

# ISOKO Y'UBUZIMA

Quarterly Newsletter January-March, 2023

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 in Rwanda to improve WASH service delivery.



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## ISOKO Y'UBUZIMA

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## WOMEN BOOSTING THE SANITATION CHANGES WE NEED IN THE COMMUNITY



Rose Kanziga is an operator of a community showroom in the Nyamagabe District who initiates talks about sanitation improvement with her clients.

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 services which is critical to improved health outcomes, improving the living standards of Rwandan citizens, and achieving Rwanda's long-term development goals.

Under one of its strategic objectives, the Isoko y'Ubuzima project is working on creating a community with a transformed mindset about sanitation and hygiene. One of the major transformations the project is aiming for is personal/household ownership of the process of living sanitary lives with proper hygiene and safe, clean water. The project is implementing activities that help families understand why they should prioritize the improvement of their sanitation while being intentional towards achieving this improvement. The transformation is also based on abandoning the mindset of always expecting help to come from someone else, and the

“sanitation is a woman's only responsibility” mentality.

These changes have started happening! Now, Isoko y'Ubuzima is giving a shoutout to some of the women in the community that are boosting the sanitation change the project aims to achieve. These women are influencing their husbands, families, and communities to accept investing in proper hygiene and sanitation facilities like installing handwashing facilities and/or building latrines.

Through market-based sanitation, Isoko y'Ubuzima is building the capacity of producers to fill any gaps in



the supply chain of sanitation products to the community. As one of the approaches to bringing sanitation products closer to households, Isoko y'Ubuzima has established community showrooms. The showrooms eliminate the geographical barrier to household access to essential sanitation and hygiene products. Most operators of these showrooms established so far are run by shopkeepers who add a dedicated corner of sanitation and hygiene products in the shop. In response to the demand created by the project's social behavior change agents commonly known as Hygiene Focal Points and Village Agents (HFPs & VAs) in the community, these showrooms are meant to fill the demand. These HFPs and VAs often leverage community meetings "Inteko z'Abaturage", Village Saving and Loans Associations (VSLAs), and monthly Umuganda days, for example, to raise awareness on the products available and or showcase new ones. Sometimes they are joined by the showroom operators too!

Speaking of these boosters of positive change, Rose Kanziga is the operator of a community showroom in Nyamagabe District, Tare Sector. When she was trained on hygiene and sanitation behavior change communication by Isoko y'Ubuzima and encouraged to add a sanitation corner to her business, she gladly took the advice. Rose easily started initiating talks about sanitation improvement with her clients. While challenging the norm about sanitation needs being a women's responsibility, Rose influenced many men in her community to buy SATO pans and set goals of improving their household latrines. She always challenges peers to adopt improved standards of hygiene in their lives.

Similarly, Rose Uwineza is the operator of a showroom in Kayonza District, Mukarange Sector, Kayonza Cell, and Kayonza Centre Village. Her showroom is in the city center, and this location is strategic for being accessible to everyone coming to the main market or seeking other services in this small town. Rose is an entrepreneur at heart, and

her business growth and bookkeeping are impressive. Rose sees the potential of the showroom as a business and the impact it has on the community primarily by bringing sanitation products nearby and changing people's mindset on spending on hygiene and sanitation products. She hopes to add more products and partner with the sales agents and the HFPs in community mobilization. To conclude this shoutout to the changemakers, here is another example of a woman who was able to help her family to prioritize their sanitation needs.

