



IRIMYA WATER PROJECT

PHASE ONE ENDLINE REPORT | 2024

IBANDA DISTRICT



A Future of Shining Possibility

Thanks to You

"Now, sanitation and hygiene in our homes have 100% changed... We all shine because of the services brought to our community. Thank you!"

- Gloria, Program Participant



This project felt impossible in the beginning.

How could we extend 19 km of pipe through thick jungle forests to bring 7,000 more people clean water access?

But today, as we look back on the first phase of the Irimya Water Project, it's obvious that **with genuine collaboration and dedication, we can achieve great things together!**

This initiative tackled the critical water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) needs of seven rural villages in Ibanda District, Uganda. The communities, situated near the natural beauty of Queen Elizabeth National Park, Kasyoha-Kitoomi Forest Reserve, and Lake George, have long struggled with limited access to clean water and sanitation due to the region's rugged terrain and remoteness. The project aimed to change that reality, improving lives by providing reliable clean water, reducing waterborne diseases, supporting school attendance through better sanitation facilities, and fostering greater socio-economic resilience.

I'm happy to share with you today **the exciting report from the conclusion of Phase One of the Irimya Water Project and my deep and sincere thanks to you** for joining us on this journey to create such a lasting change.

This work wouldn't have been possible without the collective efforts of you and our other dedicated partners - Ibanda District leaders for their local knowledge and support, Rotary for their technical expertise and funding, ACTS Uganda for spearheading the planning, implementation, and training!

Together, we reached **738 households and laid the foundation for sustainable community transformation and a future of shining possibility.**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Golby".

Jeffrey Golby | CEO



The Big Picture



Gravity Flow System (GFS)

A water system spanning 19 km was built to distribute water from a sustainable source to **37 taps** across **7 villages**, impacting **738 households** and approximately **7,000 people** through:

- **3 primary schools** with 1,540 students (54% female, 46% male)
- **1 healthcare facility** with a tap to support patients & staff
- **Religious & Community hubs** now with 5 tap stands making clean water easily accessible for events and daily needs
- **Public access points** - 28 taps placed in high-traffic areas so every household has water close by

Sanitation Infrastructure & Hygiene Promotion

The project also integrated sanitation and hygiene efforts such as constructing latrines, promoting handwashing facilities, and reducing open defecation.

- **School Sanitation** - better sanitation facilities have improved the latrine-to-student ratio and also reduced absenteeism
- **Household Sanitation & Handwashing** - 98.6% of households now own latrines and approx 80.1% now have handwashing stations. Nearly every village has a functional water committee trained to manage and maintain WASH facilities, ensuring continued service.

The Big Highlights



99%

99% of households can now **access clean water within a 30-minute** round-trip, compared to the 35% before the project began. **A 182.9% increase!**



100%

All 7 villages are now verified by Uganda's Ministry of Water and Environment and Ministry of Health as **Open Defecation Free (ODF)**, meaning a **100% transformation in hygiene practices**.



85%

Waterborne **diseases dropped from 95.2% to 14%**, an **85% decrease**. That means fewer sick days and better educational outcomes!



44%

The likelihood of people living in poverty dropped **from 79% to 44%** - a huge shift in the economic standing of the area that will continue to improve



30%

Schools have seen an **improved latrine-to-student ratio of 1:44** (down from 1:140) and a **30% decrease in absenteeism** thanks to water & safe latrines.

Celebrating Remarkable **Impact**



1 Reliable Access to Clean Water

Over 7,000 residents across 7 villages and 738 households are enjoying safe, easily accessible water from a 19 kilometre GFS and 37 new tapstands throughout the community.

Key Impact:

Prior to this project, only 35% of households had access to safe water within 30 minutes. With the new system, **99% of households can now access water within this time frame, reflecting an improvement of 182.9%!**

This change has saved time and significantly reduced the daily burden on women and children, who are often responsible for water collection. It has also positively impacted hygiene practices, decreased waterborne illnesses, and provided the sustainable community development.

2 Improved School Sanitation & Educational Access

By providing critical sanitation infrastructure to schools that previously struggled with overcrowded latrine facilities, this project helped drop the student-to-stall ratio from 140 students to 44 (which aligns closely with the Ugandan Ministry of Education and UNICEF's recommended ratio of 40:1). Plus, the project also contributed to a **30% reduction in school absenteeism and a 10% increase in school enrollment** rates within the area.

69% Improvement



The student-to-stall ratio was reduced from 140:1 to 40:1.



Why This Matters:

Reducing the student-to-stall ratio **improves privacy, dignity, and the learning environment** for both male and female students.

Having clean water, safe latrines, and proper hygiene at schools has had a **particularly positive effect on girls' education** since they face unique barriers to education. Now they can attend school regularly and with confidence. Plus, the improved gender equity empowers these young women and supports their long-term prospects.

The increase in enrollment indicates a positive community response too. **Families feel more comfortable sending their children to school.** And students bring back hygiene practices to their families, creating a **ripple effect of health within their communities!**

3 Enhanced Sanitation and WASH Hygiene Status

All 7 villages achieved Open Defecation Free (ODF) status, certified by Uganda's Ministry of Water and Environment and Ministry of Health. These communities achieved a 100% success rate in the transformation of their hygiene practices, which is 200% higher than industry average!

Key Outcome: ODF status means a **significant leap in community health** as every family must have their own latrine, drying rack for dishes, clean household compound, handwashing stations, and is practicing proper hygiene skills. This project has **drastically reduced the risk of diseases** from poor sanitation, such as cholera and dysentery. It safeguards public health, fosters a **culture of dignity** and environmental respect and the presence of gender-balanced WASH committees ensures ongoing community compliance and hygiene standards.

