

Caritas Rwanda

Newsletter

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FOREWORD

Dear Partners, Friends and Staff,

Please, accept our heartfelt greetings during this easter season! It is with joy that we share with you what we have accomplished from January to March 2023. It was a long journey but with you by our side, everything has been easy.

With your support we achieved a lot in areas of caring for vulnerable families, supporting orphans and vulnerable children (OVC); as well as helping people through their efforts to achieve livelihood and healthy status.

Indeed, the Ordinary General Assembly of Caritas Rwanda held at Hotel Cenetra-Kabuga from Monday 27th to 28th March 2023, appreciated the existing partnership and recommended to continue with the existing while developing new ones.

Thanks to your partnership, Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) were supported with school materials and school fees for terms one and two.

Community and home based ECDs from different districts but not limited to Nyabihu, Rulindo, Burera, Gatsibo, Nyaruguru and Bugesera were equiped with learning and playing materials and the volunteers trained on ECD skills.

With your support, most vulnerable people continue to receive financial support in a form



H.E Bishop MWUMVANEZA Anaclet
Chairman of the Board of Directors /
Caritas Rwanda

of grants to help them improve economically.

The members of the saving groups have continued to make savings and promote the economic development of their families through the small loans they offer.

We are happy that the Natural Family Planning (NFP) services, have been integrated into 161 out of 216 catholic parishes throughout the country, thanks to the Government of Rwanda funding, in partnership with Enabel.

As you are going through this newsletter, please receive our sincere gratitude for your valuable support to these achievements.

Thank you for standing with us.



Newsletter content

I. Governance

I.1.General Assembly..... (p.5)

II. Social Welfare

II.1. Education support (school fees, school materials, ECD activities) (p.6-8)

II.2. Support the Social Economic Reintegration of prisoners (p.9)

II.3. Assisting vulnerable families by providing them with shelter (p.10)

II.4. Economic Strengthening of vulnerable households through grants (p.11)

II.5. GBV prevention and Case Management..... (p.12)

III. Development

III.1 Community saving activities..... (p.13-14)

III.2. Partners engagement..... (p. 15)

IV. Health and Nutrition

IV.1. Celebration of the Word Day of the Sick (p.16)

IV.2. Fighting malnutrition from the village level..... (p.16-18)

IV.3. Improving Mental Health for all..... (p.17)

IV.4. Natural Family Planning (NFP) (p.19-20)

V. Other

V.1. Testimonies (p.21)

V.2. Activities in pictures (p.22)

V.3. Message from the Secretary General of Caritas Rwanda (p.23)

V.4. Who we are (p.24)

I. Governance

I.1 General Assembly of Caritas Rwanda 2023



From Monday 27th to 28th March 2023, the Ordinary General Assembly of Caritas Rwanda met at Hotel Cenetra-Kabuga and appreciated the implementation of the recommendations of the General Assembly 2022, where the achievements went up to 98%.

In his opening remarks, the President of Caritas Rwanda and Bishop of the Nyundo Diocese Mgr Anacleto Mwumvaneza recalled that Caritas Rwanda has continued to serve the poor and other vulnerable people as it should, despite the economic shock linked to the COVID-19 and amplified by the rising market prices following the war in Ukraine.

Bishop Anacleto Mwumvaneza added that to better continue serving the poor, Pope Francis asks everyone to make a personal and community examination of conscience and to ask themselves if the poverty of Jesus Christ is their faithful companion in life (Cfr Pope's message on the 6th World Day of the Poor).

He then congratulated the participants for having celebrated the World Day of the Poor (Sunday November 13, 2022) in beauty, in communion and sharing with the poor in hospitals, Approved Health Trainings (FOSA), parishes, as well as in all the basic ecclesial communities.

Among the recommendations of the General Assembly in regard to Caritas Rwanda is the harmonization, coordination and strengthening of the voluntary system by emphasizing the mobilization of youth, the collaboration between the Episcopal Commission in charge of health care, the strengthening of the collaboration and synergy between Caritas Rwanda, the Episcopal Commission in charge of the family and the National Service for Family Action (SNAF), as well as revitalizing the development activities and supporting the Diocesan Caritas in this sector.



Opening remarks by Mgr Anacleto Mwumvaneza.



Presentation / Implementation of the recommendations of the 2022 GA.



Attendance / Caritas Rwanda General Assembly 2023

II. Social welfare activities

II.1 Education support



Children from Rutsiro who received the with school materials.

OVC supported with school fees and school materials

The IGIRE-Gimbuka Program aims to improve the social well-being of OVC, with a focus on children under the age of 18. In this regard, the program provided OVC beneficiaries with school materials in both day and boarding schools to support them in increasing and maximizing their school

achievements and attendance. Theschool material kits distributed included notebooks, pens, pencils, school backpacks, mathematical sets for children in P4 and upper levels, and sanitation pads for girls aged 12 and up. In addition, boarding school students were supported with hygiene kits that included washing soap, toothpaste, Vaseline, towels, and a bucket.

