



GAKENKE DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

Jully–September, 2025

QUARTER 1

TOP NEWS

Mount Kabuye: A Must-Visit Tourist Destination in Gakenke District

Mount Kabuye, one of Rwanda’s tallest and most scenic peaks, holds a rich history—from the era of the monarchy (linked to King Gihanga and his daughter Nyirarucyaba) to the Liberation struggle.

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Gakenke: World Vision Commended for Advancing Development and Community Wellbeing

Gakenke District authorities have commended World Vision for its 17 years of work in Kivuruga and Cyabingo, where its projects have significantly improved community development and residents’ wellbeing.

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Gakenke District Recognized for Excellence in Service Delivery

Gakenke District has been awarded 3rd place nationally for outstanding performance in the delivery of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) services for the 2024–2025 fiscal year.

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Pineapple Farming Boosts Income for Ndagijimana Théogène

Ndagijimana Théogène of Karuganda Village, Gakenke Sector, has turned previously unproductive forest land into a successful pineapple farm earning in one season what the forest would have yielded over years

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JADF Terimberé Gakenke Successfully Concluded Four-Day Open Days

Partners participating in the Gakenke Open Day expressed appreciation for the event, highlighting it as a valuable platform to showcase their initiatives and engage with citizens, while also addressing concerns related to the services they provide.

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Introduction

This newsletter provides a summary of the progress made by Gakenke District between July and September 2025 (Quarter 1 of the 2025/2026 fiscal year), underscoring the District's steadfast commitment to citizen-centered development.

It highlights key achievements and milestone events across core sectors—Economic Development, Social Development, and Good Governance—demonstrating sustained efforts to enhance the well-being of all residents.

Gakenke District, one of Rwanda's 30 administrative Districts, is located in the Northern Province with a total population of 389,110 residents, comprising 50.5% female (196,512) and 49.5% male (192,598). Among the total population, youth account for 30.2%.

Agriculture is the primary source of livelihood for approximately 92.8% of the population. The District is particularly recognized for producing high-quality coffee. However, its mountainous terrain heightens vulnerability to climate change, exposing communities to recurring natural disasters that continue to pose significant challenges.

Key Achievements (July – September 2025)

- ↻ Employment Creation: 1,000 productive jobs generated.
 - ↻ Community-Based Health Insurance (CBHI): Coverage reached 100.6% of targeted beneficiaries who paid their contributions for the 2025/2026 fiscal year.
 - ↻ Access to Energy: 200 new households connected to the electricity grid.
 - ↻ Health Infrastructure: Rehabilitation of Muhondo Health Center reached 79% completion
 - ↻ Financial Inclusion: 880 individuals accessed financial services to support Income Generating Activities (IGAs).
 - ↻ Digital Literacy: 18,200 citizens aged 15 and above trained in basic digital skills.
 - ↻ Administrative Infrastructure: Rehabilitation of Karambo Sector Office achieved 75% completion
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Economic Cluster

Mount Kabuye: A Must-Visit Tourist Destination in Gakenke District

Rising 2,700 meters above sea level, Mount Kabuye is one of Rwanda's most scenic and historic peaks. Located in Gakenke District, it combines natural beauty with cultural heritage, from the era of King Gihanga to the Liberation struggle.

The 9km hike from Gakenke center offers sweeping views of the Virunga volcanoes and Lakes Burera and Ruhondo. At the summit, visitors enjoy local cuisine, camping, and fresh mountain breezes. Guided by Beyond the Gorillas Experience, tourists also discover Gakenke's cultural landmarks, including Bagenge Rock and Huro's royal beer site.

On July 1, 2025, Gakenke's Vice Mayor for Economic Development highlighted Mount Kabuye's unique tourism potential, reaffirming its place as a must-visit destination in Rwanda.



From 50,000 RWF to a Thriving Poultry Business: Manizabayo Jean D'Amour's Journey

With just 50,000 RWF and training from World Vision Rwanda, Manizabayo Jean D'Amour of Kivuruga Sector transformed his life. Starting with a small flock of chickens, he expanded into a thriving poultry business. Produced chicks using an artificial incubation (hatching) machine. His success now includes a house, farmland, and assets worth over 10 million RWF.

