day of the announcement. Determined not to miss the chance, he reached out to a friend working at Irembo, who assisted him in completing and submitting the application. Despite the last-minute effort, Eric was selected and enrolled for training in animal feeds production at Kabutare TSS in Huye District. This marked the beginning of his transformation.

Through R-YES, Migabo received technical training in formulation and production of animal feeds for poultry, pigs and cattle. Armed with new competencies, Eric returned to his community and started a small enterprise rearing just 10 chickens and producing animal feeds for people in the community. With discipline and reinvestment of profits, he gradually expanded to 50 birds, and today runs an over 320-poultry farm.

His agribusiness has since expanded beyond a simple poultry farm. He has strategically diversified into multiple poultry value chain activities, including hatchery services to supply day-old chicks to young entrepreneurs in his community, and providing advisory and extension services to them. Demonstrating innovation, he has also begun designing and fabricating egg

incubators to ensure affordable and accessible hatchery services within his community. These efforts have reduced barriers for local farmers, enabling them to access chicks and technical advice locally, rather than relying on distant and costly suppliers.

Eric's professionalism has earned him trust and recognition from both farmers and local authorities. He is frequently invited to provide training and mentorship to youth and other poultry farmers in the community. *"I am glad that I can contribute positively to my community. Now, whenever there is a poultry issue in the community, I am the first person they call," he proudly states.*

Beyond his personal enterprise, Eric's knowledge-sharing has multiplied impact, inspiring other youth to engage in poultry farming as a viable business model. The R-YES program has empowered Eric to achieve tangible milestones. He has purchased land and plans to expand his poultry farm to 3,000 chickens.

His message to fellow youth is one of persistence and self-reliance: *"Take your hands out of your pockets and start something step by step. Even with limited means, consistency builds progress."*

He encourages youth to learn from those with more experience, because shared knowledge accelerates growth.

Migabo Eric's journey from informal jobs to a professional poultry agripreneur demonstrates the transformative power of targeted youth empowerment initiatives. With technical skills, mentorship, and determination, he has created a thriving agribusiness that not only sustains his livelihood but also uplifts his community.

Migabo is one of the one hundred eighty-one (181) youth currently employed in animal feeds production running feeds enterprises and others working in different industries and farms as employees.



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