

# ISOKO Y'UBUZIMA

Quarterly Newsletter April-June, 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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# WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM REHABILITATION

## Works kick-off



Pipes on broken networks are being replaced. Photo taken in Nyamagabe District.

Isoko y'Ubuzima, in collaboration with district governments, has recently commenced its rehabilitation efforts aimed at restoring 200 km of water supply systems in its districts of implementation. This initiative primarily focuses on repairing broken infrastructure, including water tanks, public taps, and the installation of new pipes.

The project is set to alleviate the water scarcity issues faced by many communities in rural areas.

Site installations, water source tracing, trench excavation for pipelines, and the delivery of equipment/materials on-site have started and now the work is at the pipe laying stage and rehabilitation of the water tanks, chambers, and taps.

To ensure the continuity of water supply services, the project works with private operators of the rural water supply services to reduce Non-Revenue Water (NRW).

## NON-REVENUE WATER REDUCTION STRATEGIES

### Early signs of positive changes

NRW poses a challenge to rural water services, and its reduction is crucial to ensure sustainable water service management.

NRW is the water that is captured from its source and lost before it reaches the customer, or it is not billed, leading to financial losses for water utilities and unsustainable water management.

In Rwanda, major causes of NRW are poor billing, unregistered customers, vandalism of water infrastructure, and slow response time to repair water leakages.

The project collaborates with districts to create a conducive environment for the private operators of rural water supply services to monitor, analyze, and develop action plans for NRW reduction.

The intended result is for the rural water supply companies to be able to efficiently bill water consumption, easily detect and fix water leakages, equip their staff with necessary tools to curb NRW, and educate the communities to participate in effort to reduce water leakages and prevent vandalism.



Bulk meters installed to monitor NRW on the Ngabwe-Ryarubondo-Kabuga, Nyamagabe District.



## HOW IT WORKS

To monitor NRW, the project strategy is to install meters at different points of a water supply network, which allows the private operator to know exactly how much water is being lost due to leakages or not billed correctly.

With these data, the private operator can compare the quantity of water that entered a DMA, and the quantity of water that was consumed and billed correctly.

## WATER SUPPLY SYSTEMS BEING REHABILITATED BY ISOKO Y'UBUZIMA

### KAMUSHIKUZI II

**Type:** Total Rehabilitation  
**Length:** 32.64 km  
**District:** Kayanza  
**Beneficiaries:** 10,159 People, 26 Public Taps, 3 Schools and 1 Health Center

### NYAKAGERA

**Type:** Partial Rehabilitation  
**Length:** 16.24 km  
**District:** Kirehe  
**Beneficiaries:** 7,462 People, 19 Public Taps, 1 Schools and 1 Health Center

### BYIMANA

**Type:** Partial Rehabilitation  
**Length:** 56.66 km  
**District:** Rwamagana  
**Beneficiaries:** 21,057 People, 155 Public Taps, 33 Schools and 5 Health Center

### NYARUSHISHATI-KABAYA

**Type:** Total Rehabilitation  
**Length:** 5.4 km  
**District:** Ngororero  
**Beneficiaries:** 5,860 People

### RUBINDI - VUNGA

**Type:** Total Rehabilitation  
**Length:** 34.22 km  
**District:** Nyabihu  
**Beneficiaries:** 13,555 People, 8 Public Taps, 2 Schools and 1 Health Center

### RUBEGO-KADUHA-NYABISINDU

**Type:** Total Rehabilitation  
**Length:** 34.37 km  
**District:** Nyamagabe  
**Beneficiaries:** 8,206 People, 26 Public Taps, 6 Schools and 1 Health Center

### NYAKABINGO-KARAMA-NYARURAMA

**Type:** Total Rehabilitation  
**Length:** 21.28 km  
**District:** Nyanza  
**Beneficiaries:** 7,741 People, 18 Public Taps, 3 Schools and 1 Health Center

### NYIRAMUHEBE-KANZOGERA-MUYUNZWE

**Type:** Total Rehabilitation  
**Length:** 10.94 km  
**District:** Ruhango  
**Beneficiaries:** 4,066 People, 12 Public Taps, 3 Schools and 1 Health Center

### GASETSA- SAKE- JARAMA- RUKUMBERI- ZAZA

**Type:** Partial Rehabilitation  
**Length:** 5.5 km  
**District:** Ngoma  
**Beneficiaries:** 100,118 People, 155 Public Taps, 33 Schools, and 5 Health Centers



A broken water tank to be rehabilitated on the Gássetsa- Sake- Jarama- Rukumberi- Zaza network.

A bulk meter installed on the Ngabwe-Ryarubondo-Kabuga to monitor NRW in Nyamagabe District.