He urges youth to invest wisely, save, and pursue productive ventures. Over 17 years, World Vision's initiatives in Gakenke have improved community wellbeing,.....



spanning sanitation, education, nutrition, agriculture, and infrastructure, with investments exceeding 13 billion RWF.

Pineapple Farming Boosts Income for Ndagijimana Théogène

Ndagijimana Théogène of Karuganda Village, Gakenke Sector, has turned previously unproductive forest land into a successful pineapple farm, earning in one season what the forest would have yielded over years. Over 10 years, he has cultivated 2.5 hectares, built a modern house, invested in livestock, employed six staff, and provided quality education for his children.

Pineapple farming, requiring minimal maintenance beyond good seedlings and care, continues to empower farmers across Gakenke. The District now has over 1,900 professional pineapple growers, generating income, improving livelihoods, and contributing to local development. Pineapples remain a reliable and profitable crop, selling between 300 and 400 RWF each at harvest.



Ndagijimana Théogène from Karuganda Village, Gakenke Sector, earns around 800,000 RWF per season through pineapple farming.



Gakenke Inaugurates Milk Collection Center with 5,000-Liter Daily Capacity

Gakenke District officially inaugurated a milk collection center with a 5,000-liter daily capacity on July 10, 2025, in Ruli Sector under the CDAT project to strengthen agriculture and livestock development. Supported by the Business Development Fund (BDF), the cooperative managing the center received training to improve operations, enhance milk quality, and increase farmers' incomes.



Gakenke District Launches Agriculture Season 2026 A and Inaugurates Masha Vegetable & Fruit Selling Point

On Wednesday, 17 September 2025, DUHAMIC-ADRI and CARE International Rwanda, through the Kungahara Project, joined the local community, representatives from the Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB), and officials from Gakenke District to officially launch Agriculture Season 2026 A.

On the same occasion, they inaugurated the Masha Vegetable and Fruit Selling Point, constructed under the Kungahara Project. The initiative is co-funded by the European Union, the Austrian Development Agency, and CARE Austria, and is implemented by CARE International Rwanda in partnership with DUHAMIC-ADRI.



Social Cluster

Gakenke: World Vision Commended for Advancing Development and Community Wellbeing

On August 21, 2025, Gakenke District, in partnership with World Vision Rwanda, celebrated the successful completion of the Kivuruga Development Project, which has been implemented over the past 17 years. The program brought transformative change to communities by improving hygiene and sanitation, education and child welfare, nutrition, agriculture and livestock, and infrastructure, with investments exceeding Rwf 13 billion. Testimonials from beneficiaries highlighted how the project enhanced livelihoods, from access to livestock and health insurance to improved food security and family well-being.

During the ceremony, Mayor Mukandayisenga Vestine described the milestone as the beginning of a new phase in the District's development journey with World Vision, while Northern Province Governor Mugabowagahunde Maurice commended the partnership's impact and called for continued efforts to build on these achievements. To recognize World Vision's contribution, Gakenke District presented the organization with a trophy of appreciation, underscoring the enduring value of collaboration in promoting citizen-centered development.



Rotary Club Kigali Virunga Supports 1,000 Vulnerable Families in Gakenke District

A total of 1,000 vulnerable families including 500 from Gakenke Sector and 500 from Muyongwe Sector received essential household items such as mattresses, sportswear, blankets, and mosquito nets.

The support was provided by Rotary Club Kigali Virunga and distributed on August 14, 2025, in an event graced by the Governor of the Northern Province, Mr. Mugabowagahunde Maurice, and the Mayor of Gakenke District, Ms. Mukandayisenga Vestine.

Beneficiary families expressed their gratitude to Rotary Club Kigali Virunga for the assistance, noting that the support will greatly help improve their living conditions.



Gakenke: Top-Performing Schools Recognized for 2024-2025 Academic Year Exams

In a ceremony held on September 15, 2025, at GS Nemba, Gakenke District recognized school leaders and institutions that excelled in the 2024-2025 end-of-year examinations. The awards acknowledged their dedication to quality teaching and encouraged them to sustain high performance while inspiring other schools to improve.

The event was attended by the Governor of the Northern Province, Mr. Mugabowagahunde Maurice, and the District Mayor, Ms. Mukandayisenga Vestine.

