The Mayor of Ngoma District in the Eastern Province, Aphrodise Nambaje underscores the increasing engagement of his residents in the district development process including planning and budgeting, this was revealed on Saturday, 25th July 2020 during a live talk show on Radio Izuba.

“I am very happy with the residents of Ngoma for their role in planning and executing performance contracts for 2019-2020 because the district officials could not have achieve on its own,” observes Mayor Nambaje.

Aphrodise Nambaje, the Mayor of Ngoma District

Themed «Enhancing citizens’ participation in the district development process including agriculture planning and budgeting,” the live ‘Talk show’ was organised by Rwanda Development Organisation (RDO) as a way of raising awareness on the citizens’ rights of participating in development initiatives.

The initiative is in the context of Voice for Change Partnership for improved food and nutrition security funded by SNV and, in collaboration with the Ngoma District were participants discuss issues pertaining development process in general and agriculture sector in particular to come up with possible solutions.

Eugene Rwibasira, the Executive Secretary of RDO observed that they were compelled to hold the discussion on a radio because of coronavirus preventive measures of not holding big public gatherings but it was also an opportunity to allow citizens to talk more freely during call-ins and through social media engagements.

Eugene Rwibasira, the Executive Secretary of RDO

During the talk show, Rwibasira underscored the role of citizen participation in the district development process. “Sustainable development is more achievable when beneficiaries are more involved and engaged,” he said.

He said that Rwandans are increasingly becoming more involved in their own development initiatives as has been seen in various parts of the country where RDO is operating.

The discussants who included Mayor Nambaje, RDO Executive Secretary and the

Vice Mayor in Charge of Economic Development, Cyriaque Mapambano Nyiridandi fielded various questions from the audience on the district’s development.

Cyriaque Mapambano Nyiridandi, Ngoma District Vice Mayor in Charge of Economic Development

Mapambano Nyiridandi underlined that citizens’ have been consulted when undertaking planning as well as implementing of different activities. He listed various developments where citizens have been involved and how far the district was in implementing the 2019/2020 performance contracts.

The Vice Mayor called on all local leaders to continue working closely with the population through provision of information so that people are more involved in their development initiatives.

However, the Executive Secretary of RDO noted that in some areas there were still challenges in enhancing citizens’ participation in development processes because of communication gaps between citizens and their leaders.

He called on local leaders to communicate more and share information with citizens in order to close these communication gaps and improve citizen participation in development.