



UNITED NATIONS  
RWANDA



# TURI KUMWE

Newsletter | 2023 Quarter 3



# FOREWORD



**Mr. Ozonia Ojelo**  
UN RESIDENT COORDINATOR

Dear esteemed Readers,

Welcome to the third quarter edition of the Turi Kumwe Newsletter, a testament to the spirit of collaboration with the visionary leadership of the government of Rwanda and the dedication that defines the work of the United Nations.

In this issue, we shine a spotlight on pivotal joint initiatives that underscore the UN's commitment to enhancing the lives of Rwandans and fostering sustainable development. Our stories delve into various domains, reflecting the diverse spectrum of our engagements and their profound impact on the communities we serve.

Stories you are about to read revolve around the following headlines:

"Digitalising Nutrition Data: Impact on Child Wellbeing in Rwanda" encapsulates our innovative approach to leveraging technology for the improvement of child nutrition, a crucial element in ensuring a brighter future for Rwanda's youth and human capital development.

In a heartwarming demonstration of solidarity and mutual support, "UN Rwanda staff contributed white canes to Rwanda Union of the Blind." This thoughtful contribution resonates with the compassion and empathy that define our team's spirit.

Their generous gesture perfectly encapsulates the core value of inclusivity and reaffirms our unwavering commitment to ensuring that no one is left behind.

"A Collective Effort: Strengthening the Midwifery Profession to Save the Lives of Mothers and Newborns" and "Bridging the Divide and Promoting Women's Empowerment through Cross-Border Trade" underscore our determination to empower women and enhance healthcare systems for the well-being of mothers and their children. These stories embody our collaborative ethos with our partners and staff.

The story of "Joint efforts of Refugees and Rwandans to restore the environment" exemplifies how unity and shared goals can drive positive change, fostering environmental restoration.

"Empowering Rural Women: Illuminating Their Journey with Solar-Powered Irrigation " and "Placing a Stepping Stone for Women's Socio-economic Empowerment and Early Childhood Development in Rwanda" illustrate our dedication to enhancing livelihoods and Early Childhood Development. These stories showcase the transformative power of collaboration.

In the face of adversity, we draw strength from the resilience of individuals, as you will read in "Strength in Adversity: A refugee's resilience to cope with HIV." This story portrays the indomitable human spirit and emphasises the need for collective action in health interventions.

"Bringing Hope Door-to-Door: UN and Govt Join Forces to Vaccinate Polio and Safeguard Public Health" reaffirms our collective responsibility towards public health.

"Unveiling Impact, gaps, and Progress: UN Rwanda's Dynamic Field Visit in Rutsiro, Rwanda" encapsulates our commitment to transparency and accountability. This story underlines our dedication to continuous improvement, identifying gaps, and striving for progress in all our endeavors.

Lastly, the "Unleashing the Global Game-Changer: VCWC 2024's Quest for Unity and Impact" story unfolds as VCWC 2024 embarks on a global tour, aligning with the UN's Football for the Goals Initiative, forging partnerships, and rallying international support to make their upcoming VCWC2024 event in Rwanda a game-changing catalyst for unity, development, and sustainable growth on the 30th anniversary of the Genocide against the Tutsi.

We extend our deepest appreciation to our development partners and the entire UN team in Rwanda. Your dedication, collaboration, and tireless efforts are instrumental in making these initiatives successful and impactful.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to the shared vision of a better and brighter future.





A health center in Mahama Refugee Camp



## STRENGTH IN ADVERSITY: UN'S JOINT EFFORTS TO ENHANCE REFUGEES' RESILIENCE TO COPE WITH HIV.

When the 2015 political violence broke out in Burundi, Olive (a given name to protect her real identity) and her three children decided to flee their home. Unlike other refugees, Olive, however, carried a heavy burden that added to her refugee challenges – she was HIV positive.

Seeking safety and a new beginning, Olive and her children arrived in Rwanda, finding temporary refuge at the Nyanza transit centre before eventually settling in Mahama camp. Their arrival brought them hope, but Olive faced another obstacle – access to adequate healthcare for HIV-positive people.