## WHAT THEY SAY

Theoneste Rambo Combaniro is a plumber for PAAK KAM, a water supply private operator managing the Gasetza-Sake-Jarama-Rukumberi network in Ngoma District. He says he used to report a significant amount of NRW and could not identify where it was occurring.

“The meters help us to monitor the quantity of water entering an area, the quantity consumed, and the quantity that is not used, in other words, lost,” says Theoneste while praising the strategy introduced by Isoko y’Ubuzima.

He adds that thanks to the project support, his company can now identify causes of water losses and apply NRW reduction strategies, leading to more water in the network, thus, increasing access to clean and safe drinking water for the local community.

Isoko y’Ubuzima NRW strategies aim to minimize financial losses for private operators of rural water supply services and reduce the quantity of water produced and treated but not billed or paid for while ensuring sustainable water management, by minimizing water resources wasted due to losses before reaching the end user. The goal is to increase the water level of service to the community.





Jeannine Nyiraneza is optimistic about plans to rehabilitate the Gasetza-Sake- Jarama-Rukumberi- Zaza network.

## OPTIMISM

Jeannine Nyiraneza's community, like many others in rural areas in Rwanda, faces significant challenges in accessing permanent running water. The scarcity of water posed numerous hardships, affecting various aspects of daily life, including hygiene, agriculture, and overall community development.

"Water scarcity is a huge issue for us. To come here fetching water is also very difficult. I have come here with my child, sometimes, to fetch water is a tussle," says Jeannine, who lives in Sake Sector, Ngoma District.

However, with the commencement of the rehabilitation works, Jeannine and her community now have renewed hope for a sustainable solution to their water scarcity problem.

"Between farm works, house chores, and fetching water, it's very difficult for us [women]. What I would like, is permanent running water. I have seen people coming

to test this spring, and I am optimistic that this problem may end soon," she adds.

The initiation of the rehabilitation works has brought a sense of joy and relief to the residents who have long awaited a solution to their water supply issues. With the expectation of improved infrastructure and increased access to clean water, Jeannine and her community anticipate positive changes in their daily lives.

Isoko y'Ubuzima's commitment to providing a reliable water supply system has instilled hope for a better future and enhanced well-being.

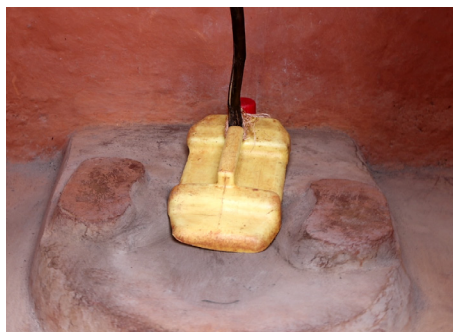
She expresses her delight at the beginning of these rehabilitation works, as the lack of access to permanent running water has been a longstanding challenge in this area.

The Isoko y'Ubuzima rehabilitation efforts to restore the water supply system in rural areas marks a significant step towards addressing the long-standing water scarcity issues faced by communities.

A close-up, profile shot of a woman with a joyful expression, smiling as she washes her hands. She is wearing a vibrant red headscarf with a green and yellow floral pattern and a green short-sleeved shirt with a small blue and white dot pattern. She is leaning over a simple wooden handwashing station made of vertical and horizontal logs. A white plastic jug is suspended from the station, and water is being poured over her hands. The background is a soft-focus view of a lush green forest with many trees.

## TRANSFORMING HYGIENE AND SANITATION PRACTICES IN HER COMMUNITY

Emilienne Ahobantegeye is one of the USAID-funded Isoko y'Ubuzima project community mobilizers. In her community, she is known as a handwashing practice champion.



An improved latrine in Musaza Sector, Kirehe District, after Emilienne's effort.

This is an inspiring story of Emilienne Ahobantegeye, a community member in Kirehe District, Musaza Sector, Rwanda, who made significant investments in improving hygiene and sanitation at the household level.

Through her dedication and hard work, she has not only improved her own life but has also become a leading advocate, driving a positive change in the mindset of other community members to adopt improved sanitation and hygiene practices.

"I used to see multiple cases of diseases and frequently visit the local health center to treat my children. I attribute this to a lack of hygiene. It changed after I constructed an improved latrine," says Emilienne.

Emilienne, a resident of Musaza Cell, Nyakariba Village adds that she witnessed firsthand the detrimental effects of poor hygiene and sanitation on the health and well-being of her

community. She was trained by the USAID-funded project, Isoko y'Ubuzima, on sanitation and hygiene practices, and changed her mindset as a result. Determined to make a difference, she invested her time, resources, and energy in transforming the living conditions of her household. With limited funds, she started by improving her home's latrine and ensuring the availability of clean water for her family.

