

3RD

**RWANDA
NATIONAL SEED
CONGRESS 2026**

July 20 – 21, 2026 

KIGALI MARRIOTT HOTEL 

EVENT PROGRAM

**THEME: “SEEDS AS A STRATEGIC ENGINE FOR NATIONAL
TRANSFORMATION: ADVANCING A COMPETITIVE, PRIVATE-
SECTOR-LED SEED SYSTEM FOR FOOD SECURITY, JOBS AND TRADE.”**



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PROGRAM FOR 3RD RWANDA NATIONAL SEED CONGRESS 2026

MONDAY 20TH JULY 2026

DAY 1: STRATEGIC, POLICY & INVESTMENT DIALOGUE

TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKER/PANELISTS
INAUGURAL SESSION		
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	Arrival of Delegates and Registration Partner exhibitions & bilateral networking	NSAR Secretariat
OPENING SESSION (Objective: Anchoring and Strategic positioning of the seed sector)		
9:00 AM - 9:05 AM	Welcome Remarks	Innocent Namuhoranye , Chairperson, National Seed Association of Rwanda (NSAR)
9:05 AM – 9:10 AM	Opening Remarks	Clive Mudgaza , President - Africa Seed Trade Association (AFSTA)
9:10 AM - 9:15 AM	Opening Remarks	Dr. Andreas Wais , Secretary General, International Seed Testing Association (ISTA)
9:15 AM - 9:25 AM	Development Partner Statements	Mohamed Aw-Dahir , Country Representative - FAO Rwanda
		Prof. Jean Chrysostome Ngabitsinze , Assistant Secretary General - UN, Director General - African Risk Capacity Group (ARC)
9:25 AM - 9:35 AM	Keynote Address - Leveraging the private sector to feed Africa, boost intra-Africa trade and create jobs: the case of the seed sector	Enock Chikava , Director, Economic Opportunity - Gates Foundation
9:35 AM - 9:45 AM	Official Opening and High-level address of the Congress	Guest of Honor: Hon. Dr. Solange Uwituze , Minister of State - MINAGRI
9:45 AM - 9:50 AM	Group Photo	ALL
9:50 AM - 10:00 AM	Inauguration of the Exhibition Booth Area	ALL
10:00 AM - 10:30 AM	Health Break	
10:30 AM - 11:40 AM	<i>From Vision to Action – Lessons and Commitments from Rwanda's Seed Congress Journey</i>	
	Focus - Take stock of progress since the 1st and 2nd Rwanda National Seed Congresses. - Assess implementation of the Private Sector Strategic Roadmap for Rwanda Seed Industry 2030 - Identify remaining policy, regulatory, institutional, and financing gaps - Renew commitments from the government, the private sector, and partners for accelerated delivery Format Presentation: Congress journey and implementation status (Kate Ojungo, Vice-Chairperson -National Seed Association of Rwanda (NSAR) (10min) Panel Discussion: - MINAGRI - MINICOM - MINECOFIN - BK Plc - RDB Commitments & Way Forward: Validation of priority actions and ownership (10 minutes)	

	Moderator – Enock Chikava, Director, Economic Opportunity - Gates Foundation Expected Output: Consolidated progress report on implementation of the Seed Industry Roadmap 2030 Commitment to accelerate implementation.
Output: Formal launch and high-level commitment to seed sector transformation.	
11:40 AM - 12:45 PM	Plenary 1: Seeds as a Strategic Economic Asset <i>From Agricultural Input to National Growth Engine</i>
	Focus: - Seed systems and national productivity - Jobs, GDP growth, and import substitution - Alignment with Vision 2050, NST2, and PSTA5 Format: Keynote address: Seeds as a Strategic Engine for Economic Transformation: From Agricultural Input to National Growth Engine (15min): Dr. Agnes Kalibata, Founder and Chair of C4Impact Advisory Group. Public & Private Sector Panel Dr. Agnes Kalibata, Founder and Chair of C4Impact Advisory Group Regis Rugemanshuro, CEO - RSSB Innocent Namuhoranye, Chairperson - NSAR Stella Nteziryayo Rusine, CEO – BRD Dr. Patrick Karangwa, DG-Agriculture modernization - MINAGRI Emmanuel Nyirimana, Head of the National Projects Development & Quality Assurance Department - MINECOFIN Moderator – Prof. Alfred R. Bizoza, Professor of Agricultural Economics and Policy Analyst, University of Rwanda. Expected Output: A national positioning statement recognizing seed systems as a strategic driver of productivity, food security, and economic transformation, identification of priority actions to strengthen seed system performance, pathways on how improved seed systems can support job creation across seed value chains (breeding, production, processing, distribution, extension, digital services), roadmap for increasing the seed sector's contribution to GDP growth through higher yields, value-chain development, and agro-industrial expansion, recommendations to reduce seed import dependence through local breeding capacity, domestic seed enterprise development, and regional competitiveness.
12:45 PM - 1:50 PM	LUNCH BREAK & Bilateral Meetings
1:50 PM - 2:50 PM	Plenary 2: Private-Sector Leadership & Investment <i>Unlocking Capital for a Competitive Seed Industry</i>
	Focus: - PPP models and blended finance - Investment pipelines and bankability - Role of DFIs and private investors Format: Presentation on Investment Outlook (Dr. Olivier Kamana, PS- MINAGRI) Policy & Investors Panel Discussion Mbundu Faustin, Chairman - MFK Group, Bernard NSENGIYUMVA, Executive Director of the Financial Stability Directorate - National Bank of Rwanda (BNR), Levi Gasangwa, Chief Business and Corporate Solutions – BK Plc, Patience Mutesi, MD - BPR BANK Herbert Asimwe, Head of the Financial sector- MINECOFIN.