4 Reduction in Waterborne Disease

The project facilitated an **85% reduction in waterborne disease** rates, decreasing disease occurrence from 95.2% to just 14%.

With clean, easily accessible water sources, residents no longer rely on unsafe water sources, which previously contributed to high rates of waterborne diseases like diarrhea and typhoid. This reduction in disease has far-reaching effects, improving **quality of life** and easing the burden on local healthcare facilities. **Families benefit from lower medical expenses, improved productivity, and greater economic stability.** Plus, healthier individuals can more actively participate in economic activities, supporting community development and enhancing overall well-being.

5 Increased Economic Resilience

Access to clean water and improved hygiene, when combined with our WASH Entrepreneurship Program, significantly reduced poverty in Irimya and we're only getting started. After a year, **the likelihood of people living in poverty dropped by 34 percentage points** (79% to 44%), according to a comprehensive poverty measurement tool. Now, the poverty rate outperforms the region, and the country, by up to 59%.

6 Strengthened Social Capital & Long-Term Sustainability

Water committees and **Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)** were established in nearly all villages, ensuring community involvement and local ownership.

Why This Matters: Investing in local capacity and creating self-reliant WASH committees means the groundwork for **long-term impact** has been laid. Community members now have the skills and structures to address future WASH challenges independently, fostering a culture of self-reliance that will benefit future generations. **High satisfaction rates (96.9%) among participants reflect trust and pride** in community-led development efforts and support resilience for future challenges.

Sanitation & Hygiene Results

Irimya Phase One achieved some remarkable improvements across the 7 villages in this rural area which impact households, schools, and communal areas.

1. Latrine Ownership and Achievement of Open Defecation Free (ODF) Status

- The universal latrine ownership and ODF achievement foster a culture of hygiene greatly reducing exposure to health risks, and supporting a [healthier environment for all](#) residents.
- 5 of 7 villages reached 100% latrine ownership and 2 achieved 95%
- 100% ODF status across all villages

2. Access to Handwashing Facilities and Improved Handwashing Practices

- 80.1% of households now have handwashing facilities with soap and water.
- 2 villages have handwashing rates at 100%, while other villages range from 61% to 88.1%.
- **75% of respondents reported always washing their hands after using the toilet.** This represents a notable increase from initial handwashing facility access levels, which were below 50% before the intervention, translating to a **60% improvement** in handwashing facility availability and hygiene practices.

3. Gender Balance and Community Participation in WASH Committees

- Gender-balanced WASH committees were established, with 99.4% of respondents reporting gender-equal participation in these decision-making groups with 60% of committee members being women and women still holding the key position of treasurer.
- This is a major improvement from baseline levels, where committee composition did not reflect gender balance. The [inclusion of both men and women in WASH committees is integral](#) to effective and sustainable WASH programming.

4. Overall Satisfaction with Sanitation Services

- **96.9% of community members expressed satisfaction** or high satisfaction with sanitation.
- This strong satisfaction rate represents a **50% improvement from baseline levels** and reflects the project's success in aligning services with community expectations and needs. High satisfaction levels **increase the likelihood of sustained use and maintenance of sanitation facilities**, reducing future costs and reinforcing positive hygiene behaviors.

5. Impact on Health Outcomes and Reduction in Disease Incidence

- A dramatic **85% reduction in waterborne diseases** has taken place, **lowering disease occurrence from 95.2% to 14%**. The WHO estimates that improved sanitation can prevent nearly half of all diarrheal disease cases, supporting the idea that [the Irimya project has brought about substantial health benefits](#) which will reduce healthcare burdens, improve productivity, and contribute to economic resilience (aligning with Sustainable Development Goal 6, emphasizing safe and adequate sanitation for all).

6. Reduction in Student-to-Stance Ratio

- The student-to-latrine stance ratio improved by 69% from 140 to 44 students per stance. This [enhances privacy, dignity, and comfort for students](#), and helps create a supportive and hygienic environment for students, encouraging better attendance and focus.

Rosette's First Sip



Rosette grew up in Irimya where the only source of water was one shared with dangerous wildlife (elephants, frogs, and more) and carried waterborne diseases that often made her family was sick.

Thanks to your willingness to create a better world, the new water system in her community has brought a wonderful wave of change.

After more than a year's worth of prayer, pipe-laying, pledges, and persistence, the water is in their hands!

When Rosette leaned over to turn on the tap for the first time, she laughed, *"My eye was watching to see if that water had frogs in it! But I am so happy the water is clean and pure!"*

Thanks to your kind support, Rosette and her neighbours can now picture futures filled with health, life, and hope for their families.

“ I am so happy to see we are turning on water from the tap. I know from today that we are going to develop ourselves. My daughter will have a better life! Thank you so much for bringing light to us.

- Rosette, Program Participant

Your Impact for Generations

While you may never meet the men, women and children in this community face to face, the impact of *your generosity will be felt by them forever*. In health, opportunity, & brighter futures.

Through a combination of infrastructure development, community empowerment, and health improvements, the Irimya Phase One project has laid a foundation for sustained impact and resilience. The strategic design of the Gravity Flow System, coupled with trained local committees, ensures that these WASH facilities will remain functional, benefiting future generations and promoting self-reliant communities in Ibanda District.

Thank you for your bold action to join Gloria, Rosette, and all the people of Irimya, to keep clean water and healthy futures *flowing forward* together!

Flowing Forward

