

Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate

INGABO FARMERS' SYNDICATE JOURNAL - 2025

Growth, Visibility, and Renewed Purpose - The 2025 Journal



"We all believe that farming is a profession like any other."
– Chairperson Cesarie Kantarama.

Empowering Change: A Story from the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Training

GAFSP Portfolio
Lead Visits Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate to Assess Progress of SCORE Rwanda Project



INGABO FARMERS' SYNDICATE 2025 - JOURNAL



This journal captures the journey of Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate throughout 2025, a year marked by growth, visibility, and renewed purpose. It reflects moments where farmers gathered to learn, to lead, and to be heard, from empowerment initiatives and skills-building trainings to national showcases and regional congresses. Within these pages are voices affirming farming as a true profession, stories of innovation taking root, and partnerships strengthening impact. Together, these highlights portray a community steadily advancing modern cassava farming while confidently shaping its place in Rwanda's agricultural future.

2025 AT A GLANCE

P. 04

SCORE PROJECT FARMER EMPOWERMENT

SCORE Project comes to empower Cassava Farmers with New Opportunities

P. 06

ADVOCACY FOR FARMING AS A PROFESSION

We all believe that farming is a profession like any other." – Chairperson Cesarie Kantarama.

P. 08

18TH RWANDA AGRICULTURE SHOW PARTICIPATION

Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate shines at the 18th Rwanda Agriculture show

P. 10

ANNUAL STATUTORY CONGRESS MEETING

Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate Holds Annual Statutory Congress Meeting

P. 12

GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES (GAP) TRAINING

Empowering Change: A Story from the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Training

P. 14

6TH EAFF CONGRESS AND EXHIBITION

Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate Champions Innovation at the 6th EAFF Congress, Convention and Exhibition.

P. 16

CASSAVA SEED MULTIPLIERS TRAINING IN MUHANGA

Cassava Seed Multipliers Boost Skills at Muhanga Training

P. 18

CASSAVA WEEK 2025 ENGAGEMENT

Farmers Urged to Embrace Professionalism and Modern Farming at Cassava Week 2025

P. 20

GAFSP SCORE PROJECT ASSESSMENT VISIT

GAFSP Portfolio Lead Visits Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate to Assess Progress of SCORE Rwanda Project

SCORE Project comes to empower Cassava Farmers with New Opportunities



Grant signing ceremony took place at the IFAD Office in Kigali

On January 22, 2025, the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate signed a grant agreement for the implementation of the SCORE Project, funded by the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP). This four-year project was formalized by the Country Director of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Mr. Habte-Selassie Dagmawi, as the supervising entity, and the Chairperson of the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate, Mrs. Cesarie Kantarama.

According to IFAD's Country Director for the East and Southern Division, the funds will be utilized to improve cassava productivity in terms of both quality and quantity, enhance farmers' capacities, address post-harvest challenges, and promote climate-smart agricultural practices in an inclusive manner. Mr. Habte underscored the project's goal, stating, "The SCORE Project aims to strengthen smallholder farmers' resilience to food and climate crises, thereby improving food security and livelihoods in rural areas. By investing in smallholder farmers, we enhance food security and rural resilience."



The Chairperson of the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate, Mrs. Césarie Kantarama, and the IFAD Representative and Country Director in Rwanda, Mr. Dagmawi Habte-Selassie, pause for a photo.

The Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate will implement the project, which is expected to benefit over 20,500 smallholder farmers. Of these beneficiaries, 46.4% are men, 53.6% are women, and 19% are young farmers, spanning 10 districts: Kamonyi, Muhanga, Ruhango, Nyanza, and Gisagara in the Southern Province; Rusizi and Nyamasheke in the Western Province; and Bugesera, Gatsibo, and Kayonza in the Eastern Province.

Speaking to the press, Mrs. Cesarie Kantarama, Chairperson of the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate, remarked, "This project strengthens our capacity to combat climate change, improve cassava production, and empower smallholder farmers with the skills needed for smart cassava farming. Previously, we produced 14 tons of cassava per hectare. With this new pro-

ject, we expect to increase our yield to 50 tons per hectare."

