

October 29, 2015



Zachary Clarke  
Agreement Officer, USAID

Subject: Quarterly Report for Cooperative Agreement No. AID 696-A-15-00002—Rwanda Improved Services for Vulnerable Populations (ISVP)

Mr. Clarke,

On behalf of Global Communities I am pleased to submit our quarterly report for the above mentioned agreement. This report summarizes activities undertaken from July 1, 2015 – September 30, 2015.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or our Chief of Party, Milton Funes, should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Randy Lyness  
Director of Program Operations  
International Operations

Cc: Eson Niyonsaba, AOR, USAID/Rwanda  
Milton Funes, Chief of Party, ISVP Program & Country Director, Global Communities/Rwanda

# Q4 FY15 Quarterly Report

**Program Name:** Improved Services for Vulnerable Populations (ISVP)  
USAID/Twiyubake Program (local name in Rwanda)

**Country:** Rwanda

**Donor:** USAID/PEPFAR

**Award Number:** AID-696-A-15-00002

**Reporting Period:** July 1<sup>st</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015

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<b>Name of Project</b>	<b>Improved Services for Vulnerable Populations (ISVP)</b> <i>(known locally as the USAID/Twiyubake Program)</i>
<b>Country and regions</b>	Rwanda, Africa
<b>Donor</b>	USAID/PEPFAR
<b>Award number/symbol</b>	AID-696-A-15-00002
<b>Start and end date of project</b>	February 23, 2015 – February 22, 2020
<b>Total estimated federal funding</b>	\$36,997,332 million USD (funding from USAID/PEPFAR)
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# List of Acronyms

ASRHR	Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
BIAT	Bio-Intensive Agricultural Techniques
CFI	Community Finance Initiative
CSO	Civil Society Organization
ECD	Early Childhood Development
FFS	Farmer Field School
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FY16	Fiscal Year 2016
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GOR	Government of Rwanda
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ISVP	Improved Services for Vulnerable Populations
MCCH	Maternal, Child and Community Health
MIGEPROF	Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
MINECOFIN	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
MIS	Management Information System
MoH	Ministry of Health
MVC	Most Vulnerable Children
NCC	National Commission for Children
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NWC	National Women's Council
NYBE	Nine Year Basic Education
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief
PIH	Partners in Health
PLHA	People Living with HIV/AIDS
Q4	Quarter Four
RBC	Rwanda Biomedical Center
REACH	Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and undernutrition
RFA	Request for Applications
RPO	Rwanda Partner Organization
SDTWG	Skills Development Technical Working Group
ToT	Training of Trainers
TWG	Technical Working Group
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VOP	Volunteer Opportunity Pathway
VUP	Vision Umurenge Program

# Program Overview

On February 23 2015, USAID/PEPFAR awarded Global Communities Cooperative Agreement AID-696-A-15-00002 to implement the Rwanda Improved Services for Vulnerable Populations (ISVP) Program.

Known locally as the **USAID/Twiyubake<sup>1</sup> Program**, the ISVP Program aims to improve the protection of at least 50,000 vulnerable populations from adverse circumstances in 12 target districts of Rwanda. This work reduces the risk and impact of health conditions like HIV/AIDS on vulnerable populations. Vulnerable populations are defined as people living with HIV/AIDS, Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) and members of the household caring for these two groups, very poor households (especially female- and widow-headed households), and out of school young people, especially girls. The USAID/Twiyubake Program helps these vulnerable groups gain access to health and social services that enable them to live productive lives. Program activities build upon USAID support to the Government of Rwanda (GOR) and civil society partners.

## Program objective

The goal of the project is to identify and assist 250,000 vulnerable children, youth, and adults by:

- **Increasing capacities of families and communities to provide better care for vulnerable individuals:** the program will address the vulnerabilities of households and communities, including those affected by HIV and AIDS by stabilizing household assets, improving nutrition and food security, generating income, and fostering market linkages;
- **Improving household and community care and support practices for vulnerable populations, especially children:** the program will improve care practices in families with OVCs and other vulnerable family members and address behavioral barriers to effective care and support practices; and
- **Increasing access to education and social services for vulnerable populations:** the program will assist vulnerable families in accessing the social and educational services necessary for improved health and wellbeing, including Early Childhood Development (ECD) programs, diverse educational opportunities (most importantly the GOR Nine Year Basic Education (NYBE<sup>2</sup>), vocational skills training (especially for those who are out of school), parenting support, child protection services, and prevention of gender-based violence (GBV).

