



**FOOD FOR
THE HUNGRY**



RWANDA

Bwira

**Year-End Community Summary
Fiscal Year 2023**

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Walking with **Bwira**



2021

2031



Communities:
4



Total Households:
5,239



Total Population:
22,362



Program Participants:
15,652

RWANDA

Bwira began their partnership with FH just two short years ago, and yet so much has already been accomplished! The communities in Bwira faced serious challenges with almost half of their children suffering from stunting, meaning their physical growth and mental development are impaired from poor nutrition and repeated infections. Parents needed support to multiply their harvests and grow new livelihoods so they could start providing better health and education for their children.

After two years, the communities of Bwira boast 75 active Savings and Loans groups with 2,129 members! So far, they've saved over \$6,000 CAD and distributed loans to support the education, health, and livelihoods of their members' families. In 2023 alone, 120 savings group leaders were trained on group management and record keeping, and another 180 individuals were trained on entrepreneurship skills and business development.

Since the beginning of their partnership with FH, Bwira has established over 1,750 family gardens to grow nutritious food that will sustainably combat child malnutrition. As families are introduced to growing new vegetables they're also learning tasty, culturally appropriate recipes to incorporate these new foods into their family meals. These small ways of changing family culture and behaviours have a huge impact that lasts for generations.

Further advancements in the fight against poverty were made this year in the areas of agriculture, education, clean water, church training, leadership development, and more! We're grateful for an amazing year with Bwira and are excited for the year to come.



IMPACT STORY

From washed out to thriving

Story collected by Epaphrodithe Niyirera, written and translated by Donat Ntagungira Ruhindage, Bwira

Dreams washed away

Jean farms for a living, but it isn't easy. The soil in the community of Ruhindage is acidic and the hilly landscape causes crops to wash away when it rains. And does it ever rain! Often resulting in dangerous landslides. "Fifty per cent of my crops were ruined by heavy rain," Jean explains. "The harvest was low."

Jean couldn't provide everything his family needed and often left his community to look for work. Sometimes his children missed school waiting for their father to get casual work so he could pay for their school fees and supplies. Without water access close to home, the kids had to spend an hour fetching water in the morning before school and again in the evening, adding yet another barrier to their education.

"Emotionally, neither myself nor my wife was happy, and we felt guilty before our children."

New dreams planted

Through FH partnership, life in Ruhindage began to change. Jean took agricultural workshops, learning how to make compost and increase harvests. "By putting into practice the knowledge we got, our yield has increased and there is no hunger!" Jean exclaims.

A brand new FH-funded water pipeline also created new opportunities. "I can now irrigate



I am happy that my children are regularly attending school. We also received training on balanced diet preparation. Today, our children are healthy due to the nutritious food we eat.

— Jean

my crops during the dry season which I had never done before," Jean explains. "I decided to extend my agricultural activities. I irrigated my field, planted tree tomatoes, and used manure to fertilize them. I started out planting just 100, but today, I've increased to 400 trees." With the money he earned by helping with the pipeline construction, Jean bought a cow to provide sufficient manure for fertilizer, milk, and additional income.

Jean also joined a Savings and Loans group where he saves money and accesses loans to cover family needs, including school fees. "I am happy that my children are regularly attending school [and] today, our children are healthy due to the nutritious food we eat."

With all these positive changes, Jean's relationships are improving. "I have good collaboration with my wife," he shares. "We are happy today and have committed to work together for the better future of our children."



Jean applies homemade, organic pesticide to his tree tomatoes.

EDUCATION

It takes a community to educate a child



“It was really challenging to see most of our students with no school materials. FH played the big role of supporting children with school supplies such as notebooks and pens. We are happy that children are loving studies [and] dropouts have reduced significantly.”

— Gitarama, Head Teacher, Bwira

400 caregivers trained on the **value of education and parents' role** in children's learning

97 Early Childhood Development teachers trained on **education and care practices**

48 **School General Assembly Committee (SGAC)** members trained on their responsibilities

60 children participated in a **literacy and numeracy competition**

900 children **received school notebooks, pens, and uniforms** at the Child Day celebration as seen in the photo 📷



HEALTH

Cascade health group leaders transform community hygiene



200 Cascade Health group leaders trained on **nutrition and preventing malnutrition**; they trained 1,140 neighbours

400 Cascade Health group leaders trained on **hygiene and sanitation** and created community action plans



1 **water pipeline rehabilitated**, serving 608 households and a school with 901 children as seen in the photo 📷

321 Cascade group leaders participated in **cooking demonstrations and received vegetable seeds**



1,140 community members provided with **seedlings for kitchen gardens**

200 youth participated in **sexual and reproductive health training**



“FH helped improve home hygiene by providing clean water. Now I can wash clothes whereas before, it was not a priority given that I had no access to clean water. In addition, health problems caused by germs from dirty water have been reduced.”
— Clemance

LIVELIHOODS

Agriculture, livestock, and small businesses thrive



“FH empowered me with farming techniques including mulching, irrigation, and fertilizing crops from hot composts that are being demonstrated in my plot and [in my community]. Today, we eat eggplant, and my income is increasing because I sell them in the market. I am happy!”
— Protais, farmer in photo

40 new Savings and Loans groups formed and provided with toolkits



20 teen mothers given sewing machines, tools, and vocational training

333 households provided with goats



900 families with sponsor children each received a pair of chickens (1,800 chickens!)

400 lead farmers trained on improved agricultural practices; they trained 1,100 local farmers as seen in the photo

58,652 tree seedlings, including fruit trees, distributed to community members



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Empowering the next generation



120 community leaders trained on disaster preparedness

1,847 corrugated sheets distributed to 120 vulnerable households with damaged roofs

44 church leaders trained on the role of the church in serving communities as seen in the photo

50 church leaders trained on childrens' rights and protection

30 children trained on their rights and protection



“Together with different partners, local authorities and FH staff participated in advocating for the most vulnerable to better their lives. Through FH approaches and interventions, leaders play the role of making people resilient and self-reliant.”

— Cristophe and Patrick, Bwira District Staff

“Before having a kitchen garden, we used to eat potatoes, cassava, mostly starchy foods and rarely vegetables, and my two sons were frequently sick. They become healthier after we started eating kitchen garden vegetables on daily basis.”

— Claudine



Families in Bwira are thrilled with their new kitchen gardens (check out those papayas!).

Thank You

FH Canada and FH Rwanda, together with the families of Bwira, thank you for your partnership in their development journey! Because of your generous support, transformation is already happening in all spheres of life.