Mrs. Kantarama emphasized the role of innovative farming techniques, such as Zai Pit Technology, and training programs that focus on climate adaptation, soil health, and water conservation. Additionally, the project will introduce climate-resilient cassava seeds that can withstand the adverse impacts of climate change, thereby boosting farmers' incomes.

She further affirmed, "Small-scale farmers are the backbone of Rwanda's food system. This project will empower them with the knowledge and tools they need to thrive."

The SCORE Project represents a significant step toward improving food security and fostering resilience among Rwanda's smallholder cassava farmers.

“We all believe that farming is a profession like any other.”

– Chairperson Cesarie Kantarama.

On Monday, March 10, 2025, the Institut Catholique de Kabgayi (ICK) hosted the signing ceremony of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the institution and the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate. This agreement aims to promote research, foster partnerships in various development initiatives, enhance awareness, and boost visibility.



Father Prof. Fidèle Dushimimana, Vice-Chancellor of the Institut Catholique de Kabgayi, and Mrs. Césarie Kantarama, Chairperson of the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate, during the signing of a collaboration MoU.

The MoU was signed on behalf of the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate by its Chairperson, Mrs. Césarie Kantarama, accompanied by the Chief Executive Officer, Mr. François Xavier Mbabazi, and on behalf of the Institut Catholique de Kabgayi by its Vice-Chancellor, Father Prof. Fidèle Dushimimana.

Leaders of the Institut Catholique de Kabgayi and the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate pose for a group photo after signing the MoU



Addressing the press, Mrs. Kantarama highlighted that the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate is an active organization collaborating with various local and international institutions, including the Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC), the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI), the Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB), and the Private Sector Federation (PSF), among others.

She also emphasized that the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate partners with global organizations such as the European Union (EU), the IFAD, the Eastern African Farmers' Federation (EAFF), and the World Farmers' Organization (WFO).

Father Prof. Fidèle Dushimimana expressed his enthusiasm for the growing collaboration between the two institutions, emphasizing the importance of leveraging scientific approaches to drive development.

He encouraged both parties to work towards meaningful change and a transformational partnership.

Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate Shines at the 18th Rwanda Agriculture show

At the 18th Rwanda Agriculture Show, themed “Leveraging Innovation and Investment: Building Resilient and Sustainable Agri-Food Systems,” the INGABO FARMERS’ SYNDICATE proudly emerged as a standout participant, clinching a prestigious trophy that underscored their commitment to sustainable farming, innovation, and grassroots empowerment.

This annual national event, organized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI), is a platform that brings together agricultural cooperatives, researchers, private sector players, and development partners to showcase advancements, share knowledge, and promote investment in Rwanda’s agri-food systems. For INGABO, this year’s exhibition marked not just participation, but a significant moment of national recognition for years of relentless work and visionary leadership.



of ZAI PIT TECHNOLOGY that has come as an innovative solution in boosting cassava productivity, a technology now being scaled across member cooperatives.

A Decade of Dedication Bearing Fruit

Founded over two decades ago, the INGABO FARMERS’ SYNDICATE is dedicated to improving agricultural productivity, promoting agroecology, and creating economic opportunities for smallholder farmers across Rwanda. What began as a grassroots movement has grown into a model of resilience and innovation, bringing together thousands of farmers under one unified voice.

Their participation in the 2025 Agriculture Show was carefully curated to reflect this transformation.

Visitors to the Ingabo stand were greeted with an engaging display of climate-smart farming practices, organic produce, digital farmer services, and innovative post-harvest technologies. One key feature was their presentation



Innovation Rooted in Farmer Realities

What set the INGABO exhibit apart was not just the technology, but how these innovations were rooted in real farmer experiences. For instance adapting to climate change. Demonstrations of agroecological intercropping techniques, developed through farmer field schools, offered practical solutions to issues like soil degradation and pest control without harmful chemicals.