	Moderator – Prof. Alfred R. Bizoza, Professor of Agricultural Economics and Policy Analyst, University of Rwanda. Expected Output: Public–private partnership (PPP) models to strengthen seed production, processing, certification, and distribution systems, Identification of blended finance mechanisms (grants, guarantees, concessional loans, equity) to de-risk investments in seed enterprises, suggested bankable seed-sector investment opportunities across the value chain (breeding, seed multiplication, logistics, digital systems, agro-dealer networks), criteria and actions to improve investment readiness and bankability of seed companies and seed-related SMEs, defined roles for development finance institutions (DFIs) in risk-sharing, technical assistance, catalytic financing, and entry points for private investors (venture capital, impact investors, commercial banks, seed companies) to participate in seed sector growth.
2:50 PM - 4:00 PM	Plenary 3: Climate Resilience, Innovation & Biotechnology <i>Future-Proofing Rwanda's Agriculture</i>
	Focus: • Climate-smart varieties • Biotechnology and regulatory readiness • Innovation, governance, and public trust Format: • Presentation on Technical Policy: Dr. Kanangire Canisius, Executive Director - Africa Agriculture Technology Foundation (AATF) (10min) • Presentation on the Importance of Seed Treatment: Wayne Van Rensburg, Technology Manager for Seedcare AME- Syngenta (10min) • Dialogue (panel discussion and Q&A) Wayne Van Rensburg, Technology Manager for Seedcare AME- Syngenta Peggy Odongo, Business Portfolio Manager S&T Licensing - BAYER, Juliet Kabera, DG-REMA Dr. Patrick Karangwa, DG-Agriculture modernization – MINAGRI Sudhakar Hanumanthappa, Chief Operating Officer, Syova Seed (U) Ltd (East African Seed) Dr. David Kipkosgei Tarus, Senior Seed Systems Programs Officer - AATF Moderator – Stella Simiyu, Chief Executive Officer, CropLife Africa Middle East Expected Output: A priority list of climate-smart crop varieties, a regulatory readiness roadmap to enable safe deployment of biotechnology solutions, identification of policy and institutional gaps affecting biotechnology adoption, a framework to strengthen innovation governance and coordination among research, government, private sector, and farmers, and guidance on a strategy for public engagement and trust-building biotechnology.
4:00 PM - 4:15 PM	Health Break
4:15 PM - 5:20 PM	Plenary 4: Digitalization, Youth & Gender Inclusion
	Focus: • Digital seed traceability and AI • Youth employment and women's inclusion • Formalization and financial access

	Format: Keynote Address: Digitalization, Youth, and Gender Inclusion: Esther Kunda, DG in Charge of Innovation & Emerging Technologies – MINICT (10 min) Digital Seed traceability, and Government digital certification: Bajeneza Jean Pierre, Ag. DG – RICA (10 min) Panel Discussion (30 minutes) Kate Ojunga, Vice – Chair - NSAR Bajeneza Jean Pierre, Ag. DG - RICA Dr. Solomon Gizaw, Head of TAAT Clearinghouse - IITA Esther Kunda, DG In Charge of Innovation & Emerging Technologies - MINICT Dr. Joseph Moughan, Founding Director - RICA Seed Center Moderator – Evelyn Lusenaka, Director, Center of Excellence for Seed System (AGRA) Expected Output: Suggest digital seed traceability systems (e.g., certification tracking, anti-counterfeit solutions, real-time seed distribution monitoring), identify priority AI applications (e.g., advisory services, climate risk alerts, input targeting), and provide a strategy to expand youth and women's participation in seed systems and agri-tech services.	
6:00 PM	GALA DINNER	All Delegates

