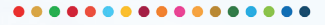




UNITED
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RWANDA



TURI KUMWE

Newsletter | 2022 Quarter 2

FOREWORD



Mr. Fodé Ndiaye
UN RESIDENT COORDINATOR

It has been five years since I assumed the office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Rwanda. Since July 2017, I have had the privilege to lead the UN team to implement the UN Reform and reposition the UN development system (UNDS), putting in place a full-fledge Resident Coordinator Office and the UNCT to coordinate its support strategically.

Collectively as a team, the UN work has delivered more effectively and efficiently on the United Nations Development Assistance Plan 2018-2023 (UNDAP II) and now our revised Cooperation Framework up to 2024, which aligns well with the National Strategy for Transformation 2017-2024 (NST1) and the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 of the UN. With this, it is a pleasure to have been part of the tremendous results the country has registered with development partners, the private sector, NGOs, the Civil Society, and the people of Rwanda.

Like the rest of the world, Rwanda has endured challenging times during the COVID-19 pandemic, significantly impacting all sectors. I'm glad the UN team elaborated a joint program to assist the Government's Socio-Economic Response and Recovery plan.

The program strongly focuses on gender, vulnerable people, and human rights and employs the Leave No One Behind principle. However, to deliver on the plan, we need a strengthened partnership and coordinated support with the Government and all partners, and I believe we have laid the groundwork for this.

This quarter, Rwanda hosted the Commonwealth Head of Government Meeting (CHOGM), where more than 4,000 delegates, including Heads of Government, Vice Presidents and Prime Ministers, attended.

From the UN side, we hosted the President of the 76th United Nations General Assembly, His Excellency Abdulla Shahid (PGA) and the UN Deputy Secretary-General (DSG), Ms. Amina Mohammed and other Heads of Agency. Both the PGA and DSG appreciated the work done by the leadership and the people of Rwanda for not only CHOGM but progress in the development of the country. I join everyone in commending the Government of Rwanda for all the efforts put into the well-organized and successful CHOGM.

Rwanda has made good and steady progress, before CHOGM, Rwanda organized the World Telecommunication Development Conference and Broadband Commission and the country stands as a global example when development is given a focus. The UN adjusted the Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework to align to do more and better to contribute to the National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) and Agenda 2030. The great partnership, cooperation, collaboration, resilience, and hard work have produced transformational results. I and the UN are proud to be part of this and believe that only a conducive environment to deliver programs with a continuous focus on inclusive, sustainable, green and resilient development can continue to move the country forward.

As I end my tenure in Rwanda, I commend our collective UN leadership, the dedication of UN colleagues and our esteemed partners. I thank our donors for their trust by entering into strategic partnerships and synergies and providing resources; most importantly, I acknowledge the trusted cooperation with the Government and other national stakeholders (CSOS and private sector) and our collective efforts have yielded tangible results for all the people. Together, we stand stronger and build forward better.

I wish you a pleasant reading of this UN Rwanda 2nd Quarter Newsletter (April, May, and June 2022). It contains exciting stories from WFPs' work with refugees in Rwanda, the excitement of Maurice Kwizera serving as a UN Volunteer with the UNV in Rusizi, Early Childhood Development centres increasing mothers' productivity in Nyaruguru district by UN Women, sponsoring innovative business projects to promote local development and environment protection by IOM, delegates from Malawi and Ethiopia acquire lessons from Rwanda's digital transformation by UNCDF, Children want to be #zerohunger heroes by FAO, long-standing commitment to saving lives by the WHO, Improving survival and wellbeing of newborns in Rwanda by UNICEF, Getting their future back: how new family planning methods are helping teenage mothers in Rwanda by UNFPA, and AfCFTA could be the Marshall Plan for the African Economic Recovery by ECA.

Beyond the few stories and numbers we publish quarterly, there is a fundamental transformation happening in people's lives, communities, institutions, and the general journey of the country towards betterment.

It has been a privilege for me to serve in this beautiful country, the land of a thousand hills, and for the people of Rwanda.

Thank you for the honour!

Turi Kumwe!

Abishyize hamwe nta kibanarira.