Empowering the Next Generation of Farmers

The success at the show also stemmed from Ingabo’s strong focus on youth and women inclusion. Young agripreneurs within the syndicate demonstrated their value-added products and explained how training and through Ingabo has transformed their livelihoods. The judges were particularly impressed by the integrated approach to agri-business incubation and rural job creation.

One female entrepreneur, a cooperative leader from MBUYE Sector, Ruhango District, Southern Province named Alexia MUKAMUSONI shared how joining Ingabo allowed her to scale her cassava production and gain certification for seed multiplication. Stories like hers gave life to the syndicate’s motto: “Farming with dignity, led by innovation.”

Recognition and Impact

Winning the trophy at the 18th Rwanda Agriculture Show was not just a symbol

of excellence—it was validation of the inclusive, sustainable, and forward-thinking model that Ingabo represents. The award was presented by senior officials from MINAGRI and Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB), who commended the syndicate’s tangible impact on rural livelihoods and their role in advancing Rwanda’s National Agriculture Strategy.

“This award is a recognition of the power of collective action,” said the Syndicate President during the award ceremony. “Ingabo is proof that when farmers are empowered, organized, and equipped with the right tools, they can transform agriculture and feed the nation sustainably.”

Looking Ahead: Scaling Innovation

The recognition has inspired Ingabo to continue its work with renewed vigor. Plans are already underway to expand farmer training programs, strengthen value chains for strategic crops, and establish regional innovation hubs. With support from partners and continued collaboration with government institutions, Ingabo is poised to become a national leader in farmer-led agricultural transformation.

As Rwanda continues to push for innovation and investment in its agri-food systems, INGABO FARMERS’ SYNDICATE stands as a living example of how bottom-up solutions, driven by farmers themselves, can lead to systemic change. The trophy from the 18th Agriculture Show is more than just an award—it is a milestone in a long journey toward food security, sustainability, and dignity for all Rwandan farmers.

End.

Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate Holds Annual Statutory Congress Meeting

On May 7, 2025, the Annual Statutory Congress Meeting of the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate was successfully held at the Lucerna Hotel in Muhanga District, Southern Province.



Members of the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate during the Annual Statutory Congress Meeting

The meeting brought together General Assembly members from various districts to review key achievements, outline future goals, and strengthen collaboration for farmer empowerment and agricultural development. Key highlights of the gathering included:

- Introduction of staff, including new members of the SCORE Project
- Review of the 2023 General Congress Report
- Presentation of the 2024 Activity Report
- Unveiling of the 2025 Action Plan
- Discussions on collaborative strategies focused on advancing farmer empowerment...

In his opening address, the Chief Executive Officer of the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate, Mr. François Xavier MBABAZI, expressed his gratitude to all attendees for their participation. He emphasized the importance of sharing information about modern farming techniques and accessing improved seeds to boost yields. Mr. MBABAZI encouraged members to embrace innovation, diversify crop production beyond cassava, and promote various agricultural value chains for a more transformative farming approach.

The Deputy Chairperson of the Syndicate and Guest of Honor, Mr. Jean Pierre HABIMANA, expressed his joy at the successful organization of the meeting. He urged members to strengthen their engagement with grassroots farmers and support co-operative development. He highlighted the

importance of working closely with financial institutions to increase farmers' access to resources and improve their economic well-being.

Mr. HABIMANA also acknowledged the efforts of all those involved in organizing the event, applauding their dedication and calling on all members to serve as role models in their communities. He encouraged them to seek accurate information and actively share it with others.

During the meeting, participants were also urged to promote the adoption of Zai Pit technology among cassava farmers. This innovative, climate-resilient technique has proven highly effective, increasing cassava yields from 14 tons to 50 tons per hectare compared to traditional farming methods.



Mr. Peter Habimana, Vice-Chairperson of the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate, addressing participants at the Congress



Farmer Field School facilitators during a training on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)

Empowering Change: A Story from the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Training

From September 8th to 12th, 2025, the serene setting of Lucerna Hotel in Muhanga District in the Southern Province and Ntende Hotel in Gatsibo District, Eastern Province became a hub of learning, collaboration, and innovation. It was here that the training on Global Agricultural Practices brought together over 160 Farmer Field School (FFS) Facilitators from across the 10 Districts covered by

the Sustainable Crops for Rural Empowerment (SCORE) Project. This vital initiative is funded by the GAFSP and supervised by the IFAD.

