



FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY

KABARORE BURUNDI MID-YEAR COMMUNITY UPDATE 2023

Walking with Kabarore

2015

2025



**FH COMMUNITIES
IN BURUNDI**

20 IN KABARORE

POPULATION

38,564

HOUSEHOLDS

8,381

**PROGRAM
PARTICIPANTS**

4,336

The signs of sustainability in Kabarore are growing! Community members continue to take ownership of new activities in education, health, and livelihoods. Leaders are embracing their role as agents of development, mobilizing their communities to get the job done, and setting an example by getting down in the mud to serve their communities—literally!

FH Burundi followed up on outcomes from the first growing season, the maintenance of Nayandaro irrigation infrastructure, livestock redistribution, and savings group cooperatives. The climate was not friendly in the first growing season, so FH Burundi emphasized agroecological techniques including mulching. As a result, even though the rain was irregular, maize production was still good!

The Let's Learn to Read program contributed to childhood literacy, and was implemented in partnership with the technical services of the Ministry of Education. Teachers were supported through coaching and supervision to help them apply their new training. The impact of this project will be assessed with a survey at the end of the school year.



After I adopted practices like using selected seeds, row sowing, and mulching on a 15 x 20 metres piece of land, I could plant only two kilograms of seed and harvest 600 kilograms of maize. This improvement is also due to the fact that our Nayandaro swamp [irrigation] was constructed with the support of FH.

- Philippe, Lead Farmer for Nayandaro swamp, Ngoma Hill



Written by Valentine Alobwede, FH Burundi
Prepared by FH Canada



Immaculée fills baskets with her bountiful maize harvest.



A Single Mother Overcomes

Story collected by Pascal Bigirimana
Photos by Nestor Nkeshimana

Immaculée is the mother in a female-headed household, a farmer, and a strong Cascade Group leader. She provides for her four children through farming and livestock rearing.

“Before being involved in FH programs, our home experienced hygiene related diseases. It was hard to eat a diversified meal. Due to poor nutrition, my family was physically vulnerable and not strong. Socially, my relationships with my neighbours were peaceful, despite the hard times I experienced following my husband leaving me in 2007.

“My children still had a beating heart following this conflict with my husband. Feeding the family, paying school fees, and buying school supplies was a burden. Emotionally, every day in my thoughts, there was a question of how I will overcome all these problems.

“I got involved in FH programs in 2015—I participated in the first awareness and [child sponsorship] registration meetings. My daughter, Jacqueline, was sponsored. I was selected to be a volunteer. I’ve now been a Cascade Group leader for eight years. Expenses in the purchase of school supplies were resolved due to FH [child sponsorship] support.

“I learned good hygiene practices, hot composting, and the development and rehabilitation of kitchen gardens. The most important knowledge I received that continues to change our living conditions for the better is good agricultural practices. The irrigation of the Nayandaro swamp by FH lets us use irrigation during the dry season. It has allowed me to increase my production. For example, I used 10 kilograms of seed to sow on an area of 13 acres and the harvest resulted in 150 kilograms. Before, the bean harvest was estimated at 50 kilograms on the same land. I really feel good to see that, personally, I have changed the way I use our land, and through this, increased production.

“My family has hope for the future because we see progress in our living conditions. Our nutrition has improved, especially through eating vegetables from our kitchen garden. My relationship with my children is good. Despite the absence of my husband, we can continue living in good conditions.”

“The most important knowledge I received that continues to change our living conditions for the better is good agricultural practices.”

- Immaculée



A community leader in Songore teaches parents ways to keep kids clean and healthy with new hygiene practices.



Changing Self-Perceptions About Reading

Through a transformational program called Let's Learn to Read, FH trained educators on early grade reading, including how to teach in a multilingual classroom. FH also trained Cascade Education Group leaders on increasing caregiver engagement and after school learning opportunities. Mothers learned how to help their little children develop through songs, making toys from local materials, and reading with their children at home.

One year in, these training sessions continue to shift the mindset of community members, especially for those who didn't have the opportunity to go to school. Before the training began, most caregivers believed only educated parents could help their children read. Now, they're realizing that any parent can create a learning environment at home.



Healthy Feeding for Healthy Babies

Exclusive breastfeeding is not well adopted in the communities of Kabarore, even though it gives infants the nutrients they need and protects them from life-threatening illnesses they could contract from drinking contaminated water. In response to this need, FH organized health education classes around exclusive breastfeeding for infants up to six months old at the health centres in the communities of Jene, Rubura, and Manga. Mothers, health centre staff, and local community health workers attended the sessions.

The medical fees of 18 children were paid so they could receive ophthalmologic services, including medicine and glasses. They are now healthy and able to keep up with their studies.



123 lactating mothers trained on exclusive breastfeeding of infants

512 Cascade Health Group leaders trained on early child stimulation

58 educators trained in early grade reading, impacting 2,048 students in Grades 1 - 3

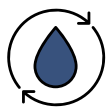
1,830 children participated in a Christmas Day celebration



“ I did not understand how an illiterate mother could help a child to study. Now, I start to notice that my Neighbour Circle Members are increasing the number of toys and books for their children. ”

- Jacqueline, Cascade Group leader, Ngoma Community

Livelihoods & Leadership



Strengthening Sustainability

Communities are strengthening the sustainability of their livelihoods through building up cooperatives, paying it forward with livestock, putting in place long-term protections for their new irrigation system, and testing new crop potential.

Farmers took steps to protect the Nayandaro swamp irrigation system from flooding. Families in Ngoma and Yandaro received tools from FH to dig contour lines on the hills that slow the speed and intensity of rain water rushing down to the swamp. These will prevent erosion and protect the dam, swamp, irrigation infrastructure, and crops. By keeping these systems intact, farmers will be able to continue increasing production. Families also received and planted grass and Grevillea tree seedlings to help stabilize the soil. To further diversify crop production, FH Burundi organized two demonstration fields for Lead Farmers to grow rice in the swamp.



Getting Their Hands Dirty

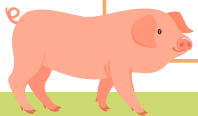
A group of Batwa learned more about cooperatives from a fellow Batwa group living on the border of Rwanda. This co-op makes and sells popular stoves that reduce fuel consumption and contribute to environmental protection. By the end of the two-day visit, the Kabarore participants had created a detailed action plan to implement the same type of program.

FH facilitated a three-day training for church youth and adult leaders on conflict resolution and gender equality. After the training, the youth committed to meet quarterly while the adults committed to producing quarterly reports. One post-training activity was cleaning the irrigation canals in the Nayandaro swamp which had become blocked by mud due to torrential rains. Leaders got their hands dirty—literally!—to serve their communities.



187 active Savings and Loans Groups with 4,670 members saved over \$44,000 CAD

24 piglets and 12 goats redistributed through the pay-it-forward model



80 Batwa households provided with hoes and bean seeds

120 Batwa, church leaders, and youth trained on business skills and entrepreneurship



Thank You!

FH Burundi, FH Canada, and the families of Kabarore thank you for your generous support! Your gifts powerfully contribute to family and group efforts to sustainably improve the lives of their children and the future potential of their communities. You are truly making a difference.