



Quarter Three 2024/2025 Newsletter

ABESAMIHIGO/GAKENKE District



Gakenke District farmers harvested over 50,000 tons of maize during the 2025 agricultural season >>Page 3



The role played by saving Groups in the success of Community-based health insurance in Gakenke District. >>> Page 4-5

Gakenke District tops all 30 Districts in the The Long Term Saving Scheme (EjoHeza) >> Page 5



Gakenke District initiated Maternal and Child Health week >>Page 6



Gakenke District Administrators Engaged with Partners in Discussions to Strengthen Collaboration >>Page 7-8

Introduction

This newsletter provides an overview of the progress made by Gakenke District from January to March 31, 2025 (Quarter 3 of the 2024/2025 fiscal year), highlighting the District's continued commitment to citizen-centered development. It outlines key achievements and notable events across various sectors, including Economic Development, Social Development, and Good Governance, showcasing the district's ongoing efforts to enhance the well-being of its residents.

Gakenke District, one of Rwanda's 30 districts, is located in the Northern Province and is home to a population of 389,110, comprising 50.5% females (196,512) and 49.5% males (192,598).

Agriculture remains the primary source of livelihood for approximately 92.8% of the population. Renowned for its high-quality coffee, Gakenke also faces significant environmental challenges due to its geographical features, which increase its vulnerability to climate change and result in frequent natural disasters affecting the local community.

Key Updates

Quarterly achievements are not limited to the following:

- 50,400 tons of maize were produced during the 2025 Agriculture Season A.
- Coffee growers expect to produce 544 tons of fully washed coffee.
- 750 cows were distributed to poor families through the Girinka program.
- A total of 7,226 out of the targeted 11,744 citizens have been linked to opportunities to graduate out of poverty.
- 1,772 new jobs were created across the District.
- The annual Ejo Heza savings target was achieved at 112.3% by March 2025.
- 98.9% of births were delivered in health facilities.
- Under the Pro-Poor Basket Fund, 25 new classrooms were constructed, achieving 85% completion.
- 13,500 citizens aged 15 and above were trained in basic digital literacy.
- The construction of the Gakenke District Archive is 98% complete.
- 17 cell offices were rehabilitated and 2 new cell offices were constructed.

Key activities in Economic Cluster

Gakenke District recorded a harvest of over 50,000 tons of maize during the 2025A agricultural season

Farmers in Gakenke District have expressed satisfaction with the crop yields recorded during the 2025A agricultural season.

According to data released by the District's Agriculture and Livestock Unit, maize production for the season reached 50,400 tons—surpassing the projected target of 46,390.62 tons.

Farmers from Gashenyi Sector shared that the successful harvest is expected to significantly boost household income and improve the overall well-being of their families.



On March 5, 2025, the Vice Mayor in charge of Economic Development, Mr. NIYONSENGA Aimé François, visited farmers in Gashenyi Sector

Members of Parliament conducted an assessment of initiatives aimed at safeguarding agricultural production in Gakenke District

Hon. Muzana Alice and Hon. Uwamurera Olive, members of the Parliamentary Committee on Land, Agriculture, and Environment, visited Gakenke District to assess initiatives focused on preserving agricultural production and ensuring food security for the local population. They commended the efforts of farmers, particularly the effective preservation of harvests through cooperative structures, which they found to be both innovative and impactful.



MPS visited Gakenke Cooperatives Farmers on 21 March 2025

Gakenke: Coffee Production Expected to Reach 544 Tons

Coffee is one of the major cash crops cultivated in Gakenke District, renowned both locally and internationally for its exceptional quality and distinctive flavor.

According to the Agriculture Unit in Gakenke District, production of fully washed coffee for the 2025A harvest season is projected to reach 544 tons.

Fabien Uwayezu, a coffee farmer from Mugunga Sector, noted that there is optimism for an increase in this season's harvest, citing favorable climatic conditions and an abundance of flower buds on the coffee plants as positive indicators.

Over the years, coffee farmers from Gakenke have consistently ranked among the top producers in Rwanda, as demonstrated by their strong performance in the annual Cup of Excellence competitions held across the country.