During the distribution of materials, the program reached out to beneficiaries near their homes to save them from having to travel long distances. Local and parish officials addressed beneficiaries on good behavior and the importance of focusing on their education while distributing scholastic materials. In total, 15,000 OVC were supported with school materials. IGIRE-Gimbuka also assisted 280 OVC (118 girls and 162 boys) enrolled in boarding schools by covering their school fees for terms one and two totaled Frw 45,852,180.

In total, the Igire-Gimbuka program identified and enrolled 41,192 orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) who will be served comprehensively throughout Fiscal Year 2023. The activity was carried out by trained volunteers in all four districts of operations (Nyamasheke, Karongi, Rutsiro, and Rubavu). Strong collaboration with various stakeholders such as health institutions, local governments, community-based organizations (CBOs), the private sector, and RRP+, Isange one-stop center, IZU, among others, allowed the program to reach out to the most vulnerable and hardest-to-reach people.

In accordance with the PEPFAR enrollment criteria, priority was given to Children/Adolescents Living with HIV, People Living with HIV, GBV survivors, HIV Exposed Infants, Children whose biological parents are HIV positive, and children of female sex workers. In addition, special care has been taken to ensure that the intervention is gender-responsive and inclusive, with children with disabilities enrolled if they meet the eligibility criteria.



School materials distribution / Rubavu



School materials distribution / Nyamasheke

Providing learning and playing materials to 258 ECDs

To empower ECDs, Caritas Rwanda through the ECD Project funded by Plan International Rwanda, distributed various materials to 258 school and home-based ECDs from the Gatsibo, Nyaruguru and Bugesera districts. The distribution run from January 11 to January 13, 2023.

The materials donated and distributed include cleaning materials, soap and toilet papers, drinking water containers, Sûr'eau for water treatment, cooking pots, buckets, mats, toys and games to stimulate the child's brain.

In addition, ECDs received teaching materials, wall stickers with letters, numbers, words in other languages and pictures, which will be used to teach the children. As food supplements, they were provided with sugar and porridge flour (known as SOSOMA).

Among other activities, the ECD Project has already begun training home and school-based ECD caregivers, equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed to accompany young children. The training will continue during the month of January in the areas where the ECD Project operates (Gatsibo, Nyaruguru and Bugesera districts).

The ECD Project also screened children by recording antropometric measurements (weight-height curve) in schools and home-based EDCs (Gatsibo, Nyaruguru and Bugesera districts). According to the measurements in all the intervention districts, there were no cases of malnutrition. The local authorities urged parents and caregivers to continue in this good direction, for the good growth of children.

The ECDs that have received these materials are home, school and community-based. There are 50 in Gatsibo district, 188 in Nyaruguru district and 20 in Bugesera district. They make a total of 258 ECDs.



Distribution of materials to ECDs from Bugesera District.



Materials distribution / Nyaruguru



One of the ECD caregivers, putting ECD materials on his bike.



Gatovu Nurturing Hub located in Gatovu Village, Rugali Cell, Rwerere Sectors in Burera District accommodates 55 children.

Establishing ECDs

Most of ECDs in Rwanda operate in volunteers' homes where basics are dramatically lacking including safe learning and playing spaces as well as qualified caregivers. In response to these issues and in line with its nurturing care hub approach where children can have access to all integrated health, nutrition and ECD services, 39 nurturing care hubs have been established in

Nyabihu (5) Rulindo (17) and Burera (17) and all sites have been successfully completed in February 2023.

All those Nurturing Care Hubs are the results of combined efforts by Community contribution and the financial support from Gikuriro Kuri Bose Program (implemented by Caritas Rwanda and funded by that allowed to renovate unfinished and unsafe facilities up to modern community ECD with 2 classrooms; improved kitchens, latrine blocks and offices of the head of village. Some of them have been equipped with essential ECD equipment and caregivers have been trained to offer high quality early child development services.



Gatovu Nurturing Hub before its renovation with the GKB Financial support.



Gatovu ECD representatives explaining how they work to maintain the kitchen gardens for balanced diet.



Children from Nurturing care hub Itetero in Nyabihu District.



Gatovu Nurturing Hub after its renovation.



Nurturing care hub Itetero in Mpinga Cell, Shyira Sector Nyabihu District.



The caregiver from Gatovu Nurturing hub reading stories for children.

II.2 Support the Social Economic Reintegration of prisoners

On January 16, 2023, Caritas Byumba launched officially the official an incubation center in the central town of Byumba.

The incubation center comes as a polishing instrument to concretize the works done in correctional centers so that the graduates out of them can play their rightful roles in society as well as enabling access to the public on the commodities being fabricated in the correctional centers. Following are its objectives :



Inauguration of the Caritas Byumba's incubation center, on January 16, 2023.