"I made an investment of Rwf 85,000 (\$72 USD) that I borrowed from my local village saving and loan association, and I was able to improve my latrine. Afterward, I have been going around the community, to ensure more people have improved latrines," says Emilienne. After seeing the positive impact of this investment on her family's health and quality of life, she became increasingly motivated to extend her efforts beyond her household.

She actively engaged with her neighbors, sharing her knowledge and experiences, and encouraging them to adopt better sanitation and hygiene practices. From speaking during community gatherings to conducting home visits, Emilienne became a leading advocate for change.

Didas Mugarura is one of the neighbors Emilienne mobilized. Now he has built an improved latrine, and most importantly, installed a homemade handwashing facility as a result of Emilienne's effort.

"Living in a dignified home is a source of my pride. Building an improved latrine is among the things that build that feeling... I built an improved latrine after I was sensitized on good hygiene practices," confirms Didas.

Now, more households in the community have started implementing improved hygiene and sanitation practices. Emilienne says she has reached out to 30 members of her community with sanitation and hygiene messages, and among them, eight have already built an improved latrine in their households.

# SANITATION AND HYGIENE

## PROMOTION ACROSS THE 10 DISTRICTS



### 32,894

People were mobilized with social and behavior change communication on sanitation and hygiene best practices and investments through interpersonal communication and mass media channels.



### 13,097

Sanitation-related products were sold in District Sanitation Centers, community showrooms and via community mobilizers including SATO products, handwashing facilities, and other hygiene and sanitation products.



### 610

Village Agents, including 13 people with disabilities, were trained in sanitation and hygiene awareness of products, pricing, and markets.



### 1,146

Families built or improved their toilets.



## DISTRICT OPEN DAY

Isoko y'Ubuzima attended the Joint Action Development Forum Open Day in Kayonza, Rwamagana, Ngoma, Ruhango, and Nyanza. Here are some pictures of how the Isoko y'Ubuzima stands were set up during the events. In Ruhango and Ngoma districts, the project received awards as one of the top exhibitors.



# All Africa WASH Systems Perform Conference

## RWANDA, THE 2025 HOST

Water For People, IRC and Water for Good organized the All Systems Connect, an international conference that took place in the Hague from the 2nd to 4th of May of 2023 with delegates from WASAC attending the event.

During the conference, Rwanda received the honor of hosting the All Africa WASH Systems Perform conference which will take place in 2025. The government of Rwanda was represented by His Excellency Ambassador of Rwanda to the Kingdom of Netherlands, Olivier Jean Patrick Nduhungerehe.

The conference was a good opportunity for Rwandan delegates to share experiences and ongoing initiatives toward WASH systems strengthening, as well as to learn from other countries.

The Isoko y'Ubuzima Deputy Chief of Party, Bruce Uwonkunda, and representative from USAID Rwanda, Janvier Karuhije, participated in the National Systems Strengthening country dialogue, where the example of Isoko y'Ubuzima's efforts to strengthen WASH systems at both national and district levels was showcased.

Conference recommendations included: to promote, champion, and build capacity for systems leadership, identify and support local and national systems leaders (current and emerging) and develop leadership programs to help do this, and build capacity for connected action between sectors and disciplines.

Moreover, it was recommended to increase the number and impact of these critical government commitments that place water, sanitation, and hygiene and systems strengthening at the heart of national agendas, further develop policy frameworks that connect WASH with health, strengthen links between water resources management, climate action, and WASH, dismantle the systems that marginalize certain people, and ensure their rights are upheld by governments and others and connect water sector actors with finance institutions, often through intermediaries, to reduce the finance gaps.

Isoko y'Ubuzima organized an orientation of national-level staff from WASAC, LODA, MININFRA, NCPD, REMA, and the PSF from the 26th to the 29th of June 2023 on the Building Blocks for Sustainable WASH Systems and Advocacy for Universal WASH Services.

## GENDER, EQUITY, AND SOCIAL INCLUSION (GESI)

Isoko y'Ubuzima organized a two-day workshop from 28-29th June to review the GESI action plan that was developed during the previous workshops, assessing together with participants the progress made toward the implementation of the GESI action plan, and analyzing the challenges and how to make the necessary adjustments and provide any support needed.

The workshop brought together 13 participants, including four females and nine males, from various institutions, including MININFRA, WASAC, LODA, NCPD, LODA, and PSF specialized clusters.

The discussion focused on the importance of GESI in local development programs, including WASH. Participants suggested that government institutions should integrate GESI into existing policies to ensure the specific needs of women, girls, persons with disabilities, the poorest, the elderly, youth, and children are considered.



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