CASH OFFERS GREATER CHOICE FOR REFUGEES IN RWANDA

©WFP/JohnPaul Sesonga

Joselyne and her children escaped violence in Burundi in 2015 and now live in Mahama Camp in Rwanda.



Joselyne and her six children fled their home in the village of Kirundo in north-east Burundi when violence broke out following elections in 2015. Today, she is one of 38,000 Burundian refugees living in Mahama Camp in south-east Rwanda.

"I heard shooting and people screaming," says Joselyne. ***"I thought the violence would only last a few weeks and so I hid my family in a nearby forest, but I soon realized the situation was worsening and escaped to safety."***

Rwanda hosts over 127,000 refugees and asylum seekers, most of them from the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi. Mahama camp – which hosts 56,000 refugees (around 45 percent of the refugee population) is the largest of five camps. The refugees depend mainly on humanitarian food assistance due to limited livelihood opportunities in and around the camps.

The World Food Programme (WFP) supports the most vulnerable refugees with cash assistance – empowering them to address their essential needs by purchasing goods from the local markets, while also helping to boost these markets.

WFP also provides nutrition supplements for malnourished children under five, pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers and people receiving treatment for HIV and tuberculosis. Some 28,000 refugee children and over 7,000 children from host communities are also supported with daily nutritious school meals.

Following years of funding shortfalls and to ensure the most vulnerable people receive assistance, WFP introduced a prioritization scheme in May 2021 – a system under which refugees are given rations according to their levels of vulnerability. Under this scheme, the most vulnerable refugees – such as Jocelyne and her family – receive 92 percent of a full ration and those deemed moderately vulnerable receive 46 percent of a full ration. Joselyne's children receive a daily nutritious snack of porridge on school days, and she is supported with a monthly cash transfer of 49,000 Rwandan Francs (US\$48) which helps her to meet her family's basic needs.



WFP's support for refugees in Rwanda is possible through generous contributions from donors such as the European Union's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) and others.





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Malawi, Ethiopia delegates acquire lessons from Rwanda's digital transformation



MALAWI, ETHIOPIA DELEGATES ACQUIRE LESSONS FROM RWANDA'S DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

A team of 20 delegates from Malawi and Ethiopia came for a three-day study tour in Rwanda, where among other things; exchanged ideas in the field of digitalisation of the economy and government services.

This tour was under a programme by the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the UN's capital investment agency for the world's least developed countries, which invests in creating new opportunities for poor people and their communities through increasing access to microfinance and investment capital.

The four year programme dubbed 'Digital Financial Services for Resilience (DFS4Resilience)' started in 2021 and will run through 2024.

It is supported by the European Union and the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, and is implemented by the UNCDF.

It aims to deploy digital finance solutions at scale, to deepen financial inclusion and accelerate economic recovery from Covid-19 in order to make economies and societies more resilient to external shocks.

"From this trip, we learned how to involve different stakeholders in the country and how to encourage SMEs in participating in the digital economy, which is very important to have an inclusive digital economy," Said Abiyot Bayou, the Director General of the Digital Transformation Program at the Ministry of Innovation and Technology in Ethiopia

[Read more](#)



The programme is supported by the European Union and the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States.





Training on briquette production for community members in Nyamagabe District



IOM CONTRIBUTES TO PROMOTE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION BY SPONSORING INNOVATIVE BUSINESS PROJECTS

IOM Rwanda sponsored ten small-scale initiatives in areas such as clean energy, infrastructure development, and agriculture. **“Protecting the environment is a compelling priority.”** Dr. Concorde Nsengumuremyi aims to do so by actively engaging local communities.

With thanks to IOM’s support, Dr. Concorde launched a project for briquette production – a clean and cost-effective source of cooking fuel made of eucalyptus leaves and red soil – with the ambition to tackle deforestation and carbon emissions, all while creating new job opportunities for local communities.

To achieve this, Dr. Concorde is following a twofold approach: sensitizing community members on the adoption of environmental-friendly energy production sources as well as training them in briquette production.

Under this initiative, in August 2021, Dr. Concorde organized a briquette-making training for 30 community members in Kitabi, Nyamagabe District.

The training provided participants with hands-on skills and represented a space for them to reflect upon and exchange on environmental-friendly behaviors.

