



## SUCCESS STORY

# Better Sanitation and Hygiene – Better Health, Uganda

USAID'S REGIONAL HEALTH INTEGRATION TO ENHANCE SERVICES IN EAST CENTRAL UGANDA (USAID RHITES-EC)

Waiswa, a peasant farmer, lives with his family in Kaliro district in East Central Uganda. Unlike other households in Kaliro, Waiswa's home did not have a pit latrine, increasing his family's risk of contracting diarrheal diseases due to poor sanitation practices.

In April 2019, USAID's Regional Health Integration to Enhance Services in East Central Uganda (RHITES-EC) Project collaborated with district parish health coordinators to pilot home improvement campaigns for better community hygiene and sanitation practices. The campaign targeted households in 88 villages in four districts (Kaliro, Luuka, Mayuge, and Namayingo) with latrine coverage rates below the national average of 75 percent.

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To kick-start the campaign, USAID's RHITES-EC selected 88 village leaders, known as Local Council One (LC1) Chairpersons, and 88 village health teams (VHTs) to mobilize communities for home improvement



Waiswa and his children use their tippy tap handwashing station

campaigns. In Waiswa's village, the campaign recruited 40 household heads, including Waiswa, to participate in the activity.

The LCI Chairperson and a VHT visited Waiswa to assess the general sanitation and hygiene of his household. The thoroughness of the assessment surprised Waiswa. "They asked me if I had a clean pit latrine, a handwashing station, soap or ash at the handwashing station, a drying rack for dishes, rubbish

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## Home Improvement Campaign

Home improvement campaigns promote water, sanitation, and basic hygiene practices to improve maternal, newborn, and child health outcomes in rural communities. These campaigns are co-created through a participatory community-driven approach. Community change agents are then equipped with relevant tools and skills to lead the campaigns and help to improve hygiene and sanitation practices in their communities.

pit, clean water containers, special containers for drinking water, and asked where I collect my water from and if the family boils or treats water for drinking. It showed that they really care about our well-being," he said. The team spoke with Waiswa and his family about the benefits of personal and household hygiene. And they worked with him to develop a home improvement action plan and timeline for his household to adopt these good practices.

The home improvement teams conducted follow-up visits every month with Waiswa and others in the community to ensure they were following their action plans. In two months, Waiswa had constructed a pit

latrine using sticks, mud, and wattle (lightweight construction material made by weaving thin branches between upright stakes). He constructed a dish drying rack using timber and installed a tippy tap handwashing station with soap and water. The team constructed the tippy tap using a five-liter container with a small hole that is filled with water and attached to a rope. The container is tipped with a stick to create a running water effect.

Waiswa sweeps the compound and collects rubbish disposing of it in the rubbish pit he constructed himself.

*"Now that I have a pit latrine, handwashing tap, dish drying rack, and rubbish pit, my four children do not get diarrhea anymore!" adds a proud Waiswa.*

Waiswa's efforts helped the village increase pit latrine coverage from 70% (28/40 households) in April 2019 to 100% (40/40 households) by the end of the campaign in June 2019.

The household hygiene and sanitation practices campaign reached 10,621 households in Kaliro, Mayuge, Luuka, and Namayingo districts, supporting households to establish 1,995 latrine pits, 5,124 rubbish pits, and 5,288 clean containers for storing water.

