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ISOKO Y'UBUZIMA

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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.





IN THIS ISSUE

WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM

USAID and the Ruhango District launched a newly rehabilitated water supply system to improve water access 3

Access to permanent running water, a wish granted, says Anitha access 4

SANITATION

Human-Centered Design for Affordable Sanitation Solutions 6

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Isoko y'Ubuzima Project achievements after year 2 7

USAID AND THE RUHANGO DISTRICT LAUNCH A NEWLY REHABILITATED WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM TO IMPROVE WATER ACCESS



(From right to left) USAID Deputy Mission Director, Keisha Effiom, Mayor of Ruhango District, Valens Harerimana, USAID Health Promotion and WASH Specialist, Janvier Karuhije, and the Ministry of Infrastructure Director General in Charge of Water and Sanitation, Marcelline Kayitesi, cutting a ribbon to officially inaugurate the rehabilitated Nyiramuhebe-Kanzogera-Muyunzwe water supply system.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Ruhango District officially launched the newly rehabilitated Nyiramuhebe-Kanzogera-Muyunzwe water supply system. The 11.46-kilometer-long water supply system was launched by the Mayor of Ruhango District, Valens Habarurema, and the USAID Deputy Mission Director, Keisha Effiom. The network was rehabilitated by Isoko y'Ubuzima, a five-year project funded by USAID, in collaboration with the district, with a total investment of Rwf 200 million.

The water supply system will provide improved water services to 4,100 beneficiaries at 17 water points, as well as two schools, APECAS Muyunzwe with 674 students and GS Muyunzwe with 770 students, and the Muyunzwe Health Center.

Isoko y'Ubuzima is collaborating with 10 districts to rehabilitate the broken water supply systems with an investment totaling over Rwf 6 billion.

The Isoko y'Ubuzima project (over Rwf 25,7 billion) will increase and sustain equitable access to and use of safe drinking water and sanitation services. This will reduce families' health, economic, and social burdens due to the lack of WASH services.

The program is being implemented from July 2021 by a consortium led by Water For People to improve WASH governance, drinking water services, sanitation, and handwashing services and products. Other members of the consortium are IRC, Vitens Evides International (VEI), CARE International, and African Evangelistic Enterprise (AEE).

With Isoko y'Ubuzima over 5 years, 216,000 people will gain access to safe drinking water services, and 100,000 people will have increased access to basic sanitation services in Rwamagana, Kayonza, Ngoma, Kirehe, Nyagatare, Ruhango, Nyanza, Nyamagabe, Ngororero, and Nyabihu districts.





Anitha Mukarutabana says the wish of her community was granted when Isoko y'Ubuzima collaborated with Kayonza District to rehabilitate Kamushikuzi II water supply system.

ACCESS TO PERMANENT RUNNING WATER, A WISH GRANTED, SAYS ANITHA

In the serene, sun-kissed lands of a remote community, of Kabare Sector, Kayonza District, there existed a tale of resilience, fortitude, and the pursuit of a fundamental need: water. Among those who experienced the profound transformation brought about by access to safe water is Anitha Mukarutabana, a spirited member of this close-knit community. Recounting the days of old, she recalls the immense hardships endured in the pursuit of something as essential as water.

“We walked miles, only to reach water sources downhill from a swamp tainted with perilous contaminants,” Anitha Mukarutabana reminisces, her voice tinged with gratitude for the winds of change that swept through her village. “Now, our wishes have been granted, we have access to safe water,” she adds. The turning point arrived when Isoko y’Ubuzima, a USAID-funded 5-year project embarked on a mission to rehabilitate her village’s broken 32.6 km-long Kamushikuzi II water supply system, in collaboration with her district to change the lives of communities by providing safe water sources.

The project not only reduced the distance to water sources but also slashed the cost exponentially, a change that rippled through the community’s socioeconomic fabric. “The financial burden associated with obtaining water has lessened significantly,” Anitha beams, expressing relief at the newfound ability to allocate resources to other vital needs within the community.

“The impact is monumental,” Anitha exclaims, her eyes reflecting the joy of newfound freedom. “Gone are the days of trekking for hours. The convenience of having clean water within our grasp at a reduced cost is beyond measure.”

Indeed, Anitha recalls, if she needed safe water, she had to pay RWF 100 (about \$ 0.08) per gallon of water and her household required at least five gallons a day. Now, she pays RW 8 a gallon of water.