The discussions initiated during the training of 30 members, coupled with the new knowledge and skills acquired by participants, also paved the way for consultations on the establishment of a local-based briquette-making cooperative, which is now underway.

“I have seen overcutting of trees for charcoal and firewood production which can lead to land degradation and climate change in the long term. I wanted to mitigate these risks but also contribute to the improvement of the communities’ wellbeing. The prices of charcoals and gas are expensive and job opportunities are limited in our community. From the waste that nobody used before, this project can provide solutions to these challenges.” – Dr. Concorde commented.



Activities funded by the Government of Belgium.





© UN Women

Nyaruguru District Vice Mayor Social affairs, the Representative of UNILEVER tea Rwanda and UN Women Project Manager interacting with children in one of the ECD centers.



NEW HOME BASED ECDs (EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT) CENTERS TO INCREASE MOTHERS' PRODUCTIVITY IN NYARUGURU DISTRICT, UNILEVER TEA CATCHMENT AREA

On June 14, 2022, UN Women Rwanda in collaboration with its partners ADEPE and Nyaruguru District officially inaugurated three Early Childhood Development Centers (ECDs) in three sectors of Munini, Kibeho and Mata in Nyaruguru district.

The project comes as a solution to fight against malnutrition and stunting in children but also promotes women's safety and economic empowerment especially young mothers employed in the Unilever tea plantation. With the ECDs in Nyaruguru, women will get enough time to work with assurance of safety for their children and good nutrition which will increase their productivity. Niyibivuga Nathalie, a full-time employee in the tea plantation said that she used to leave her three-year-old daughter alone at home **"I was always working under stress, telling myself that my child would get hit by a cyclist"**.

From now on, Niyibivuga will leave her little one at the centre and focus on her work, a joy she shared.

The goal is to promote the participation of women in income-generating activities.

"We want women to work and participate in the development of their families. But because of their daily chores at home, including childcare, they are always busy. That's why we initiated this project," says Alice Rugerindinda, UN Women.

According to Grégoire Rucamihigo, National Director of ADEPE, in charge of the execution of the rehabilitation of these three centers and their annexes, this project cost more than 100 million Rwandan francs and has the capacity to take eighty children per ECD Centre.

This work is supported by UN Women under the "Safe Rural Public Space Project" "To enhance the overall safety of women and girls, men, and boys in the Unilever Tea Rwanda (UTR) Tea plantation's catchment area in Kibeho, Mata and Munini Sectors of Nyaruguru District in the Southern province of Rwanda.



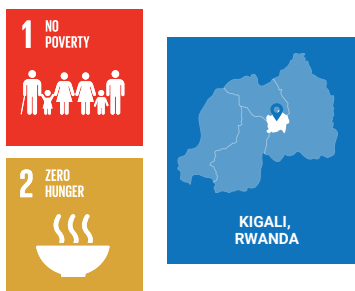
The project is funded by the UNILEVER and implemented in three sectors of Nyaruguru District.





©FAO/Eugene Uwimana

Fifth-grade pupils of Green Hills Academy posing after visiting FAO Rwanda office



CHILDREN WANT TO BE #ZEROHUNGER HEROES

Involving children in the quest for zero hunger. Efforts of food heroes worldwide to achieve zero hunger and ensure food security for all can only be sustainable if kids and the young become more involved early in their lives. They have energy, the skills in the latest technology, and the motivation to make life better for all.

"I would like to thank FAO Rwanda for hosting our kids and giving them information about Zero Hunger. The information will help the pupils with their exhibition project and has given them ideas on how they can contribute to resolving world hunger at their level. FAO's staff presented and answered questions in a form that the children can understand and in a way that they can remember throughout their life journey."

Said Momona Belay Alemayehu, parent.

She added, *"To let students see and practice in real-life and see the world they live in at this age (10-11 years old) will contribute a lot to solving the society's problems. Thanks again to FAO for contributing to making the world a better place to live!"*

At home

Children can play a paramount role in their homes, including stopping food waste. The World Bank report titled

"Rwanda Food Smart Country Diagnostic 2020" estimates that more than 40% of food is wasted annually. The report further states that today 18.7% of Rwandan households remain food insecure. Rwanda's food security index lies below the average for Sub-Saharan African countries. If educated on the impact of wasting food, children can develop a culture and mindset of eating sufficient, necessary, and healthily. Also in their funny way, they can be zero hunger heroes by convincing their parents and other household members not to waste food.

