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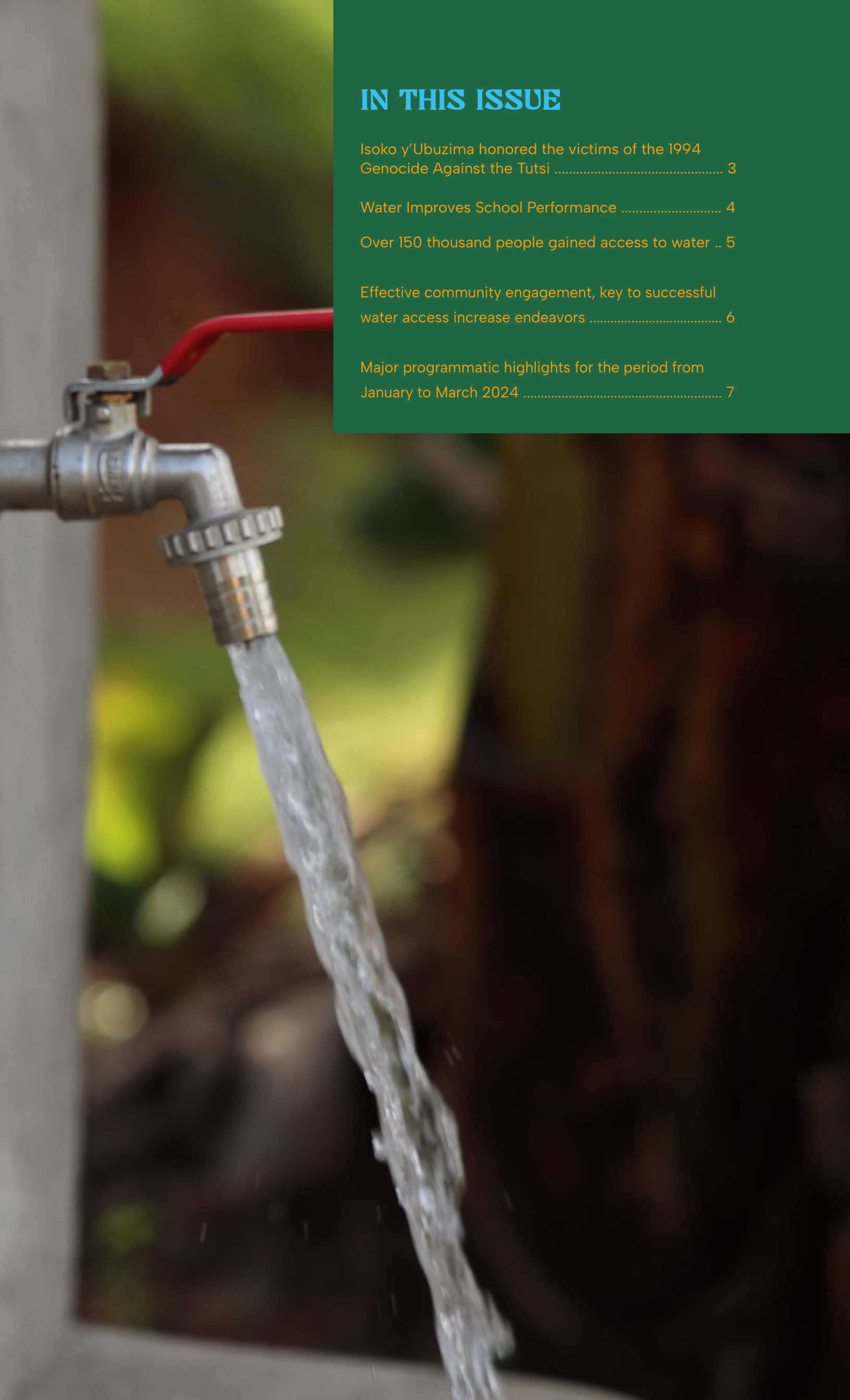
ISOKO Y'UBUZIMA

Quarterly Newsletter

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.



