

Professional Umuganda at Cyanika, Burera District: An approach for combatting malnutrition.

On the 7/2/2025, WVR in partnership with Caritas Byumba and other partners were committed in Professional Umuganda, structured community service effort to fight against child stunting and malnutrition, with the goal of enhancing the most vulnerable children's health by improving their nutritional status. These services go hand in hand with activities as exemplars.

Key activities characterized this day

- 1. Rehabilitation of a poor family house:** Unity that characterize community in every activity. Wellbeing of every person can also contribute to good life.
- 2. Construction of vegetables garden:** In teaching communities to do so as well preparation of balanced diet for fighting against malnutrition.
- 3. Construction of latrine:** sign of hygiene and sanitation
- 4. Community sensitization in fighting against Drugs:** Avoiding drunkenness is essential because it's one of many factors contributing to malnutrition
- 5. Feeding children a balanced diet and giving them milk:** As parents sees these activities, they learn from the activity, as they do so by themselves. Families are explained about menu of balanced diet, ways of preparation and feeding with cleaned hands and materials as preservation of hygiene.
- 6. Provision of food to some ECDs:** This was the contribution of communities where that got from their harvest as fighting against hunger in ECDs. This will also contribute to well nourishment of children attending ECDs.
- 7. Planting fruits trees:** As teaching communities to plant these trees so as to feed nourishment including fruits.
- 8. Provision of domestic animals:** COWS to some poor families.

General overview of Burera district in aspect of malnutrition and the reason why they are putting more efforts in fighting against it.

Despite being considered as one of the national food basket districts in Rwanda, Burera district, located in the Northern Province of Rwanda still faces a high prevalence of stunting at 41% according to the Rwanda Demographic Health Survey conducted in 2020. However, this district affirmed with efforts to adapt to changing livelihoods and is part of broader measures to meet national targets, aiming to reduce stunting to 19%.

Pressure to launch this professional Umuganga approach in this district by different partners, this innovative approach brings together different communities and officials to join hand and find solutions to the identified problems of malnutrition and stunting. The event was attended by different actors in Rwanda like Minister of State for Regional Cooperation, National Director of World Vision Rwanda, The Governor of Northern Province of Rwanda, Rwanda Northern Province Security Forces in Charges, Mayor of Burera District, Some of Burera District Staffs and its Sectors' staffs, NCDA Representative and Different partners including Caritas Byumba.

James KABAREBE, the Minister of State for Regional Cooperation and guest of honor in this event emphasizes how fighting against malnutrition via healthy food is the well means of constructing the good country for future: *“A country's development begins with children. You should ask yourself why everyone talks about them. It means they are very important. We walked the same path, and if we had missed such essential needs, we wouldn't be where we are today, doing amazing jobs. Therefore, taking good care of them means taking care of the country. Remembering to avoid alcohol from them and feed them healthy food”*

Pauline Okumu, the National Director of World Vision Rwanda insist more on rehabilitation of Children after being screened and found malnourished. Rehabilitation is playing a big role in decrease of malnutrition. For example, during the four months, about 10,000 children have recovered from malnutrition, bringing the total to 23,00. The commitment from dofferent actors including partners and the community itself is also essential in combating malnutrition as the child grows wealthy: *“These engagements have not only reinforced our collective responsibility but have also set the stage for Professional Umuganda to drive change in Burera. Today, as we officially launch this initiative in this district, we do so with a firm commitment: to work together with government, partners, and communities to end malnutrition and ensure that every child has the opportunity to grow, thrive, and reach their full potential”* Pauline insisted.

In collaboration with different partners, Burera district optimistically is improving from rates of malnutrition where the recent data shows that this district reaches on 29% in fighting against stunting and malnutrition. Hoping good results when these commitments continues.

Total estimated participants in the event: 4580 people