At school

When children participate in school-based food and nutrition education, they can help communities achieve lasting and tremendous milestones in the world's food security journey. FAO considers school gardens as one of the essential accessible models to use. School gardens have many benefits for children: Taste and learn about healthy food, learn how to grow vegetables and fruits, develop teamwork skills, promote better nutrition, and learn to value the work of those who grow our food.

"We were happy to host the pupils of the Green Hills Academy in our office. We thank the school and the parents for the initiative. We believe that it is important that children learn, at an early age, about the alarming food insecurity issues that we face as a country and globally."

Said Mr. Orlando Sosa, FAO Agricultural Officer at the Subregional Office for Eastern Africa (SFE).

[Read more](#)





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A LONG-STANDING COMMITMENT TO SAVING LIVES

Every year, World Blood Donor Day is celebrated on June 14. This is an opportunity to raise public awareness on the essential contribution of voluntary blood donors to boost national blood transfusion services and save lives. This year's theme, ***"Giving Blood: An Act of Solidarity. Join the movement and save lives!"***

The need for blood is constant. Patients need blood for transfusion in both normal and emergency situations. In 2021, the Blood Transfusion Division collected 71,933 blood units from 5 fixed and 622 mobile collection sites countrywide and served 78 transfusing public and private health facilities. This supply met 97% of the blood demand countrywide.

"We are grateful to all blood donors whose act of bravery enables us to supply more than 97% of Rwandan health facilities' demand and save lives across Rwanda."

"We guarantee a high-level assurance of blood product safety by recruiting and retaining donors from low-risk population and screen blood components as per WHO-recommended procedures." Dr Thomas Muyombo, Division Manager of the Blood Transfusion Division in the Rwanda Biomedical Centre.

In Rwanda, blood transfusion services started in 1976 after the World Health Organization (WHO) recommended that all nations should have a functional blood transfusion establishment. Between 1976 and 1985, blood donation was exclusively based on family replacement. From 1985 to date, blood is exclusively from voluntary non-remunerated blood donors.

Alphonse Nkuranga is one of these voluntary non-remunerated blood donors. Nkuranga was recognised at the World Blood Donor Day for his year-long consistency and act of solidarity in saving lives.

 [Read more](#)





EXPERTS SAY THAT RWANDA'S AfCFTA STRATEGY PLACES THE COUNTRY ON A FIRM FOOTING



Trade Experts, members of the private sector and officials of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) met to discuss and validate the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) National Implementation strategy.

The validated strategy will serve as a blueprint to identify key products and services as well as markets that Rwanda will prioritize to tap into the opportunities provided by the agreement.

Honorable Béata Habyarimana, Rwanda's Minister of Trade and Industry told the participants that businesses in Africa are eager to start trading and to fast-track the implementation of the AfCFTA agreement. The Minister reminded that the start of trading has started on 1 January 2021, but the actual trade has not yet kicked off due to outstanding negotiations, including the finalisation of tariff offers and rules of origin for textiles and automotive sectors.

Hon. Habyarimana reaffirmed the business community that the Rwandan government is fully committed to ensuring a favourable business environment to allow the private sector to grow their exports.

ECA estimates large gains for Eastern Africa, including an increase in intra-African exports by over US\$ 1 billion and the creation of over 2 million new jobs.

Speaking at the event, Ms Mama Keita, Director of ECA in Eastern Africa underlined how African economies are characterized by very high imports of essential goods from the rest of the world.

"We only need to look at the pharmaceutical industry", said Ms. Keita.

"Africa covers over 90% of its needs in pharmaceutical products by resorting to imports from the rest of the world", she stressed, adding that the COVID-19 pandemic has shown us how in the event of a global crisis, it is risky to depend too heavily on the rest of the world in terms of essential goods.