We paid our utmost respect to the victims of the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi laid to rest at the Ntarama Genocide Memorial.



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ISOKO Y'UBUZIMA HONORED THE VICTIMS OF THE 1994 GENOCIDE AGAINST THE TUTSI



As Rwanda solemnly continues to commemorate the victims of the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi, the Isoko y'Ubuzima team undertook a visit in April to the Ntarama Genocide Memorial Site to honor over 6,000 victims who were killed by the Interahamwe militia in the Bugesera region. During the visit, the team gained insights into

the historical context surrounding the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi. Additionally, the team had the privilege of meeting with one survivor, who endured the horrific events that unfolded at the Ntarama Parish in 1994. Remember, Unite, Renew. #Kwibuka30





Farina Mujara fetches water from a newly rehabilitated water supply system in Cyabakamyi Sector, Nyanza District.

WATER IMPROVES SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

Gatongati Village, nestled in the remote reaches of Nyanza District’s Cyabakamyi Sector, is experiencing a transformational journey propelled by a fundamental necessity: clean water.

Ferina Mujara, a community member whose story epitomizes the profound impact of improved water access on education and overall well-being, narrates the change. Before the rehabilitation of the water supply system, children in Gatongati faced an arduous journey to fetch water from a nearby swamp– a round trip that consumed between one and a half to two hours of their time each day, Ferina says.

This grueling task often resulted in tardiness to school, compromising their academic performance and leaving parents like Ferina deeply concerned about their children’s future. “My child used to struggle in school,” Ferina recounts, her voice tinged with a mixture of relief and gratitude. “Fetching water from the swamp meant he was often late, affecting his studies.”

However, the USAID-funded Isoko y’Ubuzima project’s rehabilitation of the water supply system has transformed the landscape of Gatongati. Now, within a mere 500 meters, a public water tap stands as a beacon of hope, offering clean water to the community. “My child’s school performance has improved drastically,” Ferina exclaims, her face alight with pride. “He now has the time to revise his

subjects and is no longer burdened by the long journey to fetch water.”

Ferina’s 14-year-old child, once weighed down by the relentless cycle of fetching water, now exudes happiness and vitality. “We are happy, the children are happy, and the parents are happy,” Ferina says with a smile. We are well off.”

The positive impact of this transformation extends beyond academic success – it permeates every aspect of daily life.

Previously, Ferina’s child approached the task of fetching water reluctantly, always anxious about being late. Now, with the public water tap just a five-minute walk away, mornings are characterized by a sense of ease and routine. “Our mornings have changed,” Ferina explains. “My child can now sleep well, knowing that water is readily available. He fetches water in the morning and is at school by 7:30 am.”

“Normally, school starts at 8:30 am,” Ferina elaborates. “Now, he’s at school one hour in advance, whereas he used to be late.”

Through Isoko y’Ubuzima, communities in Nyanza, Rwamagana, Kayonza, Kirehe, Ngoma, Nyagatare, Nyabihu, Ruhango, and Nyamagabe are experiencing tangible improvements in their quality of life thanks to newly rehabilitated water supply systems. Close to 150,000 more people have access to water now thanks to new connections to existing water supply systems or improved services due to fixing broken networks.





The Vice Mayor in charge of Economic Development in Nyabihu District, Jean Claude Habanabakize alongside USAID representatives and the Isoko y’Ubuzima team inaugurated the Rubindi–Vunga Water Supply System.

OVER 150 THOUSAND PEOPLE GAINED ACCESS TO WATER

On World Water Day in March, Isoko y’Ubuzima in collaboration with the Nyabihu District launched another significant as part of Rwanda Water Week. The Vice Mayor in charge of Economic Development in Nyabihu District, Jean Claude Habanabakize alongside USAID representatives and the Isoko y’Ubuzima team inaugurated the Rubindi–Vunga Water Supply System rehabilitated through the USAID–funded Isoko y’Ubuzima project.

