

## UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE



## BY THE NUMBERS

- » World Vision U.S. funding: \$37 million
- » Total government co-funding: \$15+ million
- » Participant target: 1 million people

**From Fiscal Years 2019-2023**

- » People gaining access to clean drinking water: 1,181,958
- » People gaining access to household sanitation facilities: 802,023
- » People gaining access to household handwashing facilities: 1,393,289
- » Sectors reaching universal water coverage: 39



DONOR: Private donations

LOCATION: 39 sectors within 15 districts

PROJECT TIME FRAME: October 2018 to September 2023

PARTNERS: Water and Sanitation Corporation (WASAC), Ministry of Infrastructure, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Local Administrative Entities Development Agency, district governments

## Overview

Over the past two decades, water service coverage levels have been steadily increasing in Rwanda, though significant gaps remain in many rural communities. In 2018, World Vision committed to reaching 1 million people with access to clean drinking water with the goal of reaching everyone in the areas World Vision works in Rwanda by 2023, through scaling up programming in Rwanda's most underserved areas.

Through the collective effort of a government-led network of actors, achievement of universal water coverage in the 39 sectors (sub-districts) prioritized by World Vision was achieved in 2023. Since 2018 there have been substantial improvements in household, school, and healthcare facility access to sanitation and hygiene, capacity building of local governments and water point operators, and careful consideration of long-term environmental sustainability and resilience of water systems. This is captured in World Vision's four prioritized intervention areas:

- Water supply and quality
- Sanitation and hygiene
- Governance and financing
- Water security and resilience

## Government Partnership

The government of Rwanda has prioritized the achievement of universal WASH coverage as a critical enabler of improved nutrition, good health, and economic growth in the country. Through this project, World Vision collaborated in all 39 prioritized sectors of the country with both the Rwandan government and WASAC, a government-approved entity that privately manages WASH services and water systems long-term and provides technical guidelines and support. This partnership recognizes that improving WASH coverage requires significant financial investment and governance strengthening, along with infrastructure and service provision that must be planned, financed, maintained, and monitored.

Through individual memorandums of understanding (MoUs) with each district government, World Vision ensured that governments contributed funding toward every water system built and that there is ongoing budget to pay for private operators as well as maintenance costs. Typically, World Vision and the district government signed an MoU for each water system to be constructed where World Vision contributed about 60% of the capital costs and the government contributed about 40%. This has resulted in more than \$15 million being spent by the government on a total of 94 water supply systems.

## Key Approaches

## Community Engagement

The governance framework in Rwanda calls for the participation of citizens in decision-making at all levels. In response to this, World Vision incorporated its Citizen's Voice and Action (CVA) model in connection with every water system commissioned. CVA aims to increase both the transparency and accessibility of information and provides a feedback mechanism for citizens to be heard by both WASAC and the government on successes and areas for improvement.

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Community hygiene clubs are another way that World Vision is empowering communities to promote change from within. This approach recognizes that creating an enabling environment that shifts social norms is needed for effective behavior change.

### Defining Universal Coverage

- *Spatial Data:* Universal coverage in Rwanda is defined as 90% of a sector's population living within a 30-minute round-trip collection time to an improved water source. To accurately calculate this metric, World Vision trained local area program staff to utilize mWater, a survey-based digital monitoring tool, for tracking water points in each sector. By using geospatial population density data overlaid with the location of community water points through mWater, World Vision could more clearly identify what areas were underserved and better plan construction projects with the district government.
- *Collection Time:* There are two important things to consider when accounting for collection time: distance to the water point and total waiting time once at the water point. Each water point should be close enough to a person's house so they can walk there in 10 minutes. The return trip will take longer (approximately 15 minutes) as heavy water needs to be carried home. By having more than one tap at each public tap stand, more people can collect water at the same time, reducing waiting time. To geographically map this 30-minute round trip, households must be within 500 meters of a water point and community members are asked how long their average wait time is to collect water at the water point. In verifying service levels, World Vision also walked with a handful of households in each sector to verify that their closest water point was within the appropriate walking distance.
- *Household Connections:* The project also is encouraging household water connections, increasing the number of households with access to a safely managed water source, the highest level of service defined by the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme. Over the course of the project, 2,716 households purchased a household connection. World Vision and the government of Rwanda will continue to highlight the benefits of household connections and therefore, we expect the number of household connections to continue to grow.



A community hygiene club member makes soap to sell for income.

### GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

World Vision's WASH program in Rwanda prioritizes gender equality by empowering women and considering the needs of females and those with limited mobility in all aspects of our programming, from hiring staff to infrastructure design to operation and management of facilities. World Vision supports strong, female leadership in the WASH sector and is empowering female to manage community water points.