- ✓ To increase income for women and youth in targeted communities,
- ✓ To increase employment for women and youth in targeted communities
- ✓ To influence a more enabling policy and legislative environment for women and youth economic empowerment in targeted communities

During the official launching of the incubation and closure of the PGII, the following functional services offered by the center were officially opened for the general public. They include:

- Hairdressing saloon
- Tailoring workshop
- A bakery
- Psychological center
- A space for direct support for vulnerable people (elderly people, street kids, hand capped, etc...)



Official inauguration of the Byumba Incubation Center by Rev. Bishop Papias MUSENGAMANA.



Visit to the Incubation Center's bakery.

II.3 Assisting vulnerable families by providing them with shelter



Through the generous financial assistance of Caritas Slovenia and technical support of Damahaus Prestige Company, Caritas Rwanda built a three-bedroom house for the family of Habamenshi Jean-Paul and his wife Muyavuge Munyurwa Alphonsine from Gashari sector of Karongi district. The family was identified by the sector authorities and proposed to Caritas Rwanda due to its dire need for healthy and decent housing.

The construction of this house started on the 1st of September 2023, behind schedule due to COVID-19, under the surveillance of Mr Stirn Marco, from Damahaus Prestige Company, and was handed over to its owners in a colorful ceremony held on the 23rd of January 2023.

The construction of this house employed not only the project's beneficiaries but also its owner from the early stage of making bricks and levelling the construction site to helping the masons with the construction. It was also a learning opportunity, it was their first time experimenting with the construction of interlocking soil bricks. They were also skilled in making those soil bricks by the project field officers who had been trained by the Damahaus Prestige Company in Slovenia.



II.4 Economic strengthening of vulnerable households through grants

Providing grants to support the most vulnerable households is an effective way to address immediate financial needs and alleviate poverty. Before transferring funds to selected households that will receive household grants, Igire-Gimbuka program organized a two-day Couples' session for those who will receive grants to learn about Income Generating Activities (IGA) management and gender equality principles.



Gender equality training helps in overcoming gender knowledge gaps. The transformative outcomes of gender equality training determine its effectiveness. It refers to the effects of training on individuals, families, and communities. The following were the specific objectives of this training:

- Help participants understand the benefits of a community free of gender-based violence by managing the triggers of GBV and create a healthy, non-violent relationship,
- Educate families on the effective use of grants for income-generating activities;
- Educate families on the effective use of grants for income-generating activities;

In total 536 households received grants totaling Frw 80,748,400, with each household receiving Frw 150,650.

Community-Based Saving and Lending activities

The beneficiaries of the Igire-Gimbuka program have been mobilized and supported in establishing Community-Based Saving and Leading Groups (CBSLG), which meet once a week or twice a month under the supervision of Community Intermediaries (CI) volunteers and program field staffs, to help them improve their household economy development by increasing the saving culture, promoting financial inclusion, social capital, income-generating activities, and financial literacy. In total, 97 new CBSLGs were formed, with 1095 members, and were provided with CBSLG kits, which included a register, five pens, one ruler, and one pencil for proper recording and book keeping.

To ensure smooth implementation and sustainability, as well as their follow-up, Igire-Gimbuka organized an orientation meeting with SEDOs on program interventions, particularly CBSLG establishment processes and follow-up, and the CBSLG committee and members were trained to equip them with skills and knowledge on saving methodology, bookkeeping and financial literacy. Furthermore, the trainees exchanged a performance contract between CBSLG and the program, which introduced management approach for CBSLG and starts with graduation in mind, and it was a great opportunity to encourage them to work with local microfinance in order to economically develop themselves by taking out small loans.

II.5 GBV prevention and Case Management



Semi-annual meeting with GBV key local leaders in Rubavu.

Caritas Rwanda through USAID IGIRE GIMBUKA Program organized semi-annual meetings with GBV key local leaders in Karongi, Nyamasheke, Rubavu and Rutsiro districts. The meetings held on 15th, 16th, 22nd and 28th March 2023 respectively.

The meeting attended by 68 GBV Key Local leaders with 26 Females and 42 Males. Power point presentations shared on program implementation so far (in general); on GBV and Teenage pregnancy prevention with activities planned in program implementation, which respond on GBV. Thereafter, participants used space to interact, and Recommendations recorded.

Among recommendations, there are parents mobilization so that they can take care of their children and make a close friendship with them, invite people with disabilities is such meetings so they can express their opinions and how they should be protected as they experience more GBV, join effort in GBV prevention to explain well Gender principles through different platforms, awareness raising on GBV law and law relating to right and protection of the child against violence.

The participants advise also to educate youth on how technology can be used for good not for bad things and mobilize community members and GBV survivors to report perpetrators on time and report to the right person (RIB and Isange One Stop Center) and try to preserve evidences.



GBV key local leaders meeting in Rutsiro.



GBV key local leaders meeting in Karongi .