Olive had discovered her HIV status a few years earlier during a routine prenatal visit back in Burundi. She was in her eighth month of pregnancy when she was diagnosed with the virus. She struggled to come to terms with the fact that she would live with the virus for the rest of her life.

*"I was devastated when I found out that I was HIV positive. I isolated myself and could not digest how I contracted the virus. I felt like it was the end of my life,"* she says.

When she arrived, humanitarian actors provided some assistance, but initially, it was not enough, especially for people living with HIV who require regular medication.

*"When we arrived here in Mahama camp, I had no medicines. I was worried about my health, and I was always chasing health personnel asking for medication,"* the 43-year-old Burundian refugee recalls.

### UN's joint collaboration to support HIV-positive refugees

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/Aids and UNHCR with support from the government of Rwanda through Kirehe District Hospital, are collaborating to assist HIV-positive refugees with antiretrovirals on a regular basis. The Joint efforts also continue to provide assistance to strengthen the resilience of refugees living with the virus.

In the first six months of being in the camp, Olive kept herself apart from others because she didn't want her fellow camp residents to learn about her HIV status.

*"When I began taking antiretrovirals, I was concerned that my neighbors might discover my HIV status,"* she says. *"Whenever I encountered my neighbours on my way back from the health centre and they inquired about my whereabouts, I would fib, claiming that I had been to the UNHCR office or elsewhere, so as to avoid revealing my condition. After consuming all the antiretrovirals, I would discreetly dispose of the medication containers."*

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©RBC / Andre Rugema

A Community Health Worker administering a dose of the nOPV2 to a child in Nyarugenge District as part of the nationwide door-to-door polio vaccination campaign



## BRINGING HOPE DOOR-TO-DOOR: UN AND GOVT JOIN FORCES TO VACCINATE POLIO AND SAFEGUARD PUBLIC HEALTH

There is a Kinyarwanda adage that goes like this: 'Iyo umuturanyi arwaje ibinyoro, ugura akarago!' It literally means that if one finds out that a neighbor is suffering from yaws, they take precautions because there is a possibility that they might be next.

Earlier this year, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Tanzania, three neighbouring countries of Rwanda, declared their first Polio outbreak in three decades. This led the World Health Organization (WHO) to trigger an epidemiological alert throughout the region and support synchronised Polio vaccination campaigns in countries at high risk.

The Ministry of Health, through the Rwanda Biomedical Centre (RBC), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the WHO and partners quickly took action to protect the population.

*"The week of 24th to 30th July 2023 was dedicated to the first round of the Polio vaccination campaign targeting children aged 0 to 7 years old. We reintroduced the Type2 Polio vaccine through a countrywide Polio vaccination campaign to strengthen our children's immune system."* Said Hassan Sibomana, the Immunization Manager at RBC.

Rwanda removed the Type 2 Polio vaccine from its routine immunization in 2016 after Wild Poliovirus Type 2 was declared eradicated worldwide.

After the declaration of circulating vaccine-derived polio virus type 2 outbreaks. However, the new alert urged the country to implement two rounds of house-to-house Polio vaccination campaigns to effectively respond to the circulating Vaccine Derived Polio Viruses type 2 (cVDPV2) outbreak declared in the region.

### A door-to-door Polio vaccination campaign

Seven years have passed since the country switched from trivalent Oral Polio Vaccine (tOPV), which contains types 1, 2, and 3, to bivalent (bOPV), which does not include type 2. This highlights the importance of immunity gaps among children born after the switch who are at high risk of cVDPV2 infection. For these reasons, campaigns targeted children of 0 to 7 years old countrywide. The launch of the second round of the polio vaccination took place on 11 September 2023, in Karongi district. Just like Nyanza where the first round was launched, these districts were among those considered at high risk due to their proximity to affected areas.

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Verena Mukagatare standing for a portrait in Rusizi district.

5 GENDER EQUALITY



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



## BRIDGING THE DIVIDE AND PROMOTING WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CROSS-BORDER TRADE

Verena Mukagatare, a mother of five, wakes up early every morning to ensure she gets the best products at the market. She meets up with other members of her cooperative, where they purchase legumes and vegetables from wholesalers in Rwanda before heading to the border with the DRC where they will resell them.