Awarded schools included ES Cyabingo, Lycée St. Jerome Janja, Janja TSS, and GS Muramba. Certificates of excellence were also presented to leaders of schools that achieved 100% pass rates across all levels (P6, S3, S6, and L5).



Good Governance Cluster

Gakenke youth Talents festival: Youth Encouraged to Embrace Discipline and Hard Work for a Better Future

The Vice Mayor in charge of Economic Development, Mr. NIYONSENGA Aimé François, reminded young people that they are the driving force and hope of Rwanda's future. He urged them to uphold Rwandan values, avoid negative behaviors, and actively contribute to the country's development. He delivered the message on August 29, 2025, during Gakenke youth Talents festival and the closing ceremony of the Intore mu Biruhuko program in Janja Sector, held under the theme "Healthy Living, My Dignity."

The event, which also featured performances by artist Danny Nanone, provided a platform for youth to showcase their talents and reflect on their role in building a better future.



Gakenke District Recognized for Excellence in Civil Registration Services

On August 12, 2025, Gakenke District was recognized for its outstanding performance in civil registration, ranking third in the country with a score of 95%. The award was presented during the African Civil Registration Day celebrations and the launch of Civil Registration Week in Kivuruga Sector.

The event, held under the theme "Digital Civil Registration: A Foundation for Quality and Inclusive Services," emphasized the role of technology in enhancing efficient and inclusive service delivery.

Mireille Batamuriza, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, commended Gakenke residents for actively participating in civil registration, noting its importance for national planning.

Mayor Vestine praised residents and leaders for their dedication and encouraged ongoing efforts to improve services and aim for first place next year.



JADF Terimbere Gakenke Successfully Concluded Four-Day Open Days

The Joint Action Development Forum (JADF) Terimbere Gakenke successfully completed a four-day Open Days event aimed at showcasing development achievements and strengthening collaboration between the District, partners, and the community.

On 22 July 2025, Gakenke District held its 13th annual Open Day, bringing together development partners, private sector actors, and citizens to showcase initiatives promoting local development and wellbeing. District leadership highlighted key achievements, including top national rankings in the Ejo Heza program and Community-Based Health Insurance contributions, as well as strong service delivery performance.

The event offered citizens a chance to learn about district projects, while partners showcased their services and shared expertise to further enhance community development.



Gakenke Approved 2024–2029 Development Strategy

Gakenke District has adopted its new five-year Development Strategy (DDS 2024–2029), setting out priorities in infrastructure, human capital, agriculture, tourism, and governance.

Aligned with NST2, Vision 2050, and the SDGs, the plan aims for 100% clean water access, expanded electricity and digital connectivity, stronger health and education systems, and support for youth- and women-led enterprises.

Developed through a participatory process, the DDS reflects citizens' aspirations and positions Gakenke as a model for inclusive and sustainable local development.

The meeting was chaired by the Gakenke District Council, Mr. Mugwiza Telesphore, On August 25, 2025.



Embracing Gender Equality: A Pathway to Family and Community Development in Gashenyi

Musanabaganwa Marie-Françoise, a Civil Registration and Notary Officer in Gashenyi Sector, illustrates how gender equality and complementarity can transform family life and foster development.

Growing up in a farming household, she witnessed her parents actively practice equality by sharing responsibilities and valuing each other's contributions. This approach allowed the family to work together harmoniously, avoid conflicts, and achieve collective progress.

Musanabaganwa reflects, "By recognizing and respecting each member's role at home, we were raised responsibly, benefiting both our family and our country."

This supportive upbringing enabled her and her siblings to fully develop their talents, with no distinction between boys and girls.



Her experience underscores the importance of promoting gender equality within households as a foundation for stronger families and a more prosperous community.

Appreciation



**Mukandayisenga Vestine
Mayor, Gakenke District**

As we wrap up the first quarter of 2025-2026, I extend my sincere appreciation to all residents, community leaders, and partners for your dedication to Gakenke District's development. Your commitment in areas such as education, health & Sanitation, agriculture, infrastructures, good governance, environmental protection, youth and women empowerment and social welfare has driven remarkable progress this quarter.

I particularly commend teachers, students, public servants, and local leaders for their achievements, which reflect the shared vision of a prosperous and inclusive district.

Let us continue working together with the same unity and determination to achieve even greater milestones in the months ahead.



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