GBV key local leaders meeting in Nyamasheke.

III. Development

III.1 Community saving activities



Rukundo Fabrice, one of the refugees from Nyabiheke Camp, testified about how he prospered thanks to the money he borrowed from the group to sell milk.

On Wednesday 1st March 2023, a savings-sharing event for 27 SILCs supported by Caritas Rwanda through the PAC Project, funded by the American Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (BPRM) was held at the Nyabiheke refugee camp located in the Gatsibo district. A total of **Frw 54,019,000** that the 760 SILC members shared was saved from March 2022.

The group with the most savings has Frw 3,722,000 and the least saved has Frw 1,025,000. These groups are made up of 760 members grouped into 27 groups, including 19 of which are from the Nyabiheke Refugee Camp and 8 from the host community.

In partnership with the local authorities, the Ministry in charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA) and the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 800 beneficiaries were selected at the beginning of 2022, including 550 refugees and 250 from the host community. Today, 760 remain, as the families of the other 40 have moved abroad.

After being selected, they received various training namely: How to Become more Resilient, Savings and Credit Methodology, Creating and Managing Income Generating Activities, Gender Equality and Equity, Training on Agriculture, and Completing the trade journal.

In March 2022, the beneficiaries established the Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILCs). Their weekly savings vary between 500 Rwf and 5000 Rwf per week depending on the capacity of each group member. At the end of February 2023, their savings were worth Rwf 54,019,000 before the share out event.

The PAC (Poverty Alleviating Coalition) project is being implemented by Caritas Rwanda in collaboration with World Vision Rwanda in the camps of Nyabiheke and Kiziba since August 2021, with funding from the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (BPRM). Its objective is to reduce poverty in the families of the beneficiaries so that, at least by the end of 2024, they will be able to contribute to their development and that of the country.



Haranirisuku SILC gathering (from Nyabihu).

Creation, coaching, monitoring and operationalization of SILCs

In order to mentor and coach SILCs, Gikuriro kuri Bose Program (GKB) supported the recruitment and training 164 community-based Field Agents (71 in Rulindo, 69 in Burera and 24 in Nyabihu) in addition to 41 existing Private Service Provide that worked with Gikuriro one and have been certified to independently create and coach saving groups. There are 1075, 937 and 754 SILC groups established in Burera, Rulindo and Nyabihu respectively that re meeting every week for saving loans provision under close supervision by GKB Staff and Field agents/PSPs.

With the aim of continuous capacity building of field agents and reporting of achievements, three review and reporting meetings re-organized on a monthly basis to maintain the functionality and boost the multiplication of IGAs. From January to March 2023, nine monthly meetings have been organized in Burera, Rurindo and Nyabihu involving all 164 FAs and 41 PSP. The meetings were also an opportunity to document the progress on last meeting's actions, key challenges encountered, and lessons learned.



Joint monitoring team visiting restaurant of 4 Graduation beneficiaries graduated in culinary arts.

Monitoring and mentoring of Graduation Project SILC groups

22 SILC groups of the Graduation Project (implemented by Caritas Rwanda and funded by UNHCR), 12 from Mahama(8 from the camp and 4 from HC) and 10 from Kiziba (8 from the camp and 2 from HC) were visited (Jan-Feb 2023) in their saving activities in collaboration with Community Based Volunteers for monitoring and especially for coaching on the record keeping. The following is the summary of SILC Groups (4SILC groups from Host community and 8 SILC groups from Camp) for the first meeting of saving: (1) Cumulative value of savings: Frw 59,686,160, (2) Cumulative value of loans: Frw 67,992,250; (3) Cash at Bank: 39,467,681 Rwf; (3) Cash in hand: Frw 3,237,782 3) Social fund: Frw 1,755,600. Generally, the SILC activities are progressing well.

III.2 Partners engagement

Caritas Rwanda and the implementing Partners, kicked off the implementation of Y4Y Project

From 13th to 17th February 2023, held the Districts-level Introductory meetings to introduce the project and its interventions in this fiscal year of 2022/2023.



Nyabihu introductory meeting.

Digital Entrepreneurship in East Africa -Youth for Youth, is a three-year project (2023-2025) aimed at improving the lives and livelihoods of young adults in Rwanda by strengthening youth digital entrepreneurship and the enabling environment around youth entrepreneurship.

The project introductory meetings in each district were attended by the District Mayor and Vice Mayor, District Youth Officer, Executive Secretary of the Sectors, Financial Service providers (FSPs) and other stakeholders in youth development from each of the four districts of project zones (Rubavu, Nyabihu, Huye and Nyamagabe).

The project is funded by CRS Rwanda and implemented by Caritas Nyundo/Gisenyi in the Nyabihu District, Caritas Butare in the Huye District, Caritas Gikongoro in the Nyamagabe District, and Vision Jeunesse Nouvelle in the Rubavu District, all in close collaboration and coordination with Caritas Rwanda.

