

In a case that has captured national attention, senior officials of the Water and Sanitation Corporation (WASAC) are under investigation for alleged corruption, abuse of power, and favoritism in recruitment. Among those implicated is Umuhumuza Gisèle, former head of WASAC Utility and key overseer of the corporation's budget and operations.

The Nyamirambo Primary Court has ordered 30-day provisional detention for Umuhumuza, alongside Prof. Omar Munyaneza, former CEO of WASAC Group, and Murekezi Dominique, former CEO of WASAC Development. Two other individuals were temporarily detained but later released. The arrests have sparked widespread discussion on social media and raised pressing questions about governance and accountability in Rwanda's public sector.

Prosecutors allege that Umuhumuza played a central role in manipulating recruitment processes. She reportedly allowed candidates who did not meet formal qualifications to pass employment tests, including Rasana Ndahiro Eric, who lacked the required academic credentials but was hired for a supervisory position. She is also accused of participating in irregular promotions and reassignments, often favoring friends, relatives, or selected groups while disadvantaging other employees.

The allegations further extend to misuse of public assets. As part of WASAC's leadership, Umuhumuza allegedly oversaw or approved payments and benefits that exceeded authorized limits. Evidence presented by prosecutors suggests that she, alongside other senior officials, facilitated overpayments to employees and authorized improper "lump sum" allowances connected to company vehicles and roles.

The investigation also includes allegations of forced early retirement for some employees, creating opportunities for preferred candidates. Prosecutors argue that these actions violated internal regulations and the corporation's HR policies, undermining fairness and meritocracy.

In court, Umuhumuza and her co-defendants maintained that hiring and promotion decisions were made collectively, in consultation with other executives, and within procedural frameworks. She denies acting independently or with personal intent to favor specific individuals.

This case underscores systemic governance challenges within Rwanda's public

institutions. By highlighting alleged favoritism, abuse of authority, and mismanagement of public resources, it serves as a litmus test for accountability. As investigations continue, the outcome could set a significant precedent, demonstrating that even senior officials in state-owned enterprises are not above the law.