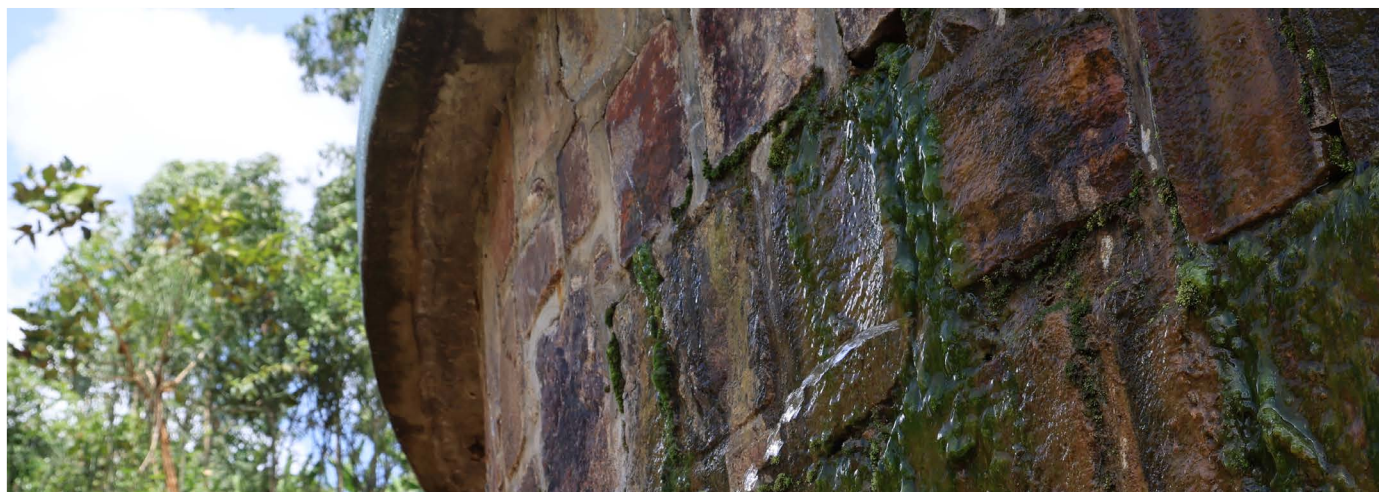
Nyirahabimana Cesarie is the wife of Jean de Dieu Ayirwanda. They live in Ngoma District, Mutenderi Sector, Mutenderi Cell, and Akarimba Village. Cesarie is part of the advisory board of their village. Therefore, she is one of the early adopters of key messages of community development and often aims to be an example to her community. Cesarie contributes to her family's development through her husband. In the past, her husband did not think "improved sanitation" needs should be a priority for their family. For him having a latrine-even if it is not close to the house-in any condition is enough. However, Cesarie learned from the Urumuri group, her VSLA, the value of an improved latrine and hygiene to her family's health and safety. She started to share these new insights with her husband. After multiple discussions with her husband and hearing the same sanitation behavior change messages on the radio, he realized it was time for his family to act. As a result, Cesarie and her family built a new roofed latrine with an all-covered hygienic slab, and a hand-washing tippy tap in their home.

These women and others like them leading changes in their homes and community are the unsung leaders. They drive the impact that Isoko y'Ubuzima aims to see and their efforts do not go unnoticed. These cheerleaders are key to sustainable impact in the community, and the more empowered women we have, the more households improve their sanitation and lifestyle.



## ILLUSTRATION: LAYING GROUND FOR WATER SUPPLY SYSTEMS REHABILITATION WORKS

In its efforts to achieve its strategic objective of improved drinking water, Isoko y'Ubuzima reached a crucial milestone of completing the procurement process for the first round of water supply system rehabilitation. We have now signed contracts with successful bidders and will finalize the rehabilitation of the selected water supply systems this year. Here are some pictures of the current state of water supply systems that will be rehabilitated.



*Broken water pumps will be rehabilitated, leaky water tanks will be fixed to ensure the continuity of water supply services to the communities.*



# THE WATER CUSTOMER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN THE PIPELINE

Group photo of stakeholders who attended the customer management system review meeting.



Isoko y'Ubuzima is supporting the Government of Rwanda to develop a Customer Management System (CMS) that will help improve the water services delivery in 10 districts of the project. The system will also be used in the remaining 20 districts.

In March, the project organized a meeting to introduce to stakeholders the consultant who is developing the CMS. The overall objective of the meeting was to bring stakeholders together, clarify goals and objectives, and introduce the consultant commissioned for CMS development.