“There has been a study in this district [of Nyabihu], to identify functional, partially non–functional, and non–functional water supply systems and investment needs to rehabilitate them,” said the Vice Mayor at the launch event while acknowledging the impact the detailed engineering designs developed collaboratively in the project districts are having to improve planning.

“Today’s launched pipeline is among water supply systems identified by this study and now, nine other networks are about to be rehabilitated by WASAC,” he added to emphasize the importance of the project effort to identify districts’ water needs in the near and distant future.

The USAID Isoko y’Ubuzima project implements its activities in Rwamagana, Kayonza, Kirehe, Ngoma, Nyagatare, Nyabihu, Ngororero, Nyanza, Nyamagabe and Ruhango.

In the first phase, which ended in March 2024, the project rehabilitated 10 water supply systems in nine districts with a total length of 136 km, serving close to 150 thousand people with a total investment of \$U.S. 2.7 million.

Starting in June, the project will begin working on an additional nine water supply systems with a total length of 126.1 km to serve over 45 thousand people with an investment of \$2 million.

By the end of the project in 2026, over 210 thousand people will have gained access to improved water services with an investment of approximately \$U.S. 5 million.



NYAGATARE OPEN DAY



The Nyagatare Open Day was officially opened by the Governor of Eastern Province, Pudence Rubingisa, on March 15th.

As part of the event, district partners

exhibited interventions and the Isoko y’Ubuzima project had a stand with the project’s community mobilizers promoting sanitation products available at the Barija Community Showroom and mobilizing the local community on sanitation and hygiene best practices.

At least 40 new or improved toilets could be constructed as the sales agent, the mason, and the community showroom agreed on a timeline to deliver at least 40 SATO pans to members of the community who visited the Isoko y’Ubuzima stand. The event was officially closed by Stephen Gasana, Mayor of the Nyagatare District, on March 17th.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, KEY TO SUCCESSFUL WATER ACCESS INCREASE ENDEAVORS

The experience gained from the project rehabilitation works in Ruhango to improve water, sanitation, and hygiene service delivery suggests effective community engagement is key to successful activities implementation, especially the need for community expropriation to enable a smooth run of the operations.

The Isoko y’Ubuzima project identified for rehabilitation in collaboration with the Ruhango District, the Nyiramuhebe-Kanzogera-Muyunzwe Water Supply System in Muyunzwe cell, Kinihira sector.

The project funded and managed the contract for rehabilitation works, and the district was in charge of the expropriation and compensation of affected properties by the construction activities as well as community engagement.

An essential lesson learned was gained from the expropriation process, where community mobilization played a pivotal role. By engaging residents and

emphasizing the collective benefits of releasing land portions for common infrastructure, the project gained acceptance and support.

This highlighted the critical need for community buy-in and the significance of understanding the people’s context and aspirations, reinforcing the idea of shared benefits for a common goal. This is critical because the community should be the protector of the WSS infrastructure and services after the project/contractor is gone. Their understanding and consent on how things should be done is to ensure that no one will voluntarily destroy the work that has been done to improve their lives.

During the inauguration of the rehabilitated system, the community learned that access to basic and improved water services profoundly impacts the socio-economic condition of rural communities in several ways, such as improving overall health and reducing healthcare costs, providing reliable access to clean water which means children spend less time fetching water and are more likely to attend school regularly, as women and girls, often responsible for water collection, gain more time for education, income-generating activities, and self-care when clean water is easily accessible.

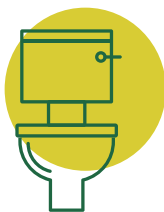


MAJOR PROGRAMMATIC HIGHLIGHTS



103,616

People gained access to basic water services and 15,390 or improved services after the project completed three water supply systems in Rwamagana, Kirehe, and Nyabihu Districts.



1,910

Households improved their latrines (739 newly built and 1,171 improved facilities) as a result of the effort of the project community mobilizers.