Ms Keita further explained that during the past two years, many countries have imposed export bans on some key pharmaceutical and food products, thereby heightening the vulnerability of African importers.

The National AfCFTA Implementation Strategy highlights that Rwanda is expected to gain from sectors with strong potential for increased industrialisation such as agro processing of food products, mining and mineral processing of high-value extracts like coltan, tantalum and cobalt, construction materials like cement, iron, steel and ceramics, light manufacturing of textiles, leather products, pharmaceuticals, electronic equipment.

The Minister of Trade and Industry extended special appreciation to ECA and the European Union for providing technical and financial support in the development of Rwanda's National AfCFTA Implementation Strategy.

The meeting held in Serena, Kigali on 9 June 2022 gathered more than 70 people, featuring government officials, academics, the private sector as well as media.



Supported by the European Union





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IMPROVING SURVIVAL AND WELLBEING OF NEWBORNS IN RWANDA



UNICEF is working with partners to reduce newborn mortality by improving the quality of maternal and newborn care in Rwanda through training of nurses and doctors and equipping health facilities with equipment vital for child survival

“As a midwife or nurse, you have to be artistic and precise in everything you do,” says Sophia Nyame, a Ghanaian nurse, while working at Kacyiru Hospital in Rwanda’s capital, Kigali.

“This is important because it helps reassure the patient that they are in good hands, and they will be taken care of, whatever the issue may be,” she adds.

Sophia is part of an international outreach team of nurses, doctors, and midwives currently in Rwanda to impart their skills and knowledge to Rwandan doctors and nurses as part of the Integrated Rwandan Perinatal Improvement Programme (RPIP), a UNICEF-supported neonatal clinical mentorship project.

The team spends a total of six months in-country, imparting mentorship and training to doctors and nurses in various hospitals across the country on a rotational basis.

Implemented in collaboration with the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) and the Rwanda Paediatric Association (RPA), and thanks to the generous financial support from Takeda Pharmaceuticals, RPIP currently covers 10 Hospitals and 75 catchment Health Centers countrywide. The RPIP involves training and mentoring hospital nurses and doctors in the care of newborns, including the use of life-saving equipment.

“In our line of work, any error – big or small – can lead to the loss of a life.” Sophia Nyame

“Therefore, it is especially important that doctors and nurses are receiving this training, and it will hopefully lead to improved healthcare and lowered rates of deaths during childbirth,” she added.

 [Read more](#)



Project supported by Takeda Pharmaceuticals





©UNFPA

GETTING THEIR FUTURE BACK: HOW NEW FAMILY PLANNING METHODS ARE HELPING TEENAGE MOTHERS IN RWANDA



Chanceline Nyiraneza’s life changed for the worse when she fell pregnant at 17, while still in high school. She dropped out of school, was abandoned by her boyfriend and lost the support of her family.

The consequences of an unintended pregnancy proved an enormous burden for the teenager. Although her parents allowed her to stay at home, they stopped supporting her financially, which meant she had to take on small jobs to earn money for herself and her baby. But help was at hand, at her local health centre.

“I came to know about family planning methods and their benefits, through the programme at Karengera Health Centre, where I gave birth,” she said. “I decided to go with an implant method (Implanon) that lasts three years. It is a decision I made confidently, thanks to the information I got from the centre.”

Quality family planning services and counselling allowed Ms Nyiraneza to make informed decisions about her body and future as a result she regained her self-confidence and her hope for her future.

“My life has improved economically and socially, because even though I did not go back to school, I managed to find work for economic empowerment, to be able to take care of my child,” she said. When her implant needed to be renewed, she returned to the centre and learned about new methods of family planning.

“The nurse informed me of the new methods and I made a choice to adopt the Sayana Press method because it is easier to use,” she said. **“After being trained on how to do self-injection of Sayana, I will be able to do it myself at home without going to the health centre, and my privacy will be ensured,”** she smiles.

Family planning has enabled Ms Nyiraneza to focus on raising her son. Her newfound autonomy over her body and reproduction has given her the confidence to make plans for her future. **“I feel comfortable. I can now plan my life and the future of my family. I know I will raise my son, feed him and buy him clothes without any problem because I work hard without worrying about having another baby that I did not plan for,”** she said.