## Program consortium

Global Communities has selected three international partners to complement the training and capacity building of local partners in various areas:

- **The AVSI Foundation** will provide household and family strengthening services including child protection and youth work readiness;
- **Plan International USA** will focus on inclusive, quality education in ECD, gender mainstreaming including strengthening male involvement, and combating GBV; and
- **Partners in Health (PIH)** will build on their experience in the Rwandan health sector and provide capacity building to local partners. PIH will also work with households to deliver high quality healthcare and promote clinical-community linkages as well as social, nutritional, and economic support for clinical expertise and clinical linkages.

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<sup>1</sup> Twiyubake is a Kinyarwanda word for building and enhancing self-resilience. This term also emphasizes togetherness and mutual support to achieve sustainable wellbeing.

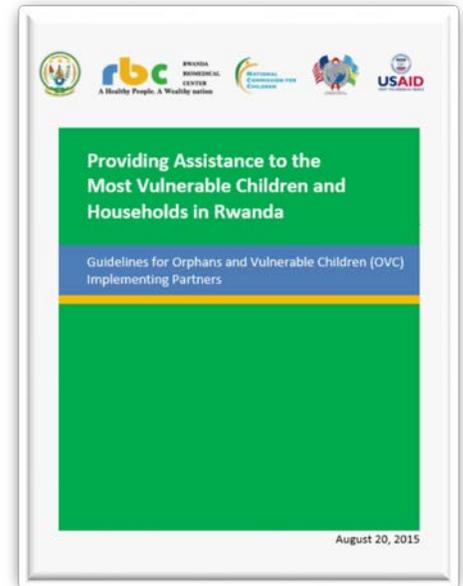
<sup>2</sup> NYBE refers to the government policy to provide nine years of free and compulsory education for all Rwandan children. This includes six years of primary school and the first three years of secondary school.

# Key Achievements this Quarter

## Development of standard guidelines for identification and selection of most vulnerable children (MVC), for participation in OVC programs

As a result of the program's support, OVC implementing partners in Rwanda now have a standard set of guidelines and criteria for identifying and enrolling program beneficiaries. Prior to this initiative, each of the development partners implementing OVC programs had their own criteria and systems for identifying and enrolling beneficiaries.

This new guidelines were initially drafted by the program and reviewed during several Technical Working Group (TWG) meetings lead by the Rwanda Biomedical Center (RBC), the National Commission for children (NCC), and USAID, with the participation of OVC program implementing partners. The guidelines provide clear criteria for identifying potential beneficiaries—referencing the definitions provided in the National OVC Policy to ensure consistency—and include a scoring framework to increase transparency in the selection and enrollment of beneficiaries. This guideline addresses the traditional approach for enrolling beneficiaries at the community level and also provides much needed guidance on how to identify and enroll beneficiaries at the health facility level.



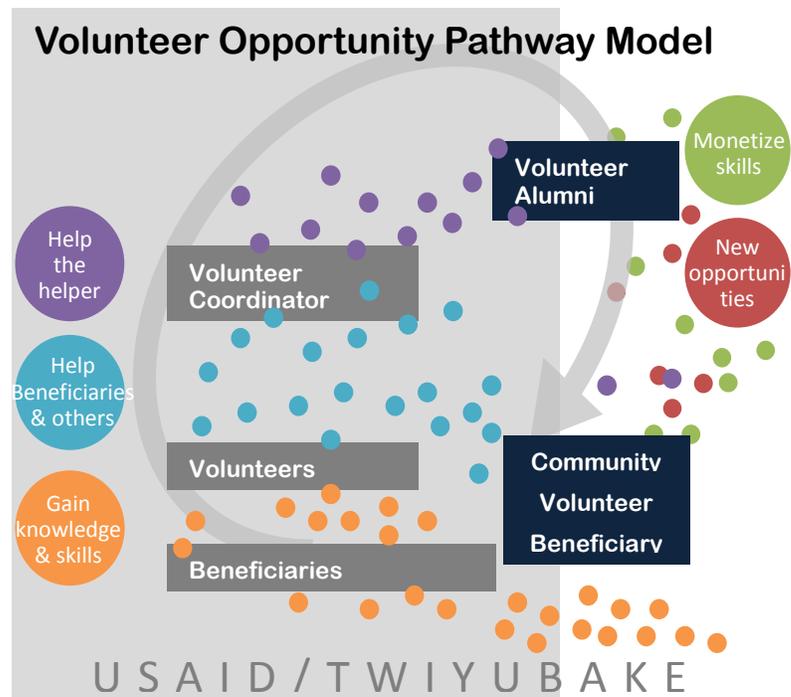
By developing these guidelines, the program is helping the GOR to provide clear standards for enrolling program beneficiaries in all OVC programs. At the same time, these guidelines will help implementing partners to target the most vulnerable individuals at both the clinical level and the community level.