DAY 2: IMPLEMENTATION & DELIVERY PLENARIES

TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKER/PANELISTS
9:00 AM - 9:20 AM	Opening Plenary: From Strategy to Execution	
	Purpose: Set a shared implementation lens for Day 1 Recap of Day 1 strategic outcomes: Dr. Patrick Karangwa, Director General of Agriculture Modernization, MINAGRI Objectives & expected deliverables for Day 2: Kate Ojunga, Vice -Chair - NSAR - Framing implementation around regulation, finance, technology, markets, and people Output: Shared implementation framework and expectations for actionable outcomes.	
09:20 AM - 10:10 AM	Implementation Plenary 1: Enabling the Seed System <i>Building a Predictable and Trade-Ready System</i>	
	Integrated Themes: - Seed Quality Assurance & Certification (ISTA, OECD) - Seed Law, IP Protection & Biotechnology Governance - Variety Development & Seed Production Systems Key Questions: - What regulatory and quality assurance reforms are essential for competitiveness? - How can we quantify the economic benefits of International Accredited Seed systems for Rwanda? - How do we accelerate ISTA/OECD readiness and innovation governance? - How do breeding, production, and certification systems align end-to-end?	

	Format: • 20-minute presentation from experts: Dr. Andreas Wais, ISTA – Secretary General (SG), Csaba Gaspar, Head of Section - OECD Codes and Schemes, Yolanda Huerta - Vice Secretary General – UPOV. • Panel Discussion (30 minutes) Dr. Claid Mujaju – Member of ISTA ExCom Bajeneza Jean Pierre, Ag. DG- RICA Paul Coleman, Chairman - Rumbuka Seed Ltd Ephraim Wachira, Deputy Managing Director – KEPHIS Dr. James Micah Onsando - International Seed Systems Consultant NEPAD/AU • Question and Answers (5 minutes) Moderator – Dr. Joseph Ahenda, AGRA & SAP Member Expected Output: • Integrated regulatory and quality assurance roadmap • Agreed institutional roles and timelines • Priority actions for innovation and certification systems
10:10 AM - 11:00 AM	Implementation Plenary 2: Development Partners Seed Sector development <i>Aligning External Financing and Global Frameworks to Rwanda's Seed Sector Priorities</i>
	Focus: • Mapping existing and pipeline development partner commitments to Rwanda's seed sector • harmonizing partner frameworks (nutrition, climate, food systems, trade) with national seed priorities • Accelerating co-financing, joint programming, and results-based partnerships in the seed value chain. Key Questions: • How are existing development partner programs aligned with Rwanda's Private Sector Seed Industry Strategic Roadmap 2030, NST2, and PSTA5? • What financing instruments (grants, concessional loans, technical assistance, guarantees) can, or are, development partners deploying to de-risk private seed sector investment in Rwanda, and how is this impacting smallholder farmers? • How do we build a coordinated development-partner results framework that avoids duplication and enables measurable collective impact in Rwanda's seed sector? Format: • Keynote address: Dr. Andreas Wais, ISTA – Secretary General (SG) (10min) • Brief Partner Spotlight: Current and planned engagement in Rwanda's seed sector: Alexis Bizimana, Bank of Kigali (10 min) • Moderated Panel (30 minutes): Mohamed Aw-Dahir, Country Representative, FAO Evelyn Lusenaka, Director, Center of Excellence for Seed System (AGRA) Alexis Bizimana, Bank of Kigali Dr. Andreas Wais, ISTA – Secretary General (SG) • Joint Commitment Statements (5 minutes): Each partner articulates one concrete commitment for inclusion in the Congress Communiqué Moderator – Eugene Anangwe, CEO, EAMGTV

	Expected Output: • Mapping of each partner's thematic focus and timelines against Rwanda's Seed Industry Roadmap priorities • Identification of joint programming or co-financing opportunities for 2026–2030 across food systems, climate resilience, and youth/gender enterprise development • Individual partner commitment statements and an agreed coordination mechanism for formal adoption in the Congress Communiqué and tracking.
11:00 AM -11:15 AM	Health Break
11:15 AM-12:15 PM	Implementation Plenary 3: Financing, Markets and Digital Systems <i>(Making the Seed Sector Bankable and Trade-Ready)</i>
	Integrated Themes: • Financing the Seed Value Chain • Digitalization, AI & Data Systems • Market Development & Regional Trade (AfCFTA readiness) Key Questions: • How do certification and compliance translate into bankability? • How can digital systems reduce risk, improve transparency, and unlock finance? • What is required for Rwanda to become a regional seed trade hub? Format: • Investment and digital system presentations (10 minutes): Antoine Sebera, CEO - Rwanda Information Society Authority (RISA) • Investor–policy–private sector panel (40 min) Soumana Abdoulaye Djiro, Regional Lead - Western Seed Company Munyaneza Jean Marie Vianney, Agribusiness Expert - NAEB Alexis Bizimana, Head of Agribusiness - BK Chantal Tuyishimire, PS – MINICOM Clive Mudgaza, Seedco Group Director & AFSTA President Antoine Sebera, CEO - Rwanda Information Society Authority (RISA) Darius Clement Nkuriza, Head of Agribusiness, BPR BANK. • Market access and financing commitments (10 minutes) Moderator – Evelyn Lusenaka, Director, Center of Excellence for Seed System (AGRA) Expected Output: • Seed sector financing models and instruments • Mobilizing and leveraging funds on the national level and international available financing instruments for Rwanda Seed Sector Growth • Digital traceability and data integration priorities • Market access and export readiness action points