Caritas Rwanda shared with its stakeholders in Kiziba Refugee Camp on the project progress

On January 19, 2023, Caritas Rwanda, through the Graduation project (funded by UNHCR), had an orientation meeting with its stakeholders in Kiziba Refugee Camp (in Karongi District) to discuss the 2020-2022 key achievements and the 2023 action plan.



Participants in the Kiziba orientation meeting.

As presented by Caritas Rwanda, the project reached 235 house holds (165 refugees and 70 host community members HH) in 2022. The 235 beneficiaries were selected, trained, and supported to develop their business plans. Each households received the cash grand of Rwf 800,000 through two installments to implement their Income Generating Activities and the beneficiaries created 10 Savings and Internal Lending Community groups (8 from the refugee camp and 2 from the Host community).

Regarding the 2023 action plan, 422 households will be enrolled (295 refugees and 127 Host community members), trained on Internal Savings and Lending groups, Financial Literacy, Entrepreneurship, Business Plan and Income Generating Activities. In addition, 30% of the beneficiaries will be trained on Agriculture and Livestock production. The beneficiaries will be linked to the financial institutions for financial inclusion strengthening.

IV. Health and Nutrition

IV.1 Celebration of the World Day of the Sick

On Sunday, February 12, 2023, Caritas Rwanda joined Ruli District Hospital (located in Gakenke District, Northern Province) to celebrate the World Day of the Sick.

The event started with a Holy Mass celebrated in the parish of Ruli, by His Eminence Antoine Cardinal Kambanda. In his homily, he referred to the message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the World Day of the Sick 2023, under the theme: *"Take care of him"*. We find this passage in the Gospel of Luke 10:35, where the Samaritan showed compassion by taking care of a person who had been robbed and injured by thieves, unlike the priest and the Levite.



Cardinal Antoine Kambanda serving sick people and their caregivers in Ruli District Hospital.

The Cardinal also called on people to take care of the sick and elderly, starting with families, who should show them love.

After the mass, the Christians brought various gifts for the sick, including food (fruit, vegetables, eggs, rice, maize flour, etc.), money, hygiene items and other items needed by the patient or his or her carer during their stay in hospital.

IV.2 Fighting malnutrition from the village level



Group Photo / quarterly coordination meeting at Ruhurura Nurturing Care Hub / Burera District on 28/03/2023

Revamping of DPEM-SPEM-CPEM-VPEM Committees

The functionality of DPEM (District Plan for Eliminating Malnutrition) corresponding SPEM (Sector Plan for Eliminating Malnutrition), CPEM (Cell Plan for Eliminating Malnutrition) and VPEM (Village Plan for Eliminating Malnutrition) is perceived as effective way to reduce all forms of malnutrition and improve health

and nutrition outcomes of young children and pregnant/lactating women.

However, these structures have been facing many challenges including technical and financial capacity required for the expected functionality and intended results. GKB is supporting the revitalization of DPEM structures through different ways including facilitating quarterly coordination meetings with DPEM-SPEM-CPEM-VPEM committees' members.

From January to March, GKB continued to financially and technically support the supportive supervision and coordination meetings by DPEM-SPEM-CPEM-VPEM Committees' members in Nyabihu Rulindo and Burera District.

Community based VNS

There are 1075, 937 and 754 Village Nutrition Schools (VNS) groups established by Gikuriro kuri Bose in Burera, Rulindo and Nyabihu Districts respectively and 1140, 988 and 914 Parents Lumières in Burera, Rulindo and Nyabihu Districts respectively have been trained to lead nutrition activities in villages by working closely with CHWs and other community volunteers to ensure and maintain VNS groups' dynamisms and functionality. During VNS sessions, usually organized once or twice a month, the mothers, who bring their children under five, take part in cooking demonstrations, nutrition counseling, and child growth monitoring. With the aim of continuous capacity building of PLs and reporting of achievements, 168 review and reporting meetings (21 in Rulindo, 19 in Burera and 2 in Nyabihu) rotationally involving one PL per village are organized on a monthly basis to maintain the functionality.



Twiyubake a group of men intending to support their wives members of VNS.



Igire-Gimbuka Program field staff during a MHPSS scenario.

Improving mental health for all

From 30th January to 17 February 2023, Caritas Rwanda through the Igire-Gimbuka Program (funded by PEPFAR through the USAID) has trained 62 mental health professionals at health facilities and 19 Igire-Gimbuka Program field staff on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) integration. The trainees come from 4 districts where the Igire-Gimbuka operates, namely, Karongi, Nyamasheke, Rubavu and Rutsiro. These trainings were conducted in partnership with the Rwanda Biomedical Centre (RBC).

The sessions focused on how to help Program beneficiaries receive psychological support and approaches to deliver mental psychosocial support to the Program beneficiaries, especially children living with HIV, their disclosure and building mental health competencies and self-esteem. The aim is protecting and promotion of the psychosocial wellbeing, mental health prevention and improve quality of life of program beneficiaries

This training used the participative approach, the group discussions and presentation, scenario, and cases study as approaches.