If they are unable to find a truck to transport everything at once, these courageous ladies must carry the produce by themselves. *“At times, we carry products on our heads, which in that case means going back and forth at least three times a day,”* Verena explains.

On any given day, cross-border traders like Verena make only 1,000 RWF in profit (USD 0.85) which is well under the global poverty line of \$2.15 USD. Yet, trade at the border is the sole source of income for her family. To ensure no one is left behind, the UN through the joint efforts of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Trade Mark Africa (TMA) supports the strengthening of women's trading cooperatives.

These women-led cooperatives are helping to promote inclusive, competitive, and sustainable economic growth in areas like Rusizi district, which generates work and promotes quality livelihoods for those living in border communities.

Under this project, selected cooperatives received grants as start-up capital to run smoothly. *“Our trade is more stable because of this collective support,”* Verena explains.

Verena's cooperative was one of the 13 to receive financial support and capacity-building trainings. In total, the project distributed \$13,000 USD across women's cooperatives.

However, financial stability is only one of the challenges faced by small-scale cross-border traders. Beatrice, who has been selling vegetables for over 15 years says, *“There are times we come across dubious agents or traders, who violently attack us after we give them our products, rather than pay us.”* *“They do this to scare us off. Ultimately, we choose our lives and health, which means sometimes returning home empty-handed.”*

In order to improve the psychosocial well-being of female traders like Beatrice and help them develop coping mechanisms for dealing with trauma, group and individual counseling was organised through the Rwanda Organization of Trauma Counselors (ARCT-RUHUKA) in safe spaces where women could share their experiences, challenges, needs and come together in solidarity.

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©UNFPA Rwanda / Alain Mwizerwa

Midwifery is the cornerstone of maternal healthcare, ensuring safe pregnancies, childbirth and postnatal care for both mothers and infants.



## STRENGTHENING THE MIDWIFERY PROFESSION TO SAVE THE LIVES OF MOTHERS AND NEWBORNS

Strengthening the midwifery profession requires focusing on four pillars: education, regulation, association, and finally an increased investment in midwifery programming. UN works hand in hand with the government through fruitful collaboration between UNFPA, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the University of Rwanda, and other partners to improve the midwifery profession following the four mentioned pillars.

On the UN side UNFPA supports (1) midwifery education through scholarships for Master's and Ph.D. students and providing simulation-based training to enhance midwifery education both pre-and in-service using a mentorship program; (2) strengthening the Rwanda Association of Midwives; (3) Rwanda midwifery's regulation, for instance, a midwifery task force sub-TWG was introduced; and (4) keeps advocacy for investments in midwifery programming.

Currently, there are 2006 graduated midwives in the country from the University of Rwanda who operate on three campuses (Remera, Rwamagana and Huye) and 3 private institutes (Kibogora Polytechnic, East Africa Christian College, Ruli Higher Institute for Health).

*I said this is the right time for me to join the midwifery profession." Said Murekatete Pascasie, a passionate midwife at Rutongo Hospital*

When Murekatete decided to go back to school to acquire hands-on skills in midwifery, she was 36 years old with 6 kids. As a former nurse with 6 years of experience in that sector, Murekatete said that her passion and love for human wellness, as well as realising the struggle that a mother passes through during pregnancy, had pushed her to beat the odds to become a professional midwife.

*"After realising how women struggle during pregnancy and childbirth and looking at how well I could contribute to saving more mothers and newborns, I decided to go back to school and graduated in 2016. This was achieved because of the government of Rwanda and its partners' efforts to improve maternal health. I think this is the most fascinating decision I have ever made." - Narrates Murekatete Pascasie.*

One such example is the story of a six-month-old baby named Jolly, who was born on the 1st of June 2022 weighing only 600 grams. She was admitted to Rutongo Hospital in Rulindo District, where Murekatete works as a midwife.

*"I used to be a nurse for a long time. When I heard the government's plan to establish schools of midwifery,*

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Ornella Uwihirwe measurement indicates she is in Yellow, meaning she is moderately acutely malnourished. Anthro software analyses data and inform nutritionists to act and save children at early stage.