Coffee is one of the major cash crops cultivated in Gakenke District



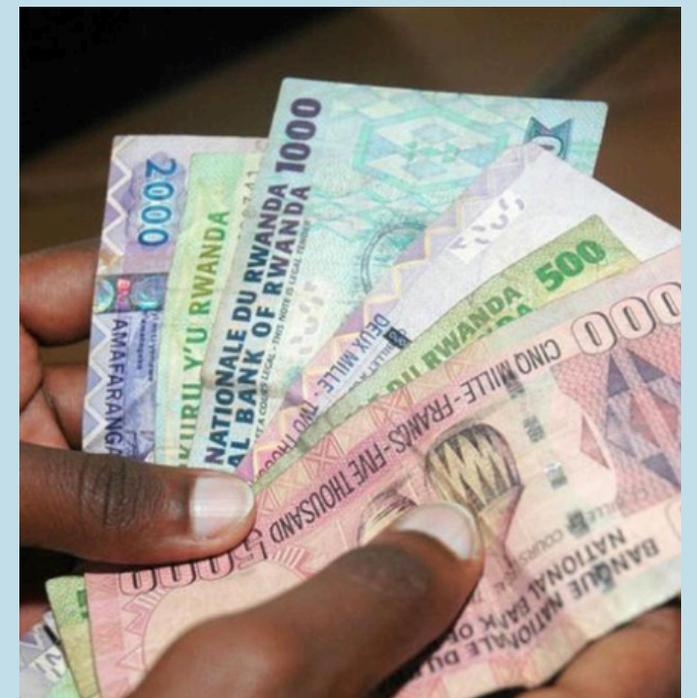
Coffee flower buds are abundance

The Role of Saving Groups in the Success of Community-Based Health Insurance in Gakenke District

Gakenke District Continues to Lead in Community-Based Health Insurance Contributions. Over the past fiscal years up to now, Gakenke District has maintained its position as one of the top-performing districts in Rwanda in meeting community-based health insurance (CBHI) contribution targets.

For the 2024/2025 fiscal year, all residents of Gakenke District have fully paid their CBHI premiums. As of March, contributions toward the following year had already reached 7%, with Muzo Sector emerging as the frontrunner at 43%.

Small savings groups have played a pivotal role in supporting low-income families to meet their CBHI obligations. Members have testified to the importance of these groups in enhancing financial access and promoting health insurance coverage for all.



Saving Groups lead to Success of Community-Based Health Insurance in Gakenke District

"We save and lend to one another, but the primary objective of our group is to support community-based health insurance. At the end of the year, we use the savings to pay for each member's health insurance," said Nayiga Edith.

"Thanks to the TWITE KU BUZIMA group, to which we belong, we contribute 300 RWF per week. When we distribute the savings, each member receives funds for their CBHI contributions," she added. Savings groups operate in a transparent and accountable manner, ensuring that funds are used exclusively for health insurance purposes.

Nyirambarushimana Vestine shared that, prior to understanding the benefits of saving group, it was challenging for a person with a family of six to pay the entire 18,000 RWF contribution in one lump sum.



Nayiga Edith said the the primary objective of our group is to support community-based health insurance



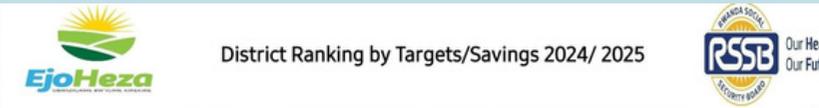
Nyirambarushimana said before understanding benefit of saving group, it was difficult to pay contribution of entire family

Gakenke District tops all 30 districts in the The Long Term Saving Scheme (EjoHeza)

A report published on February 15, 2025, revealed that residents of Gakenke District saved a total of Rwf 375,495,219, achieving 100.1% of the set target of Rwf 375 million under the Ejo Heza long-term savings scheme.

Ejo Heza is a defined contribution scheme initiated by the Government of Rwanda through the Ministry of Finance and managed by the Rwanda Social Security Board (RSSB).

