



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

# ISOKO Y'UBUZIMA

Quarterly Newsletter

July-September, 2022

## Sanitation and Hygiene Influencers Making the Difference

William Musoni spends his days working as a laborer. When he's not working, he educates communities in Rwanda's Eastern Province on good hygiene practices, with a special focus on handwashing. As a mobilizer for community savings and loan associations, he also encourages people to invest in and use proper sanitation facilities and products.

"Because I have built a relationship with local leaders, if I request a space to speak about sanitation and hygiene, they always grant my wish," William said. "I estimate that I have reached between 6,000 and 7,000 community members

during community gatherings and association meetings."

In Rwanda, where there is a vibrant culture of community service, William is one of 1,200 people from 10 districts across Rwanda who was trained in the Isoko y'Ubuzima program, implemented by a consortium led by Water For People in Rwanda and funded by USAID. The program goals are to improve WASH governance, improve drinking water services, and improve sanitation and handwashing services and products... [Read more](#)

## No regrets for investing in sanitation - Valentine Uwamaharo



Valentine says she convinced her husband to top up the savings made from the VSLA by Rwf 80,000 (about \$75).

"We have benefited," Valentine responds when asked if this investment was worth it. "The latrine we had before was of poor quality, not deep enough, and almost full, resulting in poor hygiene. Flies were everywhere, and now and then, we were getting ill because of poor hygiene."

It's been five months since Valentine Uwamaharo says she first heard about the importance of constructing an improved latrine for her family. It was during a visit by the USAID-funded Isoko y'Ubuzima project community mobilizers alongside volunteers of "Twungurane Ibitekerezo," a village savings and loan association (VSLA) in her neighborhood of which she is a member.

She says every member of her VSLA has a target to achieve using their annual savings made from the association. Her goal was to build an improved latrine using her Rwf 60,000 (about \$56) in savings.

She adds that her previous latrine was 3 meters deep and made from corn straws, and the roof and the concrete were made from wood.

"At that visit, they [community mobilizing volunteers] told us that the standards of a latrine are between 10-15 meters deep. Now, we meet this requirement," Valentine says proudly.

Standing outside the latrine, Valentine points to the new concrete and cement slab, the Satopan to keep flies away, the wooden shelter structure, and the tiled roof. Outside the toilet, she even installed a homemade handwashing facility.

"Before, we used to use grasses to clean ourselves after using the toilet, but after the sensitization, we heard about the use of toilet paper or other clean materials or even water." Through the involvement of key sanitation influencers and with the support of opinion leaders and district staff, Isoko y'Ubuzima rolled out Social Behavior Change (SBC) initiatives and demand creation strategy at the community level to change sanitation practices for members of the community like Valentine.

This strategy and initiatives came through the delivery of behavior change messages, sales and marketing on sanitation and hygiene products in community groups, household visits, and linking the community with district sanitation centers, showrooms, and financial mechanisms.

The mobilization effort reached over 44,000 members, of which 5,587 gained access to basic sanitation and hygiene services. This included over 1,100 households that constructed or improved their toilets.

YEAR 1 BRIEF  
OCTOBER, 2022



CONTEXT

Isoko y’Ubuzima is a 5-year USAID-funded project implemented from July 2021 through July 2026 by a consortium led by Water For People to improve water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) service delivery. Other members of the consortium are IRC, Vitens Evides International (VEI), CARE International, and African Evangelistic Enterprise (AEE).

The overall Isoko y’Ubuzima goal is to increase and sustain equitable access to and use of safe drinking water and sanitation and hygiene services.

Isoko y’Ubuzima provides technical and financial support for the Government of Rwanda through 3 major strategic objectives which are to 1) Improve WASH governance, 2) Improve drinking water services and 3) Improve sanitation and hygiene services and products.



OBJECTIVES

Year 1

5,400 PEOPLE

To have increased awareness about hygiene and sanitation products available at District Sanitation Centers

5,000 PEOPLE

Will gain access to basic sanitation and hygiene services

30 PEOPLE

From district and national institutions to be trained on inclusive governance

PROGRESS

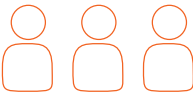
Year 1

OVER 44,000 PEOPLE Reached
OVER 5,500 PEOPLE Gained access
203 PEOPLE Trained

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

Improving water, sanitation, and hygiene governance

Isoko y’Ubuzima recognizes that with proper management, a water scheme can last decades. Hence, the strengthening of the capacity of government and private sector to sustain water systems.



152 PRACTITIONERS

in WASH sector at national and district levels have registered and are taking the WASH system academy course to improve their management of the sector building blocks.



30 PEOPLE

graduated from the WASH system academy courses to improve the management of WASH sector building blocks and received certificates of completion.



24 STAFF

at the national level trained on gender and social inclusion mainstreaming in WASH planning.



40 PEOPLE

trained on the WASH full lifecycle costing at the district and national level; staff are from the 10 targeted districts, Ministry of Infrastructure (MININFRA), Water and Sanitation Corporation (WASAC) and Local Administrative Entities Development Agency (LODA).



234 WOMEN

entrepreneurs trained on leadership to build capacity in business management.



## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

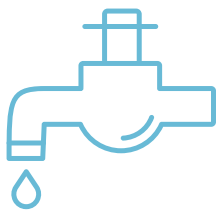
### Improve drinking water services

Non-revenue water refers to water or revenue lost through leakages in the pipes, water theft, improper metering, and billing errors. It leads to a reduction in the level of water distributed to households and revenue to operators, hence diminishing the quality of water services.



10  
District Metered  
Areas installed

as a pilot project to strengthen the capacity of private operators in monitoring and reducing water loss on 10 selected water supply systems.



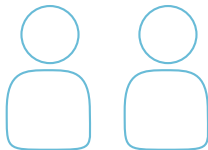
8  
Districts with  
engineering designs

of water supply systems that will help districts have WASH investment plans and reach universal water access.



10  
Staff of private  
operators

trained in business profitability assessments.



13  
Private  
operators

and staff from WASAC trained on non-revenue water and strategies to reduce water loss.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

### Improve sanitation and hygiene services and products

Low demand for WASH services leads to an increase in health challenges. Isoko y'Ubuzima works to remove barriers preventing community members in our areas of implementation from purchasing sanitation and hygiene products.

#### ASSESSMENTS TO GUIDE INTERVENTIONS OVER THE LIFE OF THE PROJECT

- The building block assessment to revise the national WASH multi-year action plan (2022-2024) and develop the WASH finance strategy
- Capacity assessment for District WASH Boards and Officers
- The assessment of water supply private operators to determine priority areas for capacity strengthening
- Inclusive sanitation marketing and financial mechanism assessment of behavior drivers and customer preferences and purchasing power of households to buy sanitation and hygiene products

1,928

Hygiene focal points and village agents mobilized to increase demand for sanitation and hygiene products.

1,100

Households constructed or improved their toilets as a result of the demand-creation strategy.

120

SACCO managers and 10 deans of the SACCOs in the 10 districts sensitized to financial demand creation.

41

Showrooms established to increase accessibility and affordability of sanitation products and four public buildings identified for conversion into District Sanitation Centers.

315

School hygiene clubs established in 304 schools to promote sanitation practices among the next generation. These clubs have 1890 members.

2,376

SATO pans sold as a result of Isoko y'Ubuzima community mobilization to buy sanitation and hygiene products.