

Women spend a lot of time doing household work, this kind of work has come to be known as unpaid care work because it doesn't bring in direct income.

This important work that keeps the family going, is often disregarded in society, partly making women as non-contributors in households that has many times discredited women's contributions in sustaining families.

To unburden rural women who spend most of the time in unpaid care work, UN Women and Rwanda Development Organisation (RDO) are undertaking the 3R Project. The 3R project aims at introducing transformative approaches to Recognize, Reduce and Redistribute unpaid care work.

On Tuesday, 19th July 2022, the project started distributing energy efficient kits to some residents in Musanze District. Each kit included an energy efficient steel cook stove, two sauce pans and a flask known as 'wonderbox'.



*The Mayor of Musanze District handing over an energy efficient kit to a beneficiary.*

The Mayor of Musanze District, Janvier Ramuli while officiating at the event applauded UN Women and RDO for developing such a project that will help women with the burden of gathering firewood and cooking for longer hours at the same time reduce on destruction of forests looking for firewood.

Mayor Ramuli applauded the focus of the project to support women by having more time to think and undertake income generating activities to uplift their families.

“In Musanze alone, 316 families received energy efficient kits and other 65 families will be given a water tank each. This is intended to empower women by removing impediments to their economic empowerment,” said Diana Mugwaneza, the Programs Officer of RDO.

She said that the 3R project seeks to empower women’s cooperatives and other organisations to introduce and provide transformative care services so that there is increased number of women with access to timesaving, climate-resilient infrastructure and technologies.

The equipment given mostly to women and few men are intended for access to time saving, climate resilient infrastructure and technology that impediments women’s economic empowerment.

Marie Louise Mukamanzi from Nyanje Sector in Musanze District is very optimistic that the stove will reduce the long hours she spends looking for firewood and cooking.

The mother of seven, was very happy to receive the energy efficient stove and wonderbox to keep food warm so she can feed