In his opening remarks during the meeting, Mr. Alexis Mutware, General Manager at Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority (RURA), asked the participants to carefully review the proposed features of the CMS to ensure solutions truly address challenges in private operators' management of their water customers to ensure the continuity of services.

RURA and Water For People believe that consulting and engaging the key stakeholders such as private operators, public institutions like the Ministry of Infrastructure, the Ministry of Local Government, the Water

and Sanitation Corporation (WASAC), and development partners in the water, sanitation, and hygiene sector before the system development stage will help ensure that Isoko y'Ubuzima addresses the needs of different users, and therefore contribute to achieving the expected results.

When the system is operational, it will benefit the population in all rural districts throughout the country as it is expected to improve accountability for private operators toward local communities, and the level of water service provision.

Private operators will be able to reduce commercial water losses through improved billing and revenue collection efficiency, on-time monitoring, and reporting as well as a way to track and collect arrears and manage customer mapping.

RURA, districts, and WASAC will be able to bridge data gaps and manage consumer information, increase regulation and royalty fees, improve water service provision, efficiently monitor the performance of private operators, and customize advisory and capacity building to private operators based on reliable data.



Mr. Alexis Mutware, General Manager at RURA.

## NEW DISTRICT SANITATION CENTERS TO BE AVAILABLE

The building that will be repurposed to become Kirehe District Sanitation Center.



customers, government, and the financial sector come together in their common effort to raise and sustain improved household sanitation coverage to 100 percent to ensure that all households in Rwanda have improved toilets.

Currently, in the districts of the Isoko y'Ubuzima project, six DSCs are operational in Rwamagana, Ruhango, Nyanza, Nyabihu, Kayanza, and Ngoma. These centers are fully owned by districts and provide a wide range of sanitation technologies and products to ensure increased access to safe and sustainable sanitation facilities, products, and services.

Each DSC has a training section to facilitate the transfer of skills—a selling point for local entrepreneurs, a place where residents can purchase sanitation-related products and services, and a display area with various technical options for sanitation and hand-washing facilities for households and professional contractors.

The Isoko y'Ubuzima project is supporting four districts to establish DSCs by renovating or rehabilitating existing buildings that will host the centers in Nyamagabe, Nyagatare, Kirehe, and Ngororero. The four districts provided buildings for DSCs.

In collaboration with the districts, a team of engineers assessed the condition of these buildings that will be transformed into DSCs, discussed and agreed on the required modifications to repurpose the existing compounds as DSCs.

Now, designs with architectural plans and technical details for each DSC building have been

produced which include latrines and handwashing prototypes that will be installed along with related bills of quantities and estimated costs.

The engineers submitted technical reports of proposed changes on the buildings to be renovated including new structures, these were validated by districts.

DSCs are part of the 2016 Rwanda National Sanitation Policy and must be located in districts to reach most members of the community.

The centers are communication and activity hubs where private sanitation service providers,

## JOINT SITE VISIT FOR GIKURIRO KURI BOSE AND ISOKO Y'UBUZIMA



USAID officials interacting with the Mayor of Nyanza District during the joint visit.

On 20th March, a joint site visit was organized by USAID to visit on-ground interventions in Nyanza District by both Isoko y'Ubuzima and Gikuriro Kuri Bose projects. USAID representatives got a chance to interact with Nyanza District leadership and hear from them about the support they are getting from the two projects. Representatives also learned about the interventions from Isoko y'Ubuzima and Gikuriro Kuri Bose that are embedded into district plans and priorities. After interacting with the District Leadership, the USAID representatives had a chance to visit the community interventions like the Nurturing Care Hub from Gikuriro Kuri Bose, the Village Savings and Loans Associations supported by the Isoko y'Ubuzima project, and finally had a brief interaction with the PO providing water services in Nyanza District and his plan to reduce NRW with the support of Isoko y'Ubuzima.



