



Gabiro Agribusiness Hub - Phase one completion: Pioneering sustainable agricultural solutions in Rwanda.

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KIGALI, RWANDA – In Rwanda's Eastern province, a ground-breaking initiative is underway to revolutionise agricultural practices, enhance food security, and foster economic development. The Gabiro Agribusiness Hub (GAH), spearheaded by the Rwanda Development Board and Gabiro Agribusiness Hub Ltd, represents a convergence of innovation, sustainability, and community empowerment. SMEC, a leading engineering and development firm, is playing a pivotal role as the project's development supervisor.

The GAH operates in a region characterised by challenging terrain and limited rainfall, making traditional rain-fed agricultural methods unsustainable. To overcome these obstacles, the project has implemented a modern drip irrigation system, a significant technological advancement from conventional methods. This automated system not only ensures up to 90% water efficiency but also minimises environmental impact, setting GAH apart as a leader in sustainable agricultural practices.

Critical to the success of the project is the establishment of ancillary infrastructure, including electric power supplies, road networks, and pumping stations. Despite the scale of the undertaking, SMEC's expertise and collaboration with government bodies has facilitated smooth progress for phase one completion. Furthermore, the project emphasises knowledge transfer and grassroots training, empowering local communities to sustainably manage and operate the new systems.

Alemayehu Senbeta, SMEC Team Leader said, "To enable this irrigation system, several components must fall into place: electric power supplies must be installed, parts must be imported, road networks must be robust, and pumping stations must be installed. Despite the gargantuan task, the project has progressed smoothly with the expertise of SMEC and the active collaboration with government bodies."

The GAH goes beyond agricultural innovation, embodying a holistic approach to sustainable development. Approximately 30% of the project's land is dedicated to community use, fostering economic opportunities for local farmers. Moreover, investments in essential infrastructure and the development of modern villages contribute to the region's socioeconomic growth and create a thriving agricultural value chain.

Government representative Uwituze Solange said “Irrigation infrastructure allows farmers to have reliable access to water throughout the year, reducing their dependency on rainfall. This leads to increased crop yields and higher productivity, which can attract private sector investments by offering a more stable and profitable agricultural environment. With irrigation, farmers can grow a wider range of crops and engage in agricultural activities throughout the year.”

The successful implementation of GAH's first phase demonstrates the feasibility of achieving economic prosperity while safeguarding the environment. As a model for future sustainable development initiatives, GAH exemplifies the potential for large-scale irrigated agriculture to be both profitable and environmentally sustainable. This paradigm shift toward modern, efficient farming practices is essential for ensuring long-term food security and socioeconomic development in Rwanda.

[End of Media Release]

- **Read more about SMEC involvement in this project:** <https://www.smec.com/au/project/gabiro-agribusiness-hub/>

About SMEC and SJ Group

SJ Group is a diverse collective of problem solvers for the built environment, continually reimagining ways to create a smart and sustainable future. Headquartered in Singapore, the group has a global talent pool of 16,000 in its member companies AETOS, Atelier Ten, B+H, CHIL, KTP, Prostruct, Robert Bird Group, SAA, SMEC and Surbana Jurong, based in more than 120 offices in over 40 countries. They include architects, designers, planners, engineers, facilities managers and other specialists driven by progressive thinking and creative ideas to shape a better future.

SMEC has carved a niche as a trusted partner on major global infrastructure projects. SMEC's expertise extends to water, transport, and energy projects that are instrumental in creating sustainable communities.

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