**2** ZERO HUNGER



**3** GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING




## DIGITALIZING NUTRITION DATA: IMPACT ON CHILD WELLBEING IN RWANDA

In the heart of Ngororero hills in western Rwanda, a story of transformation and hope unfolds. It's a mid-day field trip, and WFP staff meet Clementine, a dedicated nutritionist at the Muramba health centre, embarking on a regular field trip in Rugambiro village, Hindiro sector.

The team's first destination is the home of Immaculee Tuyisenge, a 23-year-old mother of two. As they approach, they catch a glimpse of Immaculee sitting in her small house, gently playing with her second-born child Ornella. However, something immediately strikes them as unusual: the youngest member of the family, one-year-and-eight-month-old Ornella Uwihirwe, appears unhappy and hardly smiles.

With a warm greeting, they approach Immaculee and inquire about Ornella, and why she seems not happy. Immaculee's response was: *"She has not eaten since morning,"* she sadly replies.

Clementine recognises the gravity of the situation. She observes that Ornella appears weak and suspects that she may have missed out on nutritious food for some time. Without hesitation,

Clementine takes immediate action, grabbing her measuring tape to conduct the mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) assessment, length (height 75.0 cm), and weight (8.4kgs) in relation to her 20 months age—a vital tool for quickly identifying acute and chronic malnutrition in children.

As Clementine gently wraps the measuring tape around Ornella's tiny arm, a sense of anticipation hangs in the air. Unfortunately, the result is not what she hoped for—Ornella's MUAC falls into the yellow zone, indicating that she already has double burden of malnutrition (both moderate acute malnutrition and moderate stunting).

Clementine ensures that all this data be entered into the WHO Anthropometric software—an innovative tool introduced by the United Nations joint nutrition programme through the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)-funded One UN Joint Nutrition Programme implemented by the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

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Congolese refugees in Kigeme camp are working with Rwandans to plant trees to protect the soil and participate in environmental rehabilitation efforts.



## JOINT EFFORTS OF REFUGEES AND RWANDANS TO RESTORE THE ENVIRONMENT

On a sunny afternoon, Eugene Rurangwa Gituku, a Congolese refugee living in Kigeme camp, waters seedlings in a tree nursery as his colleagues carry out a regular assessment of the seedlings' growth.

The 65-year-old refugee is confident these trees will improve air quality in the camp and, most importantly, bind the soil with their roots in an area that is threatened by high rates of erosion and landslides.

*“There is a big difference now when it rains since we started planting trees,” he says. “Before the soil was very weak and it would just wash away, but the tree roots keep the soil intact.” “When we lived in the Congo, we had a lot of forests, so now it feels like home, and we can sit in the shade of the trees when it is too hot,” he adds smilingly. Situated on two adjacent hills in the southern part of the country, Kigeme refugee camp has been hosting over 14,000 Congolese refugees since 2012.*

However, a drainage channel combined with increasingly heavy rains linked to climate change contributed to the formation of two large ravines between the hills on either side of the camp. *“There were many consequences, children would fall into the ravine,”* explains Edson Munyakarambi Sebutozi, a 54-year-old Congolese refugee and the camp president.

*“Families that used to live here have been scattered, some of them relocated to Mahama [another refugee camp, 250 kilometres away].”*

He added that having to relocate was a major setback for refugees who relied on businesses they ran in the camp to supplement their aid rations.

### The ravines have also resulted in injuries.

Apollinaire Uwimana, 47, was digging terraces near the ravine one day when a small landslide swept him into it. His arms and neck were seriously injured, and he had to be hospitalised for six months.

*“I used to work and support my family, but with this disability, I can’t do anything,”* Apollinaire says.

### A joint initiative to foster climate resilience

Rather than accept the situation, Eugene, Edson, and other refugees decided to tackle the issue head-on. Together with Rwandans living near the camp, they received training on environmental protection from the joint collaboration of the UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR, and World Vision, an international Non-Government Organisation. They learned that planting trees would counter the ravine's expansion and protect the soil and the environment around them.

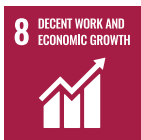
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Christine Mukamana with her youngest son at the ECD in Munini Sector.