As of March 31, 2025, Gakenke District had reached 112.3% of its long-term savings contribution target. This achievement is attributed to strong collaboration with stakeholders and ongoing awareness campaigns aimed at educating residents on the importance of saving for the future.



District Ranking by Targets/Savings 2024/ 2025

S/N	DISTRICTS	ACHIEVEMENT S	TARGETS	%	GAP	Province
1	Gakenke	375,495,219	375,000,000	100.1%	-495,219	Amajyaruguru
2	Burera	296,251,160	300,000,000	98.8%	3,748,840	Amajyaruguru
3	Rwamagana	314,010,810	320,000,000	98.1%	5,989,190	Iburasirazuba
4	Musanze	279,973,579	300,000,000	93.3%	20,026,421	Amajyaruguru
5	Rubavu	328,313,132	375,000,000	87.6%	46,686,868	Iburengerazuba

Gakenke District tops all 30 districts in the The Long Term Saving Scheme (EjoHeza)



Gakenke District saved a total of Rwf 375,495,219 by March

Key activities in Social Cluster

Gakenke District Launch Maternal and Child Health week

On January 13, 2025, the Vice Mayor of Gakenke District in charge of Social Welfare, Madame Uwamahoro Marie Thérèse, joined residents of Muzo Sector to officially launch Mother and Child Health (MCH) Week.

The MCH Week aimed to deliver key health interventions, including the provision of Vitamin A supplements, deworming for both children and adults, anthropometric measurements for children under the age of five, and education on Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) practices.



The Vice Mayor in charge of Social Welfare is providing a Vitamin A supplement to a child.

Development partners conducted a field visit to PPD-Basket Funded projects in Gakenke District.

On Thursday, January 23, 2025, the Mayor of Gakenke District, Madame Vestine Mukandayisenga, welcomed a delegation led by the Minister of State in the Ministry of Local Government, Hon. Kayisire Marie Solange, during their official visit to development projects supported through the Basket Fund for Pro-Poor Development in the District.

The delegation visited Gakenke District in Rwanda's Northern Province to assess the progress and impact of these initiatives. The delegation included Hon. Ambassador Heike Uta Dettmann of Germany, Hon. Ambassador Antoine Anfré of France, and Ms. Charlotte Helminger, Chargé d'Affaires of Luxembourg.

During the visit, the delegation toured two significant projects in Janja Sector—Rutake Health Center and Karama Primary School—both rehabilitated under the Basket Fund initiative. These projects aim to improve access to essential services and enhance the quality of life for local communities.



Karama Primary School rehabilitated in this project

Key activities in Good Governance Cluster

Gakenke District Celebrated International Women's Day with members of Parliament

On March 8, 2025, Rwanda joined the global community in celebrating the 50th anniversary of International Women's Day. At the district level, the celebrations in Gakenke District were held in Rwesero Cell, Ruli Sector.

The event featured a variety of activities aimed at promoting gender equality and community well-being. These included support to vulnerable residents—such as the donation of a cow to one beneficiary—formalization of informal marriages, social gatherings, and speeches addressing key themes such as the role of women in family and community development, as well as the challenges hindering women's advancement.

The event was attended by Members of Parliament, including Hon. Nizeyimana Pie, Hon. Mukandanga Speciose, and Hon. Mazimpaka Jean Claude. Also in attendance were the Mayor of Gakenke District, Madame Mukandayisenga Vestine, the Vice Mayor in charge of Social Welfare, Madame Uwamahoro Marie Thérèse, representatives of security agencies, religious leaders, residents, and other invited guests.



MPs joined Gakenke District in Celebration of International women's Day



Gakenke District Management Engages Partners in Discussions to Strengthen Collaboration

On January 13, 2025, a delegation from Gakenke District—comprising the Chairman of the District Council, Mr. Mugwiza Téléphone, the Mayor, Madame Mukandayisenga Vestine, and the Vice Mayor in charge of Economic Development, Mr. Niyonsenga Aimé François—paid a courtesy visit to the senior leadership of World Vision Rwanda. The discussions focused on strengthening existing collaboration and exploring opportunities to expand World Vision Rwanda's interventions across additional sectors within the District.