The Government of Rwanda, through the Ministry of Health and its subsidiary centre, Rwanda Biomedical Centre, coordinates the implementation of the Rwanda International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD25) Commitments, which include improving family planning service delivery, access and uptake, by expanding the available contraceptive method mix, including emergency contraceptives, in order to decrease the unmet need for family planning. UNFPA, the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency, supports the Government of Rwanda to ensure an ample supply of modern contraceptives and other reproductive health commodities towards achieving the SDGs and delivering UNFPA’s three transformative results – ending the unmet need for family planning, ending preventable maternal death, and ending gender-based violence and harmful practices.



This programme is supported by UNFPA Supplies





Maurice KWIZERA, National UNV in Ruzizi District



I AM DELIGHTED WITH THE CHOICE I MADE BY BECOMING A UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEER (UNV)

The UNV Programme supports UN system initiatives to achieve the SDGs by selecting and training skilled and motivated volunteers that serve in UN programmes, projects, field operations, etc. ...

These UNVs are deployed everywhere even in most remote communities and foster adapted local solutions and long-term attitude changes.

Maurice Kwizera is a National UNV serving with UNFPA in Ruzizi District/Western Province as District Programme Coordinator.

This district has the lowest enrolment in family planning programmes compared to the rest of the country which prompted the government and UNFPA Rwanda to put more focus on service quality improvement and increasing awareness of sexual reproductive health.

“Since my childhood, my dream has always been to help others and I have been blessed to follow studies that allow me to contribute to the society in a positive and significant way”, said Maurice.

His main duty is to coordinate all delivery projects at the District level with objectives to reduce the unwanted pregnancies, eliminate preventable maternal death and reduce to zero gender-based violence and harmful practices. Apart from being involved in the District Annual Plan development, Maurice, together with other district stakeholder, work closely with district team to find solutions to sexual reproductive health issues in Ruzizi district.

“Volunteering is not a profession but rather a passion, and I don’t regret my choice. I am comfortable with the Organisation I serve and the work as a volunteer because it provides me with a motivation to contribute to the achievement of UNFPA mandate and attainment of national development objectives”.



His Excellency Paul Kagame received the UN Resident Coordinator Mr. Fodé Ndiaye ending his 5 years of service in Rwanda.

“Cooperation between the UN and the Government has been at its best under your leadership as the UN Resident Coordinator. This is due to the good communication from both sides”

– H.E Paul Kagame,
President of the Republic of Rwanda



Honorable Minister Vincent Biruta received Mr. Fodé Ndiaye, the UN in Rwanda Resident Coordinator, for a farewell call.

“You were not just a Representative of the UN, you were Mr. Fodé . We appreciate all you have done in various situations including response and recovery from COVID-19 pandemic ”

– Minister Dr. Vincent Biruta,
Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation



Honorable Minister Uzziel Ndagijimana bid farewell to Mr Fodé Ndiaye the UN Resident Coordinator among Development Partners who have diligently and successfully ended their time of service in Rwanda.

“As UN Resident Coordinator, you have been able to effectively coordinate all UN Operations at the country lever to ensure delivering as one principle is achieved”

– Minister Uzziel Ndagijimana,
Minister of Finance and Economic Planning

A few highlights of the UN Resident Coordinator Mr. Fodé Ndiaye.



A group photo of the Girls best performers and the Minister of Education, the RC and First Lady Ms. Jeannette Kagame at the National Celebrations of the International Women's Day on 8 March 2019 in Nyamasheke district.



RC with heads of agencies and residents participating in the solidarity walk during the 16 Days of Activism in Gatsibo district in November 2021



In March 2019, the UN Resident Coordinator Fodé Ndiaye joined The "Girls Take Over" Initiative aimed at providing a shadowing experience to young women in Rwanda by offering them role models in the field of their career choice.



The RC and other delegates posing with the 9 private companies awarded with a Golden Gender Equality Seal on March 11 2022



The UN RC with some of the women beneficiaries who received water storage tanks during the IWD celebration in Gakenke district on March, 8 2022



RC delivering remarks during 2020 International Volunteer Day held at Gasabo District in Rutunga Sector .

