



STRIVING FOR AN EDUCATED SOCIETY

# FIYO MAGAZINE

June 2013

**Empowering Bwiza Potters' Community:  
Successes and lessons learnt**



Funded by Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)

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Successes and lessons learnt**

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## WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Reader, let me welcome you to this special magazine of Fight illiteracy Youth Organization (FIYO) featuring stories on the Empowering Bwiza Potters' Community through Education project. The project was funded by Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) and let me take this opportunity to once again thank them for their generous support.

The magazine is designed in a manner that enables you to catch up with all the project activities, and success stories. It also updates you with the key results measured against set objectives.

The project was conceived to contribute to the eradication of illiteracy among the potters community of Rwanda.

Under the present project, the potters and

non-potters community in Cyaruzinge Cell, totaling to approximately 1,000 residents of whom 60% were women, were sensitized on various livelihood campaigns such as combating gender based violence, prevention of HIV and AIDS, formation of cooperatives and the spirit of entrepreneurship, family planning and sending children to school campaign among others. The fruits of these campaigns cannot be put more than the testimonies of the beneficiaries, some of which have been captured in this magazine.

Let me take this opportunity to thank various stakeholders without which, the project would have been less successful.

Enjoy reading the Magazine!

*GAHIGI Moses*  
*Executive Director.*



## About FIYO:

Fight Illiteracy Youth Organization (FIYO) is legally registered as a non-governmental and non-profit making organization with Ministerial order No. 146/08.11 of 25th November 2009 that was published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Rwanda No. 12 of 22nd March 2010. FIYO was founded in the year 2003.

*FIYO's core Mission is to promote formal and informal education as pillars of a prosperous society.*

Fight Illiteracy Youth Organization (FIYO) has 3 core programs namely: Education, Peace Building and Reconciliation as well as Youth Economic Empowerment. Gender, HIV/AIDS, and environment protection are cross-cutting issues through all programs.



*Ntarama Secondary school, in Bugesera District constructed by FIYO*



## INTRODUCING THE EMPOWERING BWIZA POTTERS' COMMUNITY THROUGH EDUCATION:

**The project main goal was to eradicate illiteracy among women and girls among the community of potters in Bwiza Village**

In achieving that mission, the project had the following objectives;

1. To provide those who have been deprived of any access to formal education with the opportunity to learn basic skills of communication such as writing, reading, and counting,
2. To disseminate knowledge on gender equality, gender based violence, human rights, environment conservation, reproductive health, hygiene, nutrition, HIV and AIDS and any other issues which are of interest to the beneficiaries,
3. To empower economically fragile women by forming self help groups through which the anti-illiteracy programme will be implemented;
4. To contribute towards the promotion of education to the illiterate regardless of her age by conducting anti –illiteracy classes and campaigns.

## TRAINING OF TRAINERS (TOT).

### 12 Literacy teachers complete a TOT.



The training was conducted from 10th to 17th June 2012. The trainees were selected with the help of the Cell leadership as well as the potters' village representatives. 12 literacy teachers completed an intensive 7 days training on administering adult literacy lessons. In her testimony, Mukandayisenga Janviere, one of the trainees expressed satisfaction with the skills acquired in the area of adult literacy. "I have all the necessary skills to teach adult literacy lessons" said Mukandayisenga.



***"I have all the necessary skills to teach adult literacy lessons"***  
*said Mukandayisenga.*



## LITERACY LESSONS

### A visit to Nkusi literacy class.

Nkusi is one of the literacy teachers. His class is made up of 40 learners or beneficiaries as he calls them. In an interview with him, he revealed that every learning day, he prepares a specific lesson as well as a lesson plan. The teaching hours were divided into two major parts, one for literacy lessons (writing, reading or counting) and the other part for livelihood subjects.

According to Nkusi, the literacy teacher should design a picture that generates curiosity among beneficiaries to know what is going to happen next and hence capturing their attention.

“I also try to give an opportunity to the beneficiaries to air out their views hence making the learning process interactive through engaging the participants on a livelihood topic such as fighting gender based violence or family planning before I introduce the learning lesson of the day.



*Nkusi while handing out learning manuals to the learners in one of his classes.*

## THE POTTERS' COMMUNITY SENSITIZED ON LIVELIHOOD SKILLS.

In the framework of empowering the potters' community towards improved livelihood and to play a more active role in government programs, community sensitisation campaigns were conducted in the village on the following themes:

Gender based violence, Health and Hygiene, HIV/AIDS, Nutrition, Environment conservation, Family planning, Cooperatives and entrepreneurship and sending children to school.



*FIYO theater actors rehearse a play during a community sensitization.*



*A crowd being entertained by the theater group during a community sensitization campaign*

*The audience was entertained by FIYO theatre group in form of drama, poems and songs containing message in relation to the campaign themes. Also during the campaigns, posters and flyers were distributed.*

## GRADUATION CEREMONIES



*Ndera Sector representative delivering his message during the graduation ceremonies.*



*A beneficiary being handed a Certificate of merit to certify that she successfully completed the literacy classes*

On 7th June, 2013, 180 potters in total from Bwiza village (126 women, 39 girls and 15 men) graduated after successfully passing exams on reading, writing and counting.

During the graduation ceremony, the graduates wrote and read out poems to the audience carrying testimonies of literacy

benefits and how they intend to use the gained skills to improve their livelihoods.

Also, graduates read newspapers and answered correctly numeracy quiz set to demonstrate to the audience their perfection levels in reading and counting.



