

Press Release | 12 July 2023

Citizens and local leaders in Rubanda are working together to make change happen

Key priority areas include: agriculture, water and roads

12 July 2023, Rubanda: Twaweza is working with Literacy Action and Development Agency (LADA), the local government authority and residents in Rubanda to deepen the partnership between citizens and authorities aimed at improving services, enhancing local government capacity and strengthening citizen participation.

Using participatory action research, Twaweza and LADA trained community change agents, talked to different community groups, and developed joint action plans to address the issues raised. In depth qualitative and quantitative research helped describe the context in Rubanda.

Key findings from the research include:

- 9 out of 10 Rubanda residents (93%) belong to a community group including high membership to savings and loans associations (55%), community development committees (41%) and stretcher groups (36%)
- 1 out of 5 (23%) residents of Rubanda report that village consultative meetings for planning are held in their communities.
- Of those that attended these meeting, 1 out of 5 (20%) said income and expenditure reports are read and 3 out of 5 (67%) are very satisfied with the meetings.
- Around half of community members in Rubanda say that most services have largely remained the same over the past 12 months. At the same time, 7 out of 10 residents say that sanitation services have improved (65%) while 4 out of 10 say that roads and infrastructure have gotten worse (38%)
- More than half of Rubanda residents are satisfied with the quality of water (68%), sanitation (64%), public education (59%) and primary health services (54%) while more than half are dissatisfied with roads and infrastructure (60%) and the provision of electricity (68%)
- In Rubanda, residents are split evenly between being satisfied and dissatisfied with their water services (49% each?)

A number of key priority areas have been agreed by communities at village level.

Water

- Habuhinga, Bwisa, Kiringa residents complain about a lack of clean and safe water due to a lack of source, mismanagement and poor maintenance.

Infrastructure

- In Habuhinga and Kazindiro, community members are concerned about the poor state of their feeder roads that have no drainage system and lots of potholes
- In Kiringa, residents also identified road repair as a major issue, made worse by frequent landslides. They also want to build bridges connecting them to villages where they access services or sell produce

Agriculture

- In Buhanyura and Mushanje, the community is preoccupied with severe soil erosion which washes away people's gardens
- In Buhanyura, citizens are concerned about the lack of seeds and fake seeds at their market. All the identified priority problems are about agriculture.
- Community members in Ntungamo need manure (fertilizer) to address low and poor yields from their gardens

Social Issues

- Habuhinga residents are concerned about rampant property theft driven by high unemployment

Violet Alinda, Country Lead – Twaweza Uganda, said *“The best way for citizens to improve their lives is to be actively engaged in partnership with their leaders. When citizens and leaders trust each other as partners, when information flows between them, and when they have an opportunity to deliver together, the results are real and rapid. We are confident that the positive results will inspire other communities and districts to transform the partnership between citizens and their local governments. We hope these ideas can infuse the vision of the Parish Development Model and other government interventions to bring real progress to the country.”*

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Notes to Editors

- The briefs and relevant data can be accessed at www.twaweza.org
- Twaweza works through research, evidence and action to demonstrate how citizens can come together to collectively address their problems and make government work better for them; enable citizens' voices, interests and experiences to be heard and taken seriously in decision-making; and to promote enabling conditions for citizen engagement and government response in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. Follow us at Twaweza Uganda (Facebook), @Twaweza_Uganda (Twitter), Twaweza East Africa (Instagram).