## Identification of 5,400 OVCs through the MVC database as beneficiaries of the USAID/Twiyubake Program

In 2014, the NCC conducted country-wide identification and documentation of MVCs in Rwanda, the resulting in the development of the national MVC database. The purpose of the MVC database is to ensure efficient coordination and the scaling-up of services to MVCs and their families. USAID/Twiyubake has worked closely with the NCC to operationalize the database, compiling MVC information for all program-supported districts in preparation for the rolling out of services. 5,400 OVCs in three districts (Huye, Karongi, and Kayonza) have been identified, and their households will receive full ISVP services in the next three months. USAID/Twiyubake is the first program in the country to use the database to identify and enroll program beneficiaries.

## Design and development of a new framework to improve the sustainability of volunteer-led services

Community volunteers play a critical role in the implementation of development programs like USAID/Twiyubake. Based on lessons learned by engaging volunteers in previous Global Communities programs, USAID/Twiyubake has developed a resource guide for use by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to effectively integrate volunteers into programming. This framework, known as the Volunteer Opportunity Pathway (VOP), details an innovative model that can be used for volunteer recruitment, training, service delivery, and graduation in Rwanda. The development of this framework was led by a consultancy firm with expertise in this area, and was informed by significant engagements with program staff and key stakeholders.



Information gathering included an in-depth literature review, key informant interviews with lead organizations who rely on volunteers, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with former USAID/Higa Ubeho<sup>3</sup> volunteers. The VOP will be applied throughout the USAID/Twiyubake program to help create long-lasting, positive, and community-led change that improves the lives and livelihoods of vulnerable people, while empowering volunteers to expand their future economic prospects. Global Communities will also promote the adaptation of the VOP by other development programs.

## Provision of technical assistance to the National Women's Council (NWC) for development of a standard guide for the parent's evening forum

The parents evening forum, known locally as Umugoroba W'ababyeyi, is a government initiative aimed at providing a platform for families to improve and strengthen gender equity, couple communication, conflict resolution, and care practices. This initiative is led by the NWC with extensive support from Global Communities. In this reporting period, USAID/Twiyubake supported the review of the Umugoroba W'ababyeyi Guide (both the English and the Kinyarwanda versions). The review process saw the addition of strategies that encourage male involvement and participation. Also added were strategies that strengthen gender-sensitive areas such as collaboration in family decision-making, resource management, and the division of labor. The guide is now finalized and Global Communities is printing 20,000 copies for dissemination across all 30 districts. This is a key step in ensuring country wide scaling-up of the initiative.

## Development and adaptation of materials and documentation to guide programming

In preparation for the roll out of program interventions, the USAID/Twiyubake team has worked extensively on developing and adapting technical documents including tools, manuals, and strategy documents. During the fourth quarter of FY 15, the following documents were finalized and translated, these will be fundamental to successful program implementation.

<sup>3</sup> USAID/Higa Ubeho was a five year PEPFAR/USAID funded program implemented by Global communities from 2009 – 2014.  
Quarterly: USAID/Twiyubake  
July - September 2015