## PLACING A STEPPINGSTONE FOR WOMEN'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT IN RWANDA

Unique for its expansive and lush landscapes, the district of Nyaruguru stands as one of the leading regions in Rwanda contributing to a significant portion of Rwanda's GDP. Lush as they are, within these hills you will find women and men, sweat on the brow, determinedly working from the chilly hours of the morning to the sun-filled afternoons to harvest and tend to one of the country's largest natural exports. The highly acclaimed "Rwandan tea"

However, these productive plantations are sustained at a great human development cost, particularly to women. This is the cost of an unequal burden to unpaid care work, coupled with the risk for deficient early childhood development. To bridge this gap and level the burden of unpaid care work that women face, UN Women partnered with the district of Nyaruguru under the "Safe Public Spaces" project to develop three Early Childhood Development Centers (ECDs) as a solution to empower women to freely pursue income generating activities with the peace of mind of knowing that their children are catered for in a safe, educational and nutrition providing environment.

Christine Mukamana, a mother of five, is one of the many women whose lives have been transformed following the establishment of these ECDs.

*"Life before having access to the ECD was incredibly difficult. As a mother of five children working the entire day on the farm, it was almost impossible to look after them and be productive at the same time,*

*especially with my youngest who needs to be breastfed and requires constant attention. With this level of distress, my work suffered, our income was low, and our household was a mess. I sometimes wondered whether it was better to not work, but just stay home to take care of my children."*

*"When I heard that a new ECD was being developed by the district, I became very hopeful and prayed that it would be a much better option than what we had at the time. Looking back, my prayers were answered."* says Christine.

The project has so far reached approximately 18,850 direct beneficiaries during its three-year implementation period. These ECDs were developed under the overarching mission to address the unequal burden of unpaid care work that many women face in the district, to promote women's economic empowerment and ultimately gender equality.

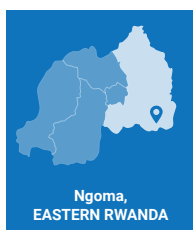
*"The three ECDs established in Kibeho, Munini, and Mata sectors employ a unique integrated approach aimed at strengthening children's nutrition, protection, health, and education. Nyaruguru district was one of Rwanda's most vulnerable to stunting, at a rate of 44 percent, but with the establishment of these ECDs and complementary awareness-raising activities including 'Men Engage' initiatives, the severity is rapidly decreasing, now standing at 24 percent with a target to reach 19 percent by 2024"* said Assoumpta Byukusenge, Vice Mayor of Socio-Economic Affairs, Nyaruguru district.

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Empowering rural women farmers is key to food security and sustainable development, unlocking their potential to drive agricultural innovation and community prosperity.



## RURAL WOMEN MAKE USE OF SOLAR-POWERED IRRIGATION UNDER UN RWANDA'S JOINT SUPPORT

Rural women in the Jarama sector, Ngoma district, have built wealth worth over Rwf200 million by earning, saving, and investing money thanks to solar-powered irrigation intervention supported by three UN Rome Based Agencies – (Food and Agriculture Organization - FAO, International Fund for Agriculture Development - IFAD, and World Food Programme), and UN Women.

The Joint Programme on “Accelerating Progress towards Rural Women’s Economic Empowerment (JP RWEE)” is a global initiative with an overarching goal of securing rural women’s livelihoods and rights in the context of sustainable development. The programme is jointly implemented by the Rome-based Agencies and UN Women, in partnership with the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF), the Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB), and other local organizations such as the Rwanda Rural Rehabilitation Initiative (RWARRI) and INADES Formation Rwanda as well as local governments such as Ngoma district and others where JP RWEE is implemented.

Building on each agency’s comparative advantage and strengths to improve the status of women in rural areas, JP RWEE uses a holistic approach to women’s economic empowerment, working towards four interrelated outcomes: i) improved food and nutrition security; ii) increased income to sustain livelihoods; iii) enhanced participation in decision-making;

and iv) a more gender-responsive policy environment for rural women in agriculture. The implementing UN agencies’ representatives toured the Ngoma district women’s achievements in climate-smart agriculture and assets on September 13, 2023, to celebrate the UN Day for South-South Cooperation.

