

Strengthening Education for Agricultural Development Factsheet



Agriculture is the backbone of Rwanda's economy. It constitutes approximately a third of the economy, with around 70% of the population working in the agriculture sector.¹ Despite this, the country's topography, changes in climate and market volatility leaves many vulnerable: one fifth of the population is food insecure and 89% of rural households practice small-scale farming with limited means to increase productivity or their income.² To address these vulnerabilities, the agricultural sector must become more knowledge intensive and market-driven, so that it can offer productive, fruitful livelihoods and ensure Rwanda's food security. Closer collaboration between the education sector, the private sector and the government is necessary for this transformation to be sustained.

Institutional partnerships and demand-driven education for sustainable food security

SEAD aims to achieve sustainable food security in Rwanda. The project brings together higher learning and TVET institutions, the public sector and farmers, cooperatives and agribusinesses to develop more practice--oriented, demand-driven education and research in order to improve food security and agricultural livelihoods for the benefit of the people and the national economy.



Working in the dairy, poultry, potato and horticultural value chains, SEAD:

- Supports learning institutions and those working in district extension services to train farmers and cooperatives on the latest techniques and new technologies to help them increase the quantity and quality of their production.
- Reviews and revises formal and non-formal curricula of higher learning and TVET institutions to ensure they are market-oriented, include the latest thinking and technology, and focus on practical skills.
- Supports and funds collaborative, applied research and innovation that targets issues and topics farmers and their communities are facing.
- Facilitates the development of public-private partnerships, and the establishment of Service Training Innovation Centres (STICs).

SEAD in numbers

Over 50 cooperatives applying new skills and increasing their yield and quality of production.	Over 40,000 farmers demonstrating greater knowledge and learning of new technologies, techniques and innovations.	50 district and sector agronomists and veterinarians demonstrating improved competencies in their work.
Over 300 agribusinesses and agri-service companies better equipped to apply new and relevant technologies and innovation, increasing their turnover and profitability.	Over 30 cross-institutional teams awarded research funds to explore a range of issues directly affecting farmers, cooperatives and agribusinesses.	17 diplomas in management and leadership granted to mid and senior-level management of SEAD's partner institutions.
10 Student Ministries awarded grants to advance gender and social inclusion within their education institutions.	Over 30 new or re-developed formal and non-formal curricula available for student enrolment and those working in agriculture.	Over 100 staff from partner institutions trained to mainstream gender in their institutions and inclusion of female student enrolment in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.
	Over 2,000 students equipped with practical skills focused on new and relevant technologies and innovations as a result of newly-developed curricula	
	€350,000 of funds granted to scholarships for staff at partner institutions to pursue Masters and PhD degrees at international universities in Ghana, Kenya and the Netherlands.	
Over 30 career guidance officers and management of SEAD partner institutions skilled in providing relevant and appropriate information, advice and guidance to students.		

Sustainability

SEAD is prioritising two key areas, amongst others, to ensure progress made in strengthening agricultural education will continue beyond the end of the project: formalising partnerships and improving extension service provision.

Service Training & Innovation Centres (STIC)

SEAD has invested €2.5 million in the establishment of STICs in each of the project value chains. These facilities are set up as public-private partnerships between education institutions and private sector enterprises. The STICs will help to strengthen education institutions' education, research and extension services, whilst ensuring the technical and financial sustainability of the facilities are sound and responding to community and market needs.

Customized Agricultural Extension System (CAES)

SEAD is providing support to the development of the CAES – an initiative backed by the Government of Rwanda. This system will shift from the current public sector-led system to private sector-led system, with a clear institutional and legal framework in which the role and responsibilities of the education sector are clearly defined.

1 Republic of Rwanda (2018). *National Agriculture Policy*. Rwanda: Kigali. https://www.minagri.gov.rw/fileadmin/user_upload/webstore/National_Agriculture_Policy_-_2018___Approved_by_Cabinet.pdf

2 WFP Rwanda (2019) *Rwanda Country Brief: September 2019*. Rwanda: Kigali <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/WFP-0000109860.pdf>