## SUCCESS STORIES AND TESTIMONIES.

Testimonies documented and evidence of concrete initiatives in the community are visible enough to justify the project success.

Learning to read, write and count has increased self esteem of women potters. Uwamariya Cansirida is one of the graduates of the literacy classes.

In her testimony "she confesses that before enrolling for the literacy classes, whenever I wanted to do anything I was discouraged mainly because I did not know how to read and write, I used to be desperate. But after learning how to read, write and count I feel now empowered and can no longer be discriminated in society because of illiteracy."



*Uwamariya Cansirida And her child giving her own testimony, at the village.*

She is now a member of self help group and was elected as the treasurer. She can record members subscriptions on a daily basis. She has started a small business of selling food stuff at the village market.

## Income generating cooperatives have been created

15 graduates formed a cooperative called Abadatana (loosely translated as those who can never be disunited). Cooperative members are engaged in selling different commodities in Bwiza market. Every day, each member saves 500 Frw and the daily savings is lent out to one member who re-pays the loan with interest. As a result, cooperative members have seen their capital triple in a period less than three months. According to Mbuguje Charles, the chairman of the cooperative, "the literacy classes and campaigns conducted on formation of cooperatives and entrepreneurship greatly inspired them to start up."



*Some members of Abadatana cooperative in Bwiza Market. Mbuguje is the man seated in a red-T-shirt.*

Another association composed of youth called Terimbere was also formed. It is made up of 10 members. It specializes in artisan work. They produce roasting sticks out of bamboo used in restaurants and hotels for meat roasting. Each week, I earn 4,000 Frw. said Mujyarugamba, a member of Terimbere cooperative.



*Members of TERIMBERE cooperative in action. Mujyarugamba is the one wearing a cap.*



## Regular absentee Children at school now attending school daily

Before the project, the mindset among some potters towards child education was very negative. It was common to have children involved in house chores in preference of attending school. After the send back children to school campaign, the frequentation of potter's children to school has improved significantly. Thiery, Charles and Chantal were among the victims of such irregular attendance of school. They both attend Groupe scolaire de Gasogi. They testify that their parents no longer ask them to assist them to undertake house chores in preference to going to school.

"I am attending class every day. Before, I used to attend one or two days a week. In some cases, i missed school for a whole week in order to take care of my young sister while my parents went to look out for jobs in the village" testified Chantal.



*Chantal (left), Charles(middle) and Giovanni(on the right).*

*I missed school for a whole week in order to take care of my young sister while my parents went to look out for jobs in the village" testified Chantal.*

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The project was indeed a great success. Testimonies from beneficiaries expounds on the success indicators captured in the matrix below.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES	SUCCESS INDICATORS AT END OF THE PROJECT.
<p><b>Project Goal:</b> To eradicate illiteracy among women and girls among Community of Potters.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ By the end of the project, 180 potters in total, from Bwiza village (126 women, 39 girls and 15 men) are able to read, write and count.</li> <li>✓ By the end of the project, there is increased participation and responsiveness of the potters' community to different Government Programs.</li> <li>✓ There is a positive change in the livelihood of the potters' community. This can be evidenced by the number of children frequenting schools, level of absenteeism, nutritional levels, use of contraceptives, household income, hygiene and sanitation levels.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Project objectives:</b></p>	
<p>1. To provide those who have been deprived of any access to formal education with the opportunity to learn basic skills of communication such as writing, reading, and counting</p>	<p>By the end of the project, 180 potters in total, from Bwiza village (126 women, 39 girls and 15 men) are able to read, write and count.</p>
<p>2.To disseminate knowledge on gender equality, gender based violence, human rights environment conservation, reproductive health, hygiene, nutrition, HIV/Aids and any other issues which are of interest to the beneficiaries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Reduction of incidences of gender based violence among the potters' community as well as among non-potters community.</li> <li>✓ Personal hygiene and household among potters' increased. For example, the number of households with pit latrines increased from 60% to 80%.</li> <li>✓ Number of couples who use contraceptives to control birthrates among the community of potters has increased from 3 to 6 %.</li> <li>✓ Voluntary HIV/AIDS testing among the Potters' community has increased by 15%.</li> </ul>

<p>3. To empower economically fragile women by forming self help groups through which the anti-illiteracy programme will be implemented</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 2 cooperatives created by potters in Bwiza village. One cooperative deals in Agriculture and another one deals in mushroom farming. In total, 70 members belong to the cooperatives. 100% of the members are graduates of the literacy classes.</li> <li>✓ 4 groups of saving and lending money have been established. Each has 10-15 members.</li> </ul>
<p>4.To contribute towards the promotion of education to the illiterate regardless of her age by conducting anti-illiteracy classes and campaigns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 9 community sensitization campaigns were conducted on the following themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ending gender based violence</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reproductive health</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Combating HIV/AIDS</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Nutrition</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Environment conservation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Hygiene</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Back to school campaign</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Human rights</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cooperatives and entrepreneurship</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ 1,200 persons were reached out through the various campaigns. 400 were potters while 500 were non-potters. In total, 55% were women or girls.</li> </ul>
<p>5. To encourage those who have ceased to attend school to re-enrol by enhancing their ability up the academic standards set by the government.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 16 children from the potters' community who had abandoned school went back to school after the Back to school community sensitization campaign.</li> <li>✓ School absenteeism among potters' children was eradicated at 98% following community sensitization campaigns.</li> </ul>

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