South-south cooperation is a manifestation of solidarity through the exchange of resources, technology, and knowledge between developing countries, also known as countries of the Global South. It aims to foster self-reliance of developing countries by enhancing their creative capacity to find solutions, strategies, and technological capabilities to address their development challenges.

Talking about the implementing UN Agencies, Mr Ye Anping, the Director of the Office of South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) Division at FAO, said through south-south and triangular cooperation, many development interventions can be implemented, adding that supporting rural women is part of preparing a bright future of Rwanda’s population.

*“The participating UN Agencies already work together to support school feeding programmes and others. I am confident that all UN Rome Based Agencies will work more closely to contribute to development in Rwanda,”* he said, citing the importance of rural women empowerment.

 [Read more](#)





UN Resident Coordinator, Ozonnia Ojielo, UN Staff Association handing over the white canes to the Rwanda Union of the Blind.



## UN RWANDA STAFF CONTRIBUTE WHITE CANES TO THE RWANDA UNION OF THE BLIND

In November 2022, the UN Resident Coordinator in Rwanda attended an event called “Dinner in the Dark”. This event was organised by MTN Rwanda and Rwanda Union of the Blind to raise awareness and drum up support for the blind.

*“This event provided a humbling experience for us guests. We had to temporarily live in the world of the blind by participating in the dinner wearing a blindfold,”* said Ozonnia Ojielo, UN Resident Coordinator. *“Only a handful of participants managed to eat at least half of the food served. Many could not find the tables where the dinner was being served,”* he added.

As it was its objective, after attending the dinner, under “White Cane Challenge” Ozonnia mobilised all UN staff in Rwanda to raise money to buy white canes which are a great enabler to the blind community. The staff heeded the call and fundraised 378 white canes.

*“This initiative exemplifies the power of collaboration, compassion, and inclusivity that lies at the heart of the UN’s mission to promote equality, and inclusivity and ensure the well-being of all individuals, Leaving no One Behind. Let us continue to collaborate, innovate, and advocate for policies and practices that break down barriers and create opportunities for every individual to thrive.”* Ozonnia said during the ceremony of handing over the white canes to the Rwanda Union of the Blind

Dr. Beth Nasiforo Mukarwego, chairperson of the Rwanda Union of the Disabilities’ Organisation of Rwanda (NUDOR)

and the Executive Director of the Rwanda Union of the Blind, Dr. Donatilla Kanimba received the white canes and appreciated the initiative of UN Rwanda staff.

*“378 white canes are very many. We thank staff members of the UN family for this noble initiative. A white cane for us is not just another leg or an additional body part, it is a freedom.”* Said Dr. Beth Nasiforo Mukarwego in an exclusive interview with the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator.

**Unbreakable Resilience: Rising Beyond Adversity**  
After Beth Nasiforo Mukarwego’s birth while the family was in exile in Burundi, her parents were frantic about her education because she had a visual impairment that led to blindness.

*“I was born with a visual impairment due to abnormal development during pregnancy. It began in my right eye. As I grew up, my vision continued to deteriorate because of the development of a cataract. There was nothing the doctors could do,”* she said.

Mukarwego, now a lecturer at the University of Rwanda-College of Education, said that, in Burundi, it was impossible for a visually impaired child to go to school and get quality education. So, her family moved her to Kenya, where she finished her schooling and eventually also obtained a PhD degree.

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Members of UNCT engaging with participants from the Twiyubake Kayove VSLA

## UNVEILING IMPACT, GAPS AND PROGRESS: UN RWANDA'S DYNAMIC FIELD VISIT IN RUTSIRO, RWANDA

In a proactive step toward assessing and enhancing ongoing joint interventions, the United Nations Country Team in Rwanda conducted a third UNCT field visit, went this time to Rutsiro district in Western Rwanda on the 27th of September 2023. The visit, amidst the refreshing rain that graced the hilly terrain, aimed to delve deep into initiatives focusing on the UN Joint Nutrition Project Phase III which aims to support the Government of Rwanda's efforts to reduce malnutrition with a focus on infants, children under-five, adolescents, and women and with emphasis on reducing stunting in two districts; Ngororero and Rutsiro. The Joint Nutrition Project is implemented by the four participating UN agencies (WFP, UNICEF, WHO, and FAO).