Twiyubake group, a group of men that support their wives, members of VNS

Twiyubake is a father support group in Nsakira Village, Bukinanyana Cell, Jenda Sector in Nyabihu District that, after mobilization by GKB, was established in September 2022 by a group of men intending to support their wives, members of VNS and SILC group in the village to offer quality integrated ECD and nutrition services to their children. The group is made of 30 men meeting every week for SILC and food security activities as well as participating in monthly cooking demonstration and parenting sessions along with their wives.



Twiyubake group members support their wives, members of Village Nutrition Schools.

During the training of Parents and CHWs on VNS approach and MIYCAN, participants were urged to promote men participation the **Fathers to Support group** concept was explained. As soon as back in villages and after starting VNS activities, the parent lumières collaborated with trained field agents to sensitize men and a 30 husbands of VNS members accepted to join and Twiyubake group was born.

The Papa lumière coached his comrades on VNS methodology and asked the field agent operating in Bukinanyana cell to organize a session on SILC methodology as promoted by GKB. The group started contributing for foods commodities for VNS monthly cooking demonstration and they even regularly participate. The group undertook SILC activities in September 2022 and as today, their saving is elevated to Frw 311,600, Social funds of Frw 65,550 and total loans of Frw 402,700. Members we able to run small business which transformed positively household economic lives (many HHs have bought small animals like sheeps ,,..) and they all started to actively contribute in their children' nutrition, health and education. Moreover, the group is actively contributing to the establishment of kitchen gardens in all households.



Twiyubake group members feeding their children after a health diet cooking demonstration session.



Twiyubake group members working in vegetable garden with their wives.

Mid-term evaluation meeting of the Family Action Strategic Plan (2019-2024)



Group Photo captured at the end of the Mid-term evaluation meeting of the Family Action Strategic Plan (2019-2024) on February 27, 2023.

On 27th February 2023, Caritas Rwanda through the Health Department and National Family Action Secretariat held a mid-term evaluation meeting of the Family Action Strategic Plan (2019-2024), which was inaugurated by His Eminence Antoine Cardinal Kambanda.

As it was reported in this meeting, the Natural Family Planning services commonly known as NFP, have been integrated into 161 out of 216 catholic parishes throughout the country. This was achieved thanks to the collaboration between Caritas Rwanda and SNAF (Secrétariat National d'Action Familiale) through the NFP services Providers and the Family Commission at the diocese and parish level.

As challenges, many couples hesitate to choose the natural methods and prefer other methods offered by the government because they think that the natural methods are not approved by the Government. There is also a small number of staff in health centers and parishes to serve those who want to use the natural methods.

In his opening remarks, His Eminence Antoine

Cardinal Kambanda commended the collaboration between Caritas Rwanda and the National Family Action Secretariat and emphasized the collection of testimonies from families who have resolved their conflicts through the NFP, for the awareness on these natural family planning methods to be successful.

His Eminence Antoine Cardinal Kambanda added that apart from helping couples in the family planning, the natural methods are also the way to receive the social education for married couples. Therefore, the Church chose it to help the family members to have a healthy life, family safety, to progress and to fulfill the responsibilities of parenthood as it should be.

Since September 2019, Caritas Rwanda, through the Health Department and Secrétariat National d'Action Familiale with the support of technical and financial partners, have put in place a Family Action Strategic Plan in order to have a specific roadmap to accelerate efforts made around Family Planning. The plan intends to reach around at least 741,600 couples using at least one natural family planning method by August 2024.

Family Planning training for FP TOT at National level for two weeks



Participants after getting certificates.

In partnership with RBC/ Enabel, Caritas Rwanda has conducted a ten-day Training of Trainers for 10 participants selected in the Catholic based Health Facilities offering Natural Family Planning services whereby each Diocesan Caritas has been represented by one (1) NFP service provider at Health Center level. In total, 14 participants have attended it (including 4 staff from Caritas Rwanda/Health Department/NFP). The training held at Fatima Hotel, in Musanze District, from 20th to 31st March 2023.

The main objective of this training was to strengthen capacity of Health Facilities FP service providers to safely administer and dispense FP services to couples, to transfer the knowledge to their pairs who provide NFP service at Health Facility level and finally, to improve their system of follow up with couples using NFP methods at community level.

Briefly, based on their scores in pre and post-test, we can conclude that there was an improvement in knowledge considering the increase in the post test results compared to the pre-test for each participant. Also, the entire team's mean score that has progressed from 83% (in pre-test) to 93% (in the post test) indicates that the training has been conducted successfully.



NFP training session.

V. Other

V.1 Testimonies



Uwikunze Fatuma / Karongi

I started my carpentry business there. I teamed up with another girl who worked there, and we registered a carpentry company.