12:15 PM - 1:15 PM	Implementation Plenary 4: National Seed Associations Dialogue <i>(Strengthening Regional Seed Association Collaboration for a Competitive and Inclusive Seed Trade)</i>
	Focus: • Sharing experiences and lessons from national seed industry development across East and Southern Africa • Advancing regional harmonization of seed quality standards and certification systems • The role of seed associations in local and regional seed industry development and the implementation of COMESA harmonization Integrated themes; • Private Sector-Led Industry Development; Collective Advocacy & Policy Engagement; Knowledge Exchange & Capacity Building Key Questions: • Best practices from each country in private-sector-led seed industry development that other emerging markets can adopt? • How can national seed associations strengthen their collective voice in continental policy processes to advocate for a more enabling environment for the private seed sector? • What are the most critical regulatory and standards-harmonization gaps preventing seamless intra-regional seed trade among countries? Format: • Presentation on National seed industry role, key achievements, and one priority area for regional collaboration (2 Seed Associations - South Africa and Rwanda (10 minutes) • National Seed Associations panel discussion (Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, South Africa, Uganda, Rwanda) (40 min) Clive Mudgaza, Seedco Group Director & AFSTA President Narcis Tumushabe Rwangoga, President, (USTA) Jean Bosco Safari, Board Member, (NSAR) Moderator – Eugene Anangwe, CEO, EAMGTV Expected Output: • A Regional Seed Industry Status: a comparative summary of seed industry development across the six countries, to be published as an annex to the Congress Proceedings. • Identification of at least two (2) priority areas for immediate bilateral or multilateral seed trade or investment collaboration. • Recommendations to AFSTA and AU for strengthening the national seed association institutional capacity as drivers of private sector-led seed systems.
1:15 PM - 2:30 PM	Lunch & Strategic Bilateral meetings

2:30 PM - 3:45 PM	Implementation Plenary 5: Human Capital, Inclusion, and Industry Professionalization	
	Integrated Themes: • Skills Development • Youth Employment • Gender Inclusion and Formalization Key Questions: • What skills are missing to professionalize the seed industry? • How do we scale youth- and women-led seed enterprises? • How can inclusion be linked to finance, certification, and social protection? Format: • Presentation: Prof. Alfred R. Bizoza, Professor of Agricultural Economics and Policy Analyst, University of Rwanda. • Panel discussion Dr. Hitimana Regis, Chief Benefits Officer: RSSB Patrick Kananga, Head of the Employment Ecosystem Policy and Strategy Department - MIFOTRA Dr. Saidi Rumanzi Mbaraka, Head of Seed Enterprise - RICA Seed Center Kate Ojunga NSAR Vice- Chair Dr. Florence Uwamahoro, Ag. DG –RAB • Commitments and actions (10 minutes) Moderator – Dr. Esperance Munganyinka, Head of Department of National Research and Innovation Fund (NRIF) at National Council for Science and Technology (NCST)-Rwanda. Expected Output: • Seed sector human capital development framework • Youth and gender inclusion commitments • Action points for professionalization and formalization	
3:45 PM - 4:00 PM	Health Break	
4:00 PM - 4:20 PM	NSAR Partners Commitments (RDI/BK/RICA/ISTA/RSSB/AGRA) Moderator: Eugene Anangwe	
4:20 PM - 5:00 PM	Closing Synthesis Plenary: From Commitments to Delivery	
	Purpose: Consolidate outcomes into official Congress deliverables • Report-back from Implementation Plenaries • Validation of the Seed Sector Action Matrix (2026–2029) • Adoption of the Congress Communiqué • Next steps toward ISTA Congress 2028 Closing Plenary Innocent Namuhoranye, Chairperson, NSAR François Twagirumukiza, Chairperson, Private Sector Federation (PSF) MINICOM Final Outputs: • Validated Seed Sector Action Matrix • Congress Communiqué with policy and investment commitments • Clear implementation of ownership and timelines	
6:30 PM – 9:00 PM	High-Level Networking Dinner	(By invitation only)



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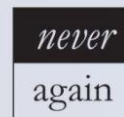
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