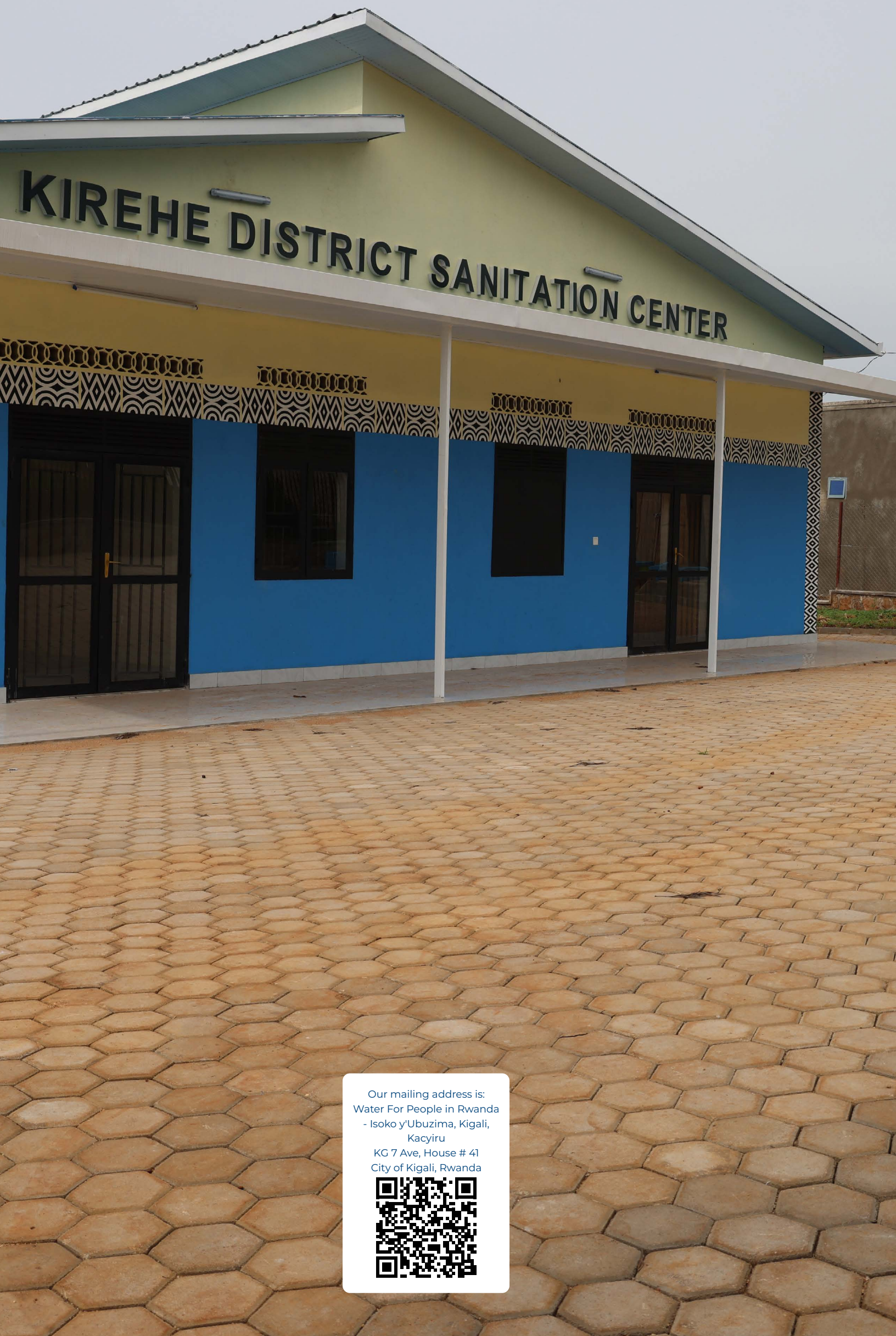
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Percent recorded non-revenue water reduction from 55% at the end of fiscal year 2023 to the current 46%.



61,958

People reached by social behavior change agents with messages on improved hygiene and sanitation via mass mobilization, door-to-door visits, and community mobilization efforts.



KIREHE DISTRICT SANITATION CENTER

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