I dropped out of the school at a young age when I was in High school (2nd year) due to my family's poverty. In 2021, the Gimbuka Program supported me to accomplish a one-year of a professional training in carpentry at IPRC Karongi. Even though some people discouraged me, I continued the training because I like this profession. After a five-month internship in Rubengera's Agakiriro, I

Quotes, March, 2022

I am grateful to Caritas Rwanda for supporting me through the PAC project. I grow the cayenne pepper on 30 acres and earn money. I have managed to buy a land measuring 40m x 25m for Frw 650,000. I built a house on that land in the village near other people. Before, my house was in a farming area, I was alone, and thieves used to steal from us. I would like to move from the first category of Ubudehe to the third one because I am no longer poor.



Jean de Dieu Habarukize and his wife

Quotes, March, 2022

Through the Gimbuka Program Trainings, I learned how to create and manage a small income activity. And we started to save and lend money in our savings groups. In 2013, I borrowed 100,000 Rwf, bought 5 drink racks, and started to sell drinks. Little by little my business developed and today I own a shop. I feed my family easily, renovated my house and bought a plot with a small house. I also learned how to prepare a balanced diet through the Gimbuka training.



Muhayimana Berthilde / Karongi

Quotes, March, 2023

V.2. Activities in pictures



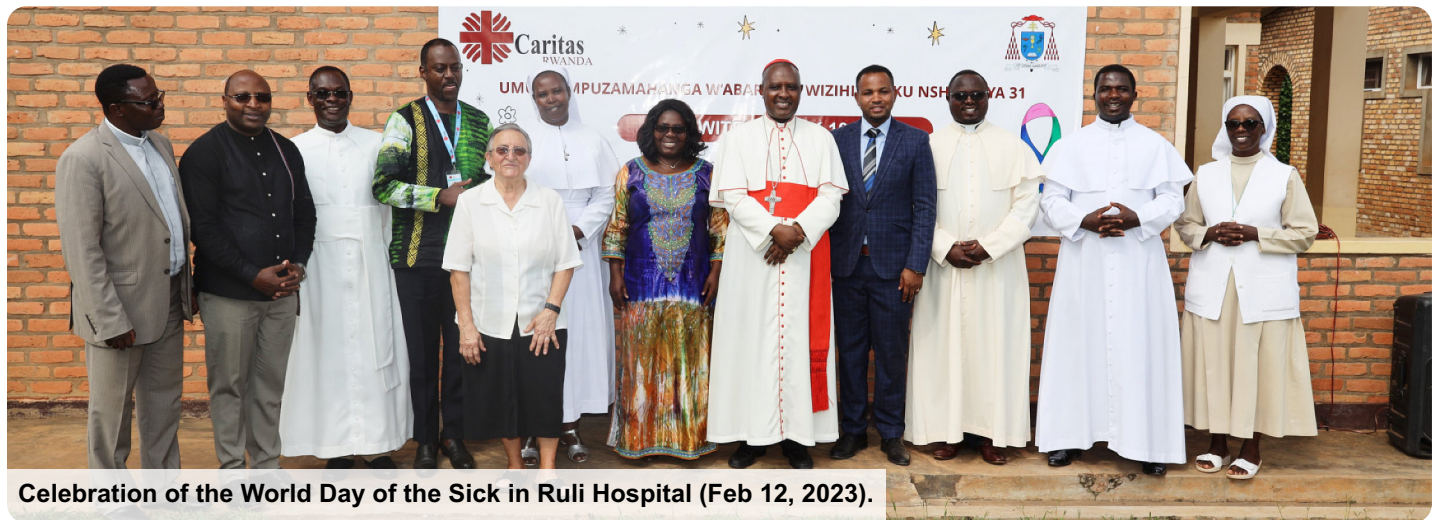
Caritas Rwanda General Assembly 2023



Farewell ceremony of Mgr JMV Twagirayezu (March 24, 2023).



23/02: Caritas Rwanda through the Graduation Project was awarded as the 2nd exhibitor among local NGOs, in Kirehe Open Day FY22-2023



Celebration of the World Day of the Sick in Ruli Hospital (Feb 12, 2023).



International women day celebration: Caritas Rwanda through Igire-Gimbuka Program donated phones to 75 women to help them access technology.



24/02: MoU was signed between Caritas Rwanda and other USAID/Igire IPs with RRP+, in bid to join hands for serving people living with and affected by HIV.

V.3 Message from the Secretary General of Caritas Rwanda



Bishop TWAGIRAYEZU Jean Marie Vianney
(SG / Caritas Rwanda)

Fraternal greetings in Jesus Christ!