Document	Description
<b>Technical implementation strategies</b>	Detailed implementation strategies have been developed for each technical area: Economic strengthening, household and community strengthening, gender, health promotion, and capacity building and referrals. Each strategy highlights the technical approach, including key areas of intervention, partnerships, measures of success, relevant indicators, and tools to be used.
<b>Savings groups toolkit</b>	This toolkit consists of all key documentation necessary to guide the establishment and monitoring of savings groups, namely the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Savings group handbook;</li> <li>• Savings group field guide; and</li> <li>• Savings group tools.</li> </ul>
<b>Conditional household grants guidelines</b>	These guidelines have been developed by the program to ensure that the household grant targeting and implementation is conducted effectively and transparently. In designing these guidelines, the team also consulted with the VUP <sup>4</sup> , the government agency that is implementing a similar cash transfer program.
<b>Community Finance Initiative (CFI) module</b>	The CFI module provides training on savings, budgeting, loans, banking services, and business project development. This module will be taught to all savings group members as part of the savings with education approach.
<b>Farmer Field School (FFS) manual</b>	A training manual has been developed for FFS facilitators. This manual details the processes for establishment, support, monitoring, and graduation of groups. Additionally, this manual includes detailed descriptions of eight Bio-Intensive Agricultural Techniques (BIAT).
<b>ECD training manual</b>	The “Early childhood Development and learning” training guide was adapted from the national ECD policy draft and other key ECD documents. The guide highlights key messages on ECD under 5 years, learning at each stage of development, and the role of both parents in positive parenting. The guide was validated and shared with the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF).
<b>Positive parenting messaging</b>	The program is supporting MIGEPROF in the annual family campaign. The theme of which this year’s campaign is “Accelerating Our Common Efforts for Early Childhood Development.” In preparation for this campaign, the program has developed ECD messaging which will be used to raise local leaders’ and parents’ awareness of positive parenting and the importance of ECD services in areas of ISVP intervention.
<b>Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (ASRHR) training manual</b>	The adaptation of this manual was informed by various documents, including the ASRH National Manual, developed by the Ministry of Health (MoH) (2012), the reproductive rights and human rights handbook, developed by UNFPA (2014), and the ASRHR National Policy, developed by the MoH (2011). This manual will be applied in training Rwanda Partner Organizations (RPOs) and program volunteers.
<b>Household enrollment tool</b>	This tool was developed to capture key household information at program enrollment. Completed forms will be entered into the program Management Information System (MIS).

<sup>4</sup> Vision Umurenge Program (VUP) is an Integrated Local Development Program to Accelerate Poverty Eradication, Rural Growth, and Social Protection. The aim of the program is to eradicate extreme poverty by 2020.

## Engagement with MoH leadership to establish partnership

On August 13<sup>th</sup> 2015, program senior management and the USAID health team, led by the Mission Director, met with Dr. Agnes Binagwaho, Rwandan Minister of Health, and other MoH senior staff. In that meeting, the minister emphasized the need to align USAID/Twiyubake with established GOR efforts by strengthening existing mechanisms for long term sustainability. She also encouraged the program team to introduce USAID/Twiyubake to the MoH Social Cluster members as a way of channeling the program planned activities all the way to the village level.

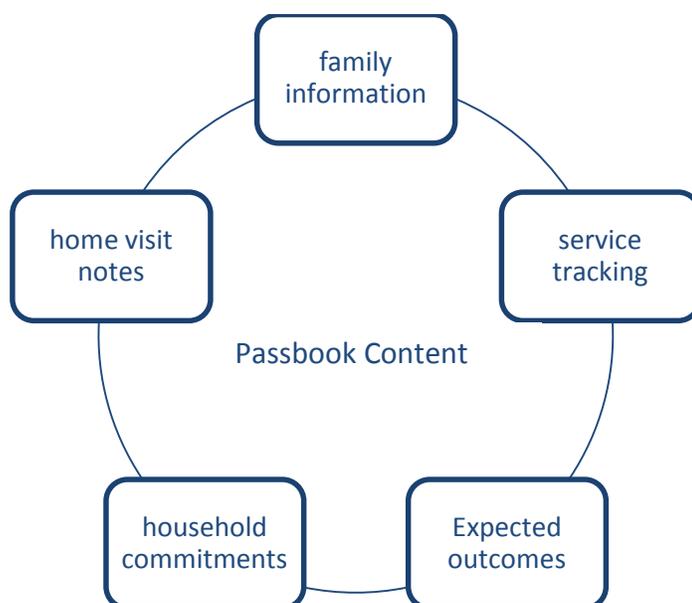
Following the introduction of USAID/Twiyubake to the Minister of Health, additional meetings engaging the health services department and the Rwanda Biomedical Center (RBC) Maternal, Child and Community Health (MCCH) division were held. Subsequently, the program work plan and other strategy documents have been shared with MoH officials.

## Development of an innovative approach for case management

The USAID/Twiyubake program is developing an innovative case management tool for beneficiary households. This tool, named the 'household passbook' will empower beneficiaries to track their enrollment in program services, understand the potential benefits of specific services, and monitor their progress towards self-reliance. The household passbook incorporates key aspects of 'ages and stages' by mapping services across three target beneficiary groups: caregivers, children under 5, and adolescents.

The tool also provides a tangible way to monitor home visits and accompaniment to services by trained volunteers (both of which are part of the program approach), to ensure linkages to community services and to strengthen referrals for HIV testing, care, and treatment.