Jointly organised by UNICEF, the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator and the office of the Mayor of Rutsiro District, this field visit was part of the UN's relentless efforts to evaluate and monitor the impact of these vital joint interventions in the fight against child stunting.

While in the field, the UN Country Team briefly met the Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Hon. Ildephonse Musafiri, who appreciated the initiative to bring all UN Agencies on the ground and meet the people they serve.

*"Oh, so you are all here? - this is very nice for you to come to the field to learn," he smilingly asked. He added, "Many partners just stay in the capital and file reports.*

*I also commend UN Rwanda's joint efforts to work hand in hand with the government to eradicate malnutrition. We appreciate your cooperation, and moving together, we can make it,"* said the Honorable Minister.

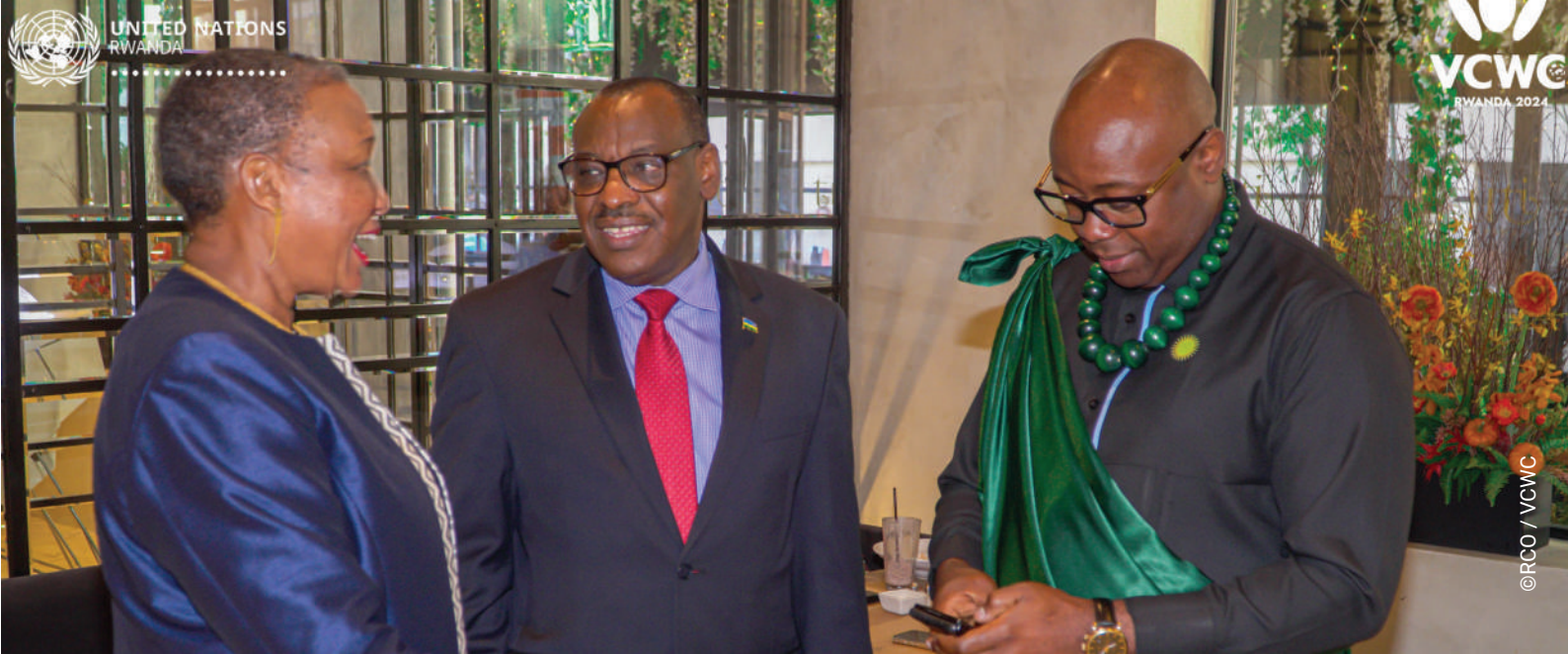
### Exploring Impact and Progress

The main objective of this field visit was to assess the impact and progress of ongoing initiatives within the unique context of Rutsiro district. The delegation, comprising heads of UN Agencies representatives from the UNCT Programme management team, UN field staff, and a representative from the Development Coordination Office, Addis Ababa, aimed to identify tangible impacts on the beneficiaries and understand the operational context in which these initiatives operate. Equally important was acknowledging the critical role played by implementing and funding partners in successfully executing these initiatives that foster sustainable change.

*"This field visit is of paramount importance. It helps us reflect on what we have learned, what we need to change, what we need to do better, what we need to collaborate more with the government, what strategic policies, and other issues we need to address. The field visit of UNCT is indeed a great tool to deliver as One,"* said Ozonnia Ojielo, UN Resident Coordinator.

 [Read more](#)





L-R: Ms. Josephine Marealle Ulimwengu, Head of UNRCO Rwanda, H.E Amb. Claver Gatete, Rwanda's Permanent Representative to the UN, and Mr. Fred Siewe, Chairperson of VCWC chatting in New York during the international tour.

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



## UNLEASHING THE GLOBAL GAME-CHANGER: VCWC 2024'S QUEST FOR UNITY AND IMPACT

A series of events leading up to the main Veteran Clubs World Championship (VCWC) 2024 events that will take place in Rwanda in September next year are in progress. These include continental and international tours.

In light of VCWC's recent admission to the UN's Football for the Goals Initiative, a delegation of members of VCWC and the Head of the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator in Rwanda from the 13th to the 15th of September embarked on an international tour in New York. During this period, numerous meetings were conducted to heighten awareness of the upcoming VCWC 2024 and the impactful partnership between, the Government of Rwanda, UN Rwanda, and VCWC.