On the same day, the delegation also visited the offices of DUHAMIC-ADRI, where they held discussions on potential new areas of partnership, particularly in addressing climate-related shocks and building community resilience.



The Executive Committee shared information on public policies during a community assembly.

The Executive Committee of Gakenke District, together with other district staff, joined residents of various cells during community assemblies.

These gatherings provided a platform for citizens to voice their pressing concerns, which were addressed directly by the District Leadership.

In addition to responding to community issues, the assemblies served as an opportunity to share important information on public policies and development programs.

Furthermore, these forums play a key role in strengthening the relationship and trust between local leaders and the citizens they serve.



On January 9, 2025, the Vice Mayor in charge of Social Affairs, Madame Uwamahoro Marie Thérèse, participated in a community assembly held in Rushashi Sector.



On February 25, 2025, Mayor Mukandayisenga Vestine joined residents of Kidomo Cell in Kamubuga Sector during a community assembly



On March 4, 2025, the Vice Mayor in charge of Economic Development, Mr. Niyonsenga Aimé François, participated in a community assembly held in Karambo Sector.

Gakenke District hosted a Unity and Resilience meeting

On January 3, 2025, Gakenke District Mayor Madame Vestine Mukandayisenga welcomed participants to the District-level meeting on “Unity and Resilience,” held under the theme “The Role of Leaders in Promoting Unity and Resilience.”

In his keynote address, Northern Province Governor Mr. Maurice Mugabowagahunde examined the historical journey of the Rwandan people before, during, and after colonial rule.

Attendees then shared ideas and proposed strategies to sustain national unity and resilience, as well as to prevent and counter any threats to these foundational values.



The Governor of the Northern Province delivered the keynote message to the participants

The Parliamentary Committee on State Budget and Patrimony visited Gakenke District

On January 21, 2025, Gakenke District Mayor Madame Vestine Mukandayisenga welcomed members of the Parliamentary Committee on State Budget and Patrimony, who were on a mission to monitor and assess budget execution for the first six months of the 2024/2025 fiscal year.

During their visit, the committee members inspected ongoing development projects and followed up on budget utilization issues identified in their analysis of resolutions from the plenary session of the Chamber of Deputies, which fall under the committee’s mandate.



The committee members inspected ongoing development projects

Gakenke District Council concluded Councillors' Week.

On March 11, 2025, the Gakenke District Councillors launched Councillors' Week in Muhondo Sector as part of efforts to advance citizen-centered governance.

This initiative seeks to engage residents in discussions on the second phase of the National Strategy for Transformation (NST2) and to review the district's performance contracts for the 2024/2025 fiscal year.

During Councillors' Week, a range of activities were undertaken, including receiving and addressing citizens' concerns through collaborative problem-solving, participating in government programs alongside the community—such as community work (Umuganda) and general citizen assemblies—assessing the implementation of performance contract (Imihigo) projects across various sectors, evaluating service delivery at the sector level, and engaging with sector leadership and representatives of the citizenry.



councillors visited Nyabarongo II hydropower project



Appreciation



**Mukandayisenga Vestine,
Gakenke District Mayor**

Gakenke District would like to take a moment to extend our sincere gratitude for being part of our newsletter community. Your involvement and attention are greatly appreciated, and we are thankful to have you as a partner in our efforts to improve the well-being of our citizens.

Your continued support motivates us to keep producing and sharing meaningful content. Whether through your feedback, ideas, or simply by reading our website, it's individuals like you who make all our efforts truly rewarding. Be sure to stay tuned for exciting updates, exclusive content, and other surprises that will be coming your way in the next quarter.



This newsletter was produced by:

Evariste Nsengimana

**Public Relations, Media, and Communications Officer
Gakenke District**

Edited by:

**Vestine Mukandayisenga
Mayor, Gakenke District**

Contact Information

Telephone: +250 788 972 522

Email: nsengimana.evariste@gakenke.gov.rw