The USAID-funded project became the beacon of change, illuminating a path that transformed Anitha’s community. With clean water at their doorstep, they flourished—no longer shackled by the burden of water-related struggles, but embracing a future filled with possibilities.

Anitha’s story stands as a testament to the transformative power of access to safe water. It’s a story of a community once burdened by adversity, now flourishing with resilience, gratitude, and the promise of a brighter tomorrow—painted by the profound impact of the USAID-funded project and the gift of clean, life-sustaining water.

The Kamushikuzi II water supply system is now serving over 10,000 members of the Kabare Sector community at 26 public taps, including three schools and a health center.



GS Kiburara is now connected to Kamushikuzi II water supply system.



A 25 m3 reservoir was rehabilitated.



How terribly frustrating it must be to understand the importance of good sanitation in our homes for the health and safety of our family members, and yet not be able to afford the needed changes.

Sylvie Nyingenera is a mother from Kirehe District, Musaza Sector, who says she cannot afford a concrete slab in the current market though she is aware of the danger of owning an unimproved latrine.

“I imagine a child, crawling to the toilet with an unimproved and damaged slab, and falling into the pit latrine. Death is a real threat,” she says.

Members of her community also tell a story of a man who recently fell into a latrine pit half full of excrement. The toilet he fell into had an unimproved wooden slab that had started to deteriorate and gave away while he was using it. Luckily, the man survived, but the community was shaken.

Some community members where the Isoko y’Ubuzima project operates face this real fear as they are challenged to own improved latrines. They generally know the risks and dangers of an unsafe latrine but feel they cannot afford the price of an improved slab, which is estimated by local masons to be around RWF 120,000 (about \$100).

The only solution is to create a concrete slab at a reduced price affordable to most of the population.

Isoko y’Ubuzima project introduced a human-centered design approach that aims to work with members of the community to design affordable sanitation products responding to their needs. Improved slabs are a key product required to improve latrines and help communities such as Sylvie’s.

The approach looks to reduce the cost of the slab. Members of the community are brought together to brainstorm and share their stories, challenges, and experiences around the dangers of unimproved slabs, and the current cost of changing the situation as estimated by local masons. Local masons commonly provide the reasons why the current high price of improved slabs reflects the high market prices, which they know are unattainable for many families.

However, the human-centered design approach proved to be a game changer in four districts of the Isoko y’Ubuzima project area where it was piloted. For instance, in Sylvie’s community, a local mason had estimated the cost of an improved slab at RWF 120,000 (about \$100). After a community brainstorming session, and after agreeing on the prototype, Sylvie



and members of her community were pleasantly surprised that, helped by the Isoko y’Ubuzima team, they were able to produce the slab at only RWF 45,000 (about \$35) - a 62.5% decrease!

The choice of the materials and quantities to be used proved to be a deciding factor for the price reduction of crafting concretes in the four districts where the human-centered design approach has been introduced.

The designed slab becomes, as it is in Sylvie’s community, a new product that Isoko y’Ubuzima community mobilizers promote and sell in their neighborhoods to improve household latrines.



Members of the Nyakaliba village, a local mason, and the Isoko y’Ubuzima project team constructing together an improved slab.



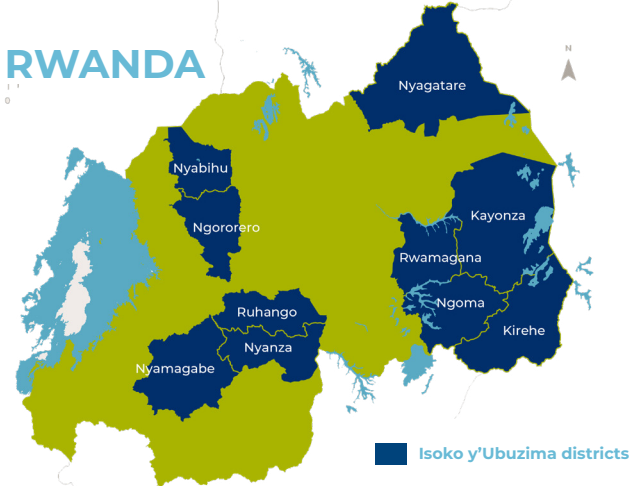
USAID FUNDED ISOKO Y'UBUZIMA PROJECT OVERVIEW & ACHIEVEMENTS

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.



