



PELLET

2020 Finalist Team Guide

PRESENTER:

Elias Kagabo [Eh-Lee-Yas | Ka-Ga-Bo]
Biomedical Engineering (U)
Trinity College



In his free time, Elias likes to read about novel scientific discoveries and to watch comedy shows. He also likes to explore new places and meet different people—He believes he can learn from anyone and any circumstances. Facts: Elias met the president of Rwanda and the 42nd president of the United States, Bill Clinton. He has been to 7 countries on three different continents. He owns two cows (one called Madonna). Since he was young, Elias loved to build stuff. This led him to pursue an engineering education in college, which got him excited about “design”. Throughout his education thus far, Elias has held multiple leadership positions (such as CGI U campus representative and Resident Assistant) with which he had to learn how to solve problems. A son of a subsistence farmer, Elias has been looking for opportunities where he could use his design experiences to tackle two issues present in Rwanda: (1) lack of affordable fertilizers and (2) waste management. Thanks to the Wege Prize that brought about the concept of the circular economy; it helped him and his colleagues to start a way to solve the two problems at the same time in a more sustainable manner. Upon graduation, Elias plans to launch a career as an entrepreneur in either agriculture or healthcare technology or both.

OTHER TEAM MEMBERS:

Jean Claude Nsengiyumva
Agricultural Sciences (U)
EARTH University



Eric Murwanashyaka
Agricultural Sciences (U)
EARTH University



Theoneste Niyomushumba
Business Administration (U)
Ashesi University



Nadine Iradukunda
Mechanical Engineering (U)
Ashesi University



TEAM BIO

Pellet Group is composed of five visionary youth from Rwanda, all born in rural areas. They all lived on the farms of their families and faced similar challenges such as low agricultural production due to lack of necessary inputs like fertilizers. They all have the ambition to use their knowledge and skills from different fields of expertise to give their contribution to agriculture development as they are all aware that more than 80% of the Rwandan population lives on that including their own families. Pellet Group as a team started in early 2017, and its mission was to invest in local manufacturing of agricultural inputs and increase access to the use of fertilizers among Rwandan farmers. That was when they started saving as the best possible option for young people who want the seed capital to implement their idea. The application process has been a learning experience for the team. They faced different challenges such as timing due to being in different countries with different time zones. However, the team has some of the memorable experiences including unbelievable way everyone on the team became fanatical with the circular economy philosophy, incredible support from their advisors, fun conversations and jokes, quick registration of their business project in the Rwanda Development Board (RDB), and having one girl on the team. The team is excited about reaching the final phase of the competition and they look forward to including the Wege Prize in their books as a big supporter for the implementation of their business project. Our prize money will contribute to the seed capital that we are putting together.

SOLUTION SUMMARY

Pellet is developing a system to do just that by tackling persistent waste streams while creating economic opportunity, nurturing soil health, and aiming to jumpstart a budding industry in Rwanda in the process.