Since October 2018, key project highlights include:

- 317 schools reached with on-premises water access
- 265 improved sanitation facilities built for children/youth with limited mobility
- 295 menstrual hygiene management facilities built at schools

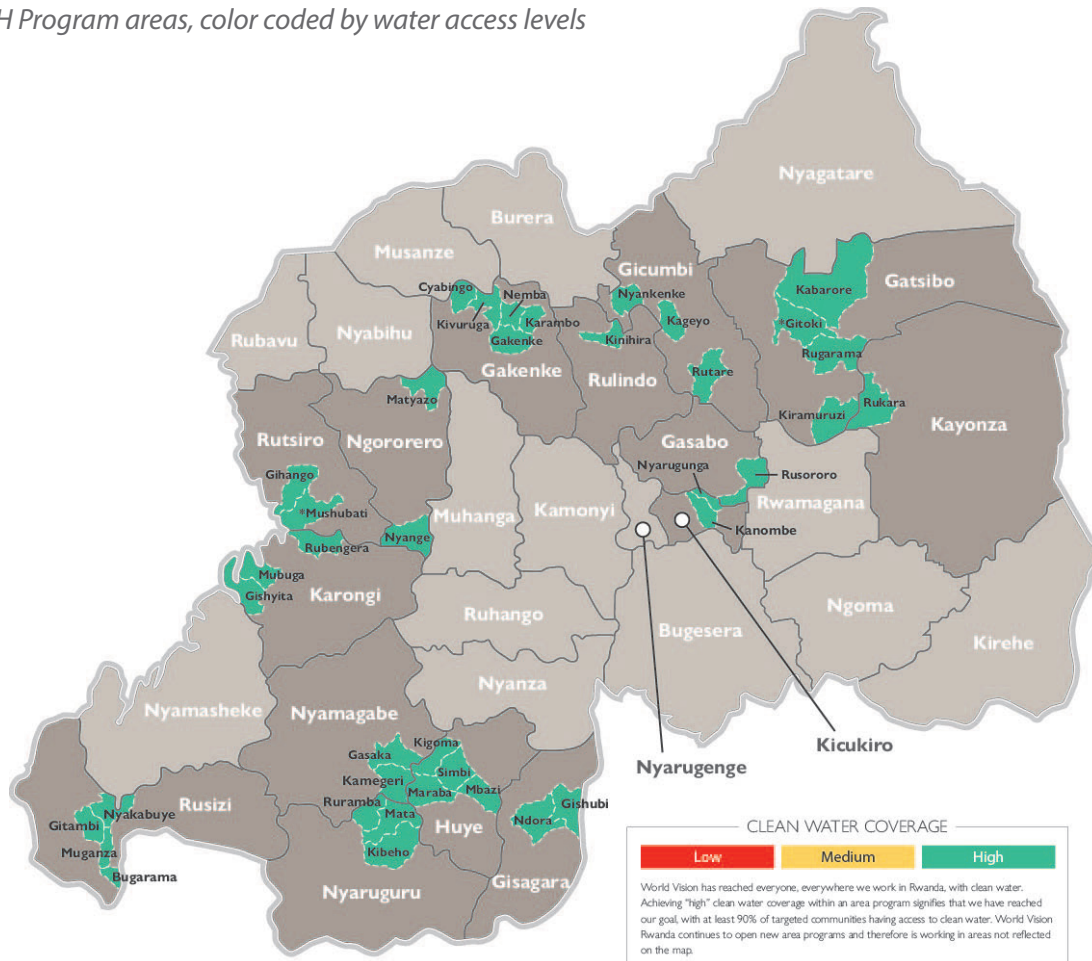
## Summary of Results

Between October 2018 and September 2023, all 39 targeted sectors in Rwanda reached at least 90% of the population with access to water within 30-minutes round-trip collection. This was validated by a household survey where enumerators went to about 100 households per sector to validate their water service levels. In total, 1,181,958 people were reached with a new, clean source of water.

World Vision's systems-based approach and integration of behavior-change promotion led to strong improvements in sanitation and hygiene access as well: 802,023 people have gained access to improved household sanitation facilities, and 1,393,289 have gained access to household handwashing facilities over the five years of the project. To encourage accurate and consistent use of these facilities, 1,817 faith leaders were trained to promote safe WASH behaviors in their communities. Even though this project has concluded, there is still work to do in Rwanda. New World Vision program areas opened during the course of the project and will continue to open. We are now working with the government to apply the learnings from this project to provide water in these areas as well. We are also continually working to strengthen the management of water supply systems to ensure that water remains flowing for many years to come.

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*Rwanda WASH Program areas, color coded by water access levels*



## "We Spoke, They Listened, and Together We Solved the Problem"

Empowered people participate in their own community development. To increase water access, ownership, and sustainability, World Vision incorporates CVA in supplying water to communities in Rwanda with remarkable results. In Karongi district, World Vision provided the materials needed to construct water points while the communities worked on raising the funds for installation as well as providing the necessary labor during construction. Through dialogue among community members, local leaders, and service providers, the community constructed five water points.

One community member in Karongi district shared, "CVA has given us a chance to meet with local authorities and partners and share ideas on how to solve challenges that occur within our community. Through CVA, we have become active members of our community. Our thoughts and voices are being heard, and it encourages [us] to take part [in] problem-solving within our community."

With the tools gained through their CVA experience, community members can actively hold their local government accountable for the water service they have been promised and can help maintain the sustainability of their system long-term.



A community member with her daughter collects water from a water point 15 feet away from her home.