The training aimed to deepen participants' understanding on the role of Zai Pit Technology on boosting Cassava Productivity, climate-smart agriculture technique

theoretical sessions and practical demonstrations that covered topics such as soil health management, integrated pest control, water conservation strategies, and market-oriented farming approaches.

What made the training particularly impactful was its participatory approach. Facilitators shared field experiences, challenges, and success stories from their respective Districts, fostering peer learning and cross-regional collaboration.

Experts and trainers guided discussions and offered insights into how these practices could be adapted to local contexts to improve productivity while preserving natural resources.

The atmosphere was not only educational but also inspiring. Many participants expressed renewed motivation and a sense of responsibility to take the knowledge gained back to their communities.

By the end of the week, participants departed Lucerna Hotel not just as trainees, but as ambassadors of change—ready to champion sustainable farming across the regions supported by the SCORE Project.

The training reaffirmed the commitment of GAFSP and IFAD to empowering rural communities through knowledge, innovation, and sustainable development.



The CEO of Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate and Gatsibo District's Vice-Mayor for Economic Development pose with Farmer Field School facilitators after a successful training session

Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate Champions

Innovation at the 6th EAFF Congress, Convention and Exhibition.

From September 30th to October 2nd, Kigali hosted the prestigious 6th East Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF) Congress, Convention, and Exhibition at Kigali Convention Center. The event, officially inaugurated by Rwanda's Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Dr. Mark Cyubahiro Bagabe, brought together farmers, agribusiness leaders, policymakers, and innovators from across the East African region to discuss strategies for advancing agricultural productivity and sustainability.

Mrs. Césarie Kantarama, Chairperson of the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate, with fellow leaders at the 6th EAFF Congress, Kigali Convention Center



Among the prominent participants, Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate stood out as a key contributor to the discussions and exhibitions. Led by its Chairperson, Mrs. Ceasrie Kantaramara, the Syndicate has consistently demonstrated its commitment to promoting modern, innovative, and sustainable farming practices among its members and the broader agricultural community.

As an active member of the EAFF, Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate leveraged this platform to showcase its initiatives that boost productivity, enhance market access, and strengthen farmer networks.

The Syndicate's engagement at the Congress underscores its pivotal role in embracing innovative agricultural solutions, including the adoption of modern farming techniques, technology-driven crop management, and climate-smart practices.

By encouraging members to integrate these innovations, Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate not only increases yields and profitability but also contributes to food security and economic growth in Rwanda and the East African region.



Cassava Seed Multipliers

Boost Skills at Muhanga Training

Empowering Rwanda's Farmers

From November 19-21, 2025, cassava seed multipliers from all ten Districts under the SCORE Rwanda Project gathered at Lucerna Hotel in Muhanga District for a dynamic two-day training focused on improving both the quality and quantity of cassava seed production.



Cassava seed multipliers attending a hands-on training at Lucerna Hotel, Muhanga District.



Cassava seed multipliers attending a hands-on training at Lucerna Hotel, Muhanga District.

Hands-On Learning for Greater Productivity

Organized by the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate and funded by the European Union, the training combined practical demonstrations with interactive sessions. Participants learned modern cassava seed multiplication techniques, best practices for high-quality seed production, and innovative strategies to meet growing local and regional demand.

Collaboration and Knowledge Exchange

The event also provided a platform for participants to share experiences and ideas, fostering collaboration and innovation in the cassava sector. Initiatives like this play a critical role in Rwanda's agricultural growth, enhancing food security, and empowering farmers with sustainable and profitable farming practices.



Cassava seed multipliers in action at Mr. Nsanzintwali François' farm, Kamonyi District, Southern Province.

Field Visit Sparks Inspiration

On day two, participants visited a cassava farm in Nyamiyaga Sector, Kamonyi District, hosted by pro-multiplier Mr. Francois Nsanzintwali. The hands-on visit inspired participants to apply the insights gained and take decisive steps to close gaps in cassava seed production.