The program has hired a consultancy firm to support the conceptualization and lead the design of the household passbook. The development process included an in-depth literature review and a series of workshops with program staff and external stakeholders. The tool is in its final stages of development, and once completed it will be printed and a copy will be provided to each household at the enrollment stage. The following figure shows the core information included in the passbooks.



## Policy engagement through national TWGs and other forums

The program team continues to impart their expertise across different TWGs and for a, which involve a wide array of stakeholders, providing valuable input and technical assistance to encourage more effective development. In the reporting quarter, USAID/Twiyubake was represented in the following TWGs:

- **Skills Development Technical Working Group (SDTWG):** The USAID/Twiyubake team participates in the SDTWG, which provides a platform for information sharing across organizations involved in youth livelihood programs in Rwanda.
- **Child Protection TWG:** The USAID/Twiyubake program is committed to child protection and, as such, is a member of the Child Protection TWG. During quarter four (Q4), several TWG meetings were held to strengthen information sharing across participating organizations. Meetings focused on strengthening the capacities of the social welfare workforce and on supporting NCC in the organization of elections for children's forum committees.
- **ECD TWG learning lab:** The ECD TWG is composed of all non-governmental organizations (NGOs) implementing ECD programs in Rwanda. This quarter, the group conducted two study visits, both of which the USAID/Twiyubake team participated in. The first took place in July 2015 to an ECD center in Bugesera district supported by Plan International, and the second was in September 2015, to a local NGO operating in Kayonza district (*Ready for Reading & Team Rwanda*).
- **Ministry of Finance and Economic planning (MINECOFIN) forum on financial education:** The USAID/Twiyubake household economic strengthening team participated in a meeting on financial education chaired by the MINECOFIN in August 2015. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the linkage of saving groups to microfinance institutions, as well as country-wide savings group mapping. Global Communities was elected to co-chair the forum for a period of one year.
- **National nutrition stakeholder and action mapping:** The USAID/Twiyubake program supported this mapping exercise which was conducted by the Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and undernutrition (REACH) program, a UN-led program that works to accelerate the scaling-up of food and nutrition actions. The action mapping exercise aimed to provide an indicative overview of who the key stakeholders in nutrition are, where they are working, and their reach on selected core nutrition actions.

## Selection and recruitment of local CSOs

USAID/Twiyubake will work with two categories of local CSOs who will form part of the program consortium. The program has made progress in the recruitment process as detailed below.

1. **Tier 1 CSOs:** This category is comprised of large CSOs with significant existing capacity, and which have experience in direct implementation of USAID programs. In Q4, the program launched a Request for Applications (RFA) to recruit three Tier 1 CSOs, and commenced the selection process.
2. **Tier 2 CSOs:** This category is comprised of emerging CSOs which require a higher level of mentorship, technical capacity building, and organizational development support. In Q4, the program finalized selection of three CSOs in this category and developed sub-award agreements which were submitted to USAID for approval.

The program expects that all six RPOs will sign agreements and commence field activities in Q1 of fiscal year 2016 (FY16).

# Next Steps

The program has prioritized the following activities for Q1 of FY16.

## Finalization of partner agreements and orientation

The program will finalize sub-awards for Tier 2 CSOs and contracts for Tier 1 CSOs following approval from USAID. Subsequently, the program will conduct a series of trainings for RPOs. Topics will include orientation on program overview, beneficiary selection and enrollment processes, VOP and Training of Trainers (ToT) on program interventions including savings with education, Umugoroba W'ababyeyi, and gender mainstreaming.

## Recruitment of community volunteers

Implementing partners (local CSOs) will roll out recruitment and trainings for community volunteers. Detailed training guides have already been developed by the program across the different intervention areas. The recruitment process will be informed by several resources including the VOP tools for implementation and the USAID/Higa Ubeho service point directory which contains information for over 3,000 community volunteers trained under the USAID/Higa Ubeho program.

## Enrollment of 12,000 households

Beneficiary household enrollment at the community level will target 12,000 households, with a specific number of households planned for each district. The process of identification, selection, and enrollment will follow the community-level protocol as detailed in the standard guidelines for MVC implementing partners. This involves six main steps:

1	Identify eligible beneficiaries from the MVC database
2	Meet with local authorities
3	Review and update list of eligible beneficiaries
4	Meet with eligible beneficiaries and key leaders
5	Enroll interested households in the program
6	Inform NCC and key stakeholders regarding enrollment