TARGETS

Over 5 Years

96,000 PEOPLE

Will gain access to basic drinking water services

120,000 PEOPLE

Receiving improved drinking water service quality

100,000 PEOPLE

Will gain access to basic sanitation services

PROGRESS

Year 2

OVER 30,000 PEOPLE

Gained access

OVER 4000 PEOPLE

Gained access

OVER 34,000 PEOPLE

Gained access

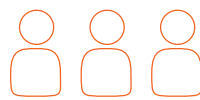
In May Isoko y'Ubuzima started rehabilitating nine water supply systems which represent a network per district. Most networks were completed in October, thus relatively few people reported gaining access to drinking water services. The number will increase in the current year.

ACHIEVEMENTS

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

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

Improving water, sanitation, and hygiene governance



WASH INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

Sixteen out of 22 water and sanitation sector institutions whose capacity was strengthened demonstrated improvement in their performance.



INCLUSIVE WASH GOVERNANCE IMPROVEMENT

The national WASH Building Block score for governance and Gender, Equity, and Social Inclusion increased by 0.4 points, representing a 13% improvement compared to last year's score.



WATER SUPPLY PRIVATE OPERATOR SUPPORT

Private operators were supported to improve their capacity to provide reliable water services and an assessment indicated that nine out of 12 provided a better service as a result.



STRENGTHENING OF DISTRICT CAPACITY

Nine out of 10 districts made improvements in water services sustainability.



Improve drinking water services

Isoko y’Ubuzima collaborated with Nyanza, Ruhango, Nyagatare, Kayonza, and Nyamagabe to complete the rehabilitation of five water supply systems out of 10 that were started. Here are key facts about the rehabilitated water supply systems.

REHABILITATION OF WATER SUPPLY SYSTEMS

100 KM

Of water supply systems rehabilitated in collaboration with districts

OVER 30,000

People receiving improved water services

15 SCHOOLS

Served by the newly rehabilitated water supply systems

4 HEALTH CENTERS

Served by the newly rehabilitated water supply systems

NON-REVENUE WATER REDUCTION

The projects collaborate with districts to reduce non-revenue water and water losses to help private operators minimize financial losses and improve water services provision to the community.

Non-revenue water reduction methods

CAPACITY-BUILDING

Of private operators and district staff responsible for non-revenue water management.

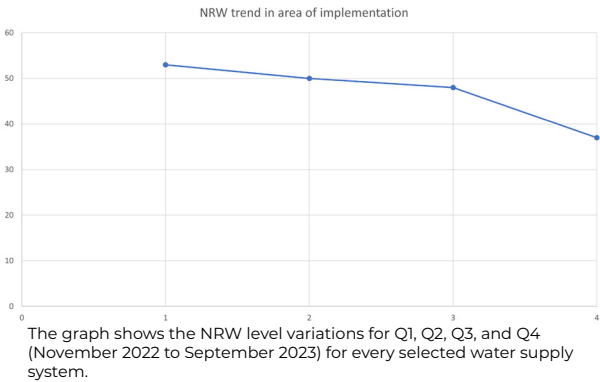
PLANS DEVELOPMENT

Private operators are supported to develop plans for water losses and non-revenue water reduction.

DISTRICT METERED AREAS (DMAs)

Mapping unmapped network extensions and customers, designing DMAs, and installing 93 bulk meters at critical points on distribution networks.

Water losses trend in 10 district of Isoko y’Ubuzima implementation as a result of the non-revenue water reduction strategy.



8% INCREASE IN %

Of households in 10 districts under the Isoko y’Ubuzima project using basic and safely managed water services from 35.1% to 43.4%.

18% REDUCTION

Of non-revenue water from 63% last year to 45% as a result of the project approaches.

200 RWF MORE INVESTMENT

Per capita by districts toward water management from RWF 1,264 to RWF 1,487 as a result of the project advocacy efforts.

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.

OVER 29,000 PEOPLE

Gained access to basic sanitation services (15,201 F and 14,124 M). Last year, over 5,000 gained access.

OVER 27% INCREASE IN %

Of households with soap and water at a handwashing station on the premises from 21.7% to 48.9%.

OVER 38,000 MORE PEOPLE

Buying products and services from the district sanitation centers and or sanitation showrooms from 1,200 to 39,878.

OVER 15% INCREASE IN %

Of households using basic and safely managed sanitation services from 67.6% two years ago to 82.8%.



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