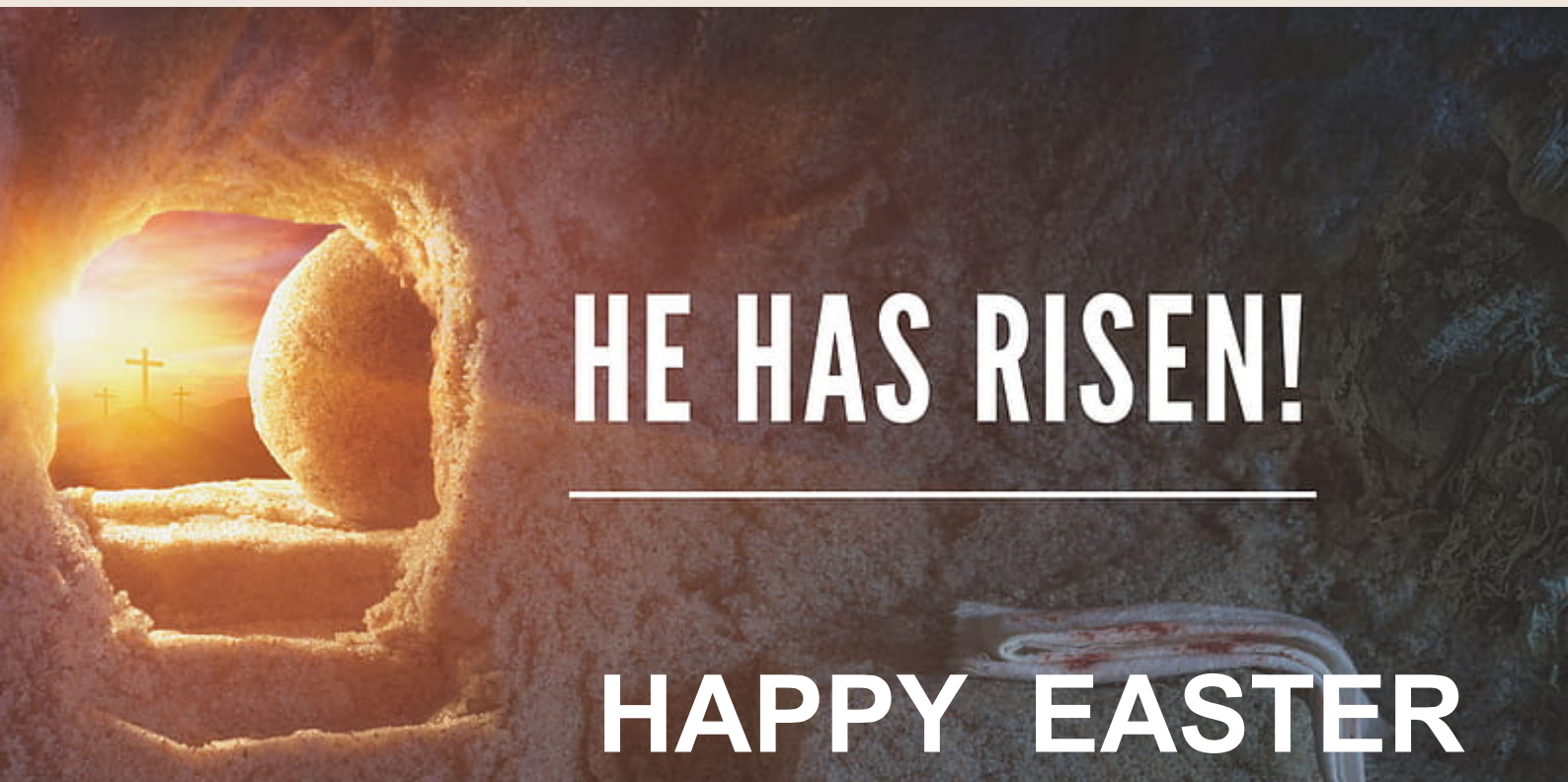
I seize this opportunity to thank you for all the support you provided Caritas Rwanda with during the last 7 years together.

As I am given a new mission in the Catholic Diocese where I am appointed as the Diocese Bishop, allow me to introduce to you the new Secretary General of Caritas Rwanda Father Oscar Kagimbura, who will be continuing with you the work we started together from April 2023.

You can reach him at the following e-mail:
okagimbura@caritasrwanda.org

We will keep in touch.

May God Almighty bless you all of you!



Who we are

Caritas Rwanda is a nationwide non-governmental organization established in 1959 by Catholic Bishops of Rwanda, officially recognized by the ministerial order N°499/08 of 1962.

Since 1965, Caritas Rwanda is member of Caritas Internationalis, an international confederation of all Caritas organizations in the world.

Caritas Rwanda works in close collaboration with a network of 10 diocesan Caritas spread across the country.

Our Vision

To promote the human dignity for All.

Our Mission

To assist people in needs and promote their integral human development, drawing on the Charity as per the Word of God.

Core values

- Human Dignity;
- Solidarity;
- Service;
- Subsidiarity and partnership;
- Compassion;
- Hope;
- Stewardship;
- Equity;
- Justice
- Environmental Protection