## KIREHE OPEN DAY



The Mayor of Kirehe District Mr. Bruno Rangira interacting with Isoko y'Ubuzima staff during the Open Day.

Isoko y'Ubuzima participated in a four-day "Open Days" in Kirehe District which served the purpose of district partners showcasing interventions and strengthening the partnership with district leadership. The event took place from February 20th to 24th, 2023.

When officially opening the event, Mr. Modeste Nzirabatinya, Kirehe District Vice Mayor in charge of Economic Development, thanked partners that participated in the open day and urged them to ensure that the exhibition reflects interventions.

The project showcased its approach to contribute to the reduction of water loss, its support to the district to identify water supply systems necessary for the immediate and future needs of the district, and a water supply system to be rehabilitated. In addition, the project presented its approach to building the capacity of district water professionals

The event was an avenue for Hygiene Focal Points to sensitize visitors about sanitation and hygiene products.

to ensure proper management of water, sanitation, and hygiene infrastructure and ensure sustained service delivery and universal coverage.

Also, the event was an avenue for Isoko y'Ubuzima community mobilizers to sensitize visitors about sanitation and hygiene products.

The Open Days event was closed by Mr. Bruno Rangira, Mayor of Kirehe District, after visiting all displays including Isoko y'Ubuzima's to hear about various partners' interventions.

On the last day, an award ceremony was organized and Isoko y'Ubuzima was recognized as the First Exhibitor of Services in the organization's category and received a trophy as well as a certificate of appreciation and participation.



## NYAGATARE LEARNING FROM THE BEST

Isoko y'Ubuzima organized a learning exchange and site visit at the Rwamagana District Sanitation Center whereby nine staff of Ngororero District visited the center to learn and know more about DSC operations. The learning exchange and site visit took place in January.

The team from Ngororero District consisted of the District Executive Secretary, the Division Manager, the Director of One Stop Center, the Executive Secretary of Kabaya, a Private Sector Federation representative, the Billing Officer, the Disease Prevention Officer, the District Water Supply and Sanitation Support Engineer, and a Water and Sanitation Officer.

## INFRASTRUCTURE PLANS READY BY SEPTEMBER

Towards its strategic objective of improved WASH governance, Isoko y'Ubuzima continued its capacity-building plan with District WASH Boards. One of the key highlights is the creation of a new course in the WASH System Academy curriculum which will assist the districts to produce their WASH Full Life Cycle Costing Infrastructure by September 2023.

## OTHER MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

- Dissemination of the WASH financing strategy in the Western Province and Southern Province
- Reflection meeting on gender equity and social inclusion and inclusive governance in Kayonza, Ngoma, Nyamagabe, Nyanza, Kirehe, Ruhango, and Rwamagana
- Refresher training on the standard operating procedures for District WASH Boards in Rwamagana, Kayonza, Ngoma, Kirehe, and Nyagatare
- Exchange and learning visit of Ngororero District WASH Boards to Rwamagana District Sanitation Center
- New course on district planning for sustainable water and sanitation services contextualized for Rwanda developed and launched on the WASH System Academy online platform
- The procurement process for the rehabilitation of water supply systems and the development of water resource management plans completed
- All private operators in project districts trained on business plan development
- Designs for the rehabilitation of public buildings into District Sanitation Centers in Kirehe, Nyagatare, Ngororero, and Nyamagabe completed
- WASH service level data collected through the MININFRA's Management Information System
- The WatSan Sector Working Group held an extraordinary meeting during this quarter, led by MININFRA as Chair, and AfDB as Co-Chair. WASH stakeholders provided progress updates and agreed on how to proceed with various initiatives to strengthen the sector
- A WASH development partner forum was created this quarter, in which USAID, African Development Bank, JICA, UNICEF, WaterAid, World Vision, and Water For People consult and coordinate actions to support the development of the WASH sector

**59**

District WASH Board members from Nyagatare, Kayonza, Rwamagana, Ngoma, and Kirehe trained on advocacy for universal WASH services

**451**

New school hygiene clubs established





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