A pivotal meeting with H.E Amb. Claver Gatete, Rwanda's Permanent Representative to the UN, emphasized Rwanda's immense readiness to host VCWC 2024. H.E Gatete pledged to mobilise and engage all African Permanent Representatives to support this extraordinary initiative. Furthermore, he offered to spotlight VCWC 2024 by engaging African Permanent Representatives and explore the possibility of hosting a side event at the Third UN Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries in June 2024, potentially reaching a vast international audience

*"We are here not only to celebrate sportsmanship and excellence but also to extend an open invitation to the international community to join us in the beautiful land of a thousand hills, for the first-ever VCWC Tournament,"* said H.E Amb. Claver Gatete, at the VCWC 2024 Presentation Conference, International Tour.

*"Our shared commitment transcends the thrill of the game; it extends to the enduring impact we can achieve collectively."*

*It mirrors our unwavering dedication to the Sustainable Development Goals and our belief in the power of sports, with its universal allure, to act as a catalyst for progress"* said Josephine Marealle Ulimwengu, reading the speech of the UN Resident Coordinator, Ozonnia Ojielo.

While delivering his remarks, Fred Siewe, VCWC President, stated that Rwanda is safe, secure, and green, which is a reason why it will not merely be a venue but the home of Legends.

*"We are now touring the world because we need people from all walks of life to seize this opportunity. Youths, women, policymakers, investors, industrialists, CEOs, and many more. To come, meet, discuss, and partner with the Legends for long-term socio-economic impact in our communities."* He added.

During the international tour in New York, the team also had courtesy meetings with Ms. Alice Nderitu, the UN Under-Secretary-General and UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Genocide Prevention; Ms. Cristina Duarte, the UN Under-Secretary-General and UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Africa.

VCWC also held a meeting with the Director of the Outreach Division in the UN Department of Global Communications (DGC), Mr. Maher Nasser. The discussions revolved around VCWC's groundbreaking approach in localizing the Football for the Goals Initiative and the tremendous significance of the event, especially being 30 years after the Genocide against the Tutsi. Plans were laid to collaborate in globalizing the initiative through the UN Resident Coordinator System worldwide.

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