Commitment to Professional Excellence

Before concluding the field day, cassava seed multipliers reflected on a day of learning and inspiration. They pledged to implement the lessons from Mr. Nsanzintwali, growing into more professional, trustworthy, and impactful multipliers, further strengthening Rwanda's cassava sector and contributing to a thriving agri-food system.

Farmers Urged to Embrace Professionalism and Modern Farming at Cassava Week 2025

From November 12 to 14, 2025, Gisagara District proudly hosted the annual Cassava Week, a flagship event dedicated to showcasing agricultural innovation, agribusiness opportunities, and the transformative power of cassava in strengthening Rwanda's food systems. Held at the vibrant Gisagara Arena, the event brought together a wide range of stakeholders committed to advancing the cassava value chain.



Southern Province Governor, Mrs. Alice Kayitesi, addresses the press during Cassava Week 2025 in Gisagara District.

This year's edition attracted national and international participants, including government institutions, private sector actors, development partners, and representatives from the 10 Districts served by the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate. The gathering provided a platform to share experiences, explore market opportunities, and highlight cutting-edge technologies driving productivity and resilience among farmers.



Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate Chairperson, Mrs. Césarie Kantarama, addressing RBA reporters at Cassava Week 2025

Speaking to the press, the Chairperson of the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate Mrs. Césarie KANTARAMA underscored the organization's mission to strengthen farmers' capacities through targeted, promoted, sustainable and high yield farming practices and foster collective action through cooperatives. She also expressed gratitude to all partners for their continued support in advancing Rwanda's Cassava Value Chain.

In her remarks, the Governor of the Southern Province, Mrs. Alice Kayitesi, commended the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate and its partners for their unwavering efforts in elevating the agricultural sector. She emphasized the importance of continuous improvement within the farming community, urging farmers to embrace professionalism, adopt modern techniques, and integrate innovative solutions to boost yields and enhance competitiveness.

Cassava Week 2025 concluded with renewed commitment from stakeholders to strengthen collaboration, promote value addition, and ensure that cassava remains a key contributor to Rwanda's food security and economic transformation.

GAFSP Portfolio Lead Visits

Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate to Assess Progress of SCORE Rwanda Project



Welcoming GAFSP Portfolio Lead Mrs. Shijie Yang to the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate office

On November 24, 2025, Mrs. Shijie Yang, Portfolio Lead at the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP), conducted a field visit to the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate to assess the progress and impact of the SCORE Rwanda Project. The visit marked an important milestone in strengthening partnerships, advancing farmer empowerment, and showcasing tangible progress in Rwanda's agricultural transformation.

During the visit, Mrs. Yang toured cassava-growing cooperatives in Muhanga and Ruhango Districts in the Southern Province, where she engaged directly with farmers benefiting from the project.

She witnessed firsthand how the adoption of the Zai Pit technique is significantly boosting cassava productivity compared to traditional farming practices. The innovation has not only increased yields but also enhanced soil moisture retention and resilience to climate variability—key priorities in smallholder agriculture.

Mrs. Yang also visited the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate Ruhango Sub-Office, where she interacted with cooperative leaders and project staff who play a central role in co-ordinating activities, guiding farmers, and

ensuring the sustainability of project gains. In her remarks, Mrs. Yang underscored the Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate as a vital actor in Rwanda's cassava value chain.

She highlighted its role in connecting farmers, cooperatives, and financial institutions, thereby strengthening resilience, enhancing competitiveness, and expanding economic opportunities for smallholder farmers.

The visit reaffirmed GAFSP's commitment to supporting impactful agricultural initiatives in Rwanda and further demonstrated how strategic partnerships—such as the SCORE Rwanda Project—continue to empower communities, improve livelihoods, and drive inclusive rural development.



On the field: Mrs. Shijie Yang witnesses the work of Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate after her office visit.

INGABO FARMERS' SYNDICATE



Value Chains we Promote



Cassava



Iron beans



Banana



Soybeans



Horticulture



Livestock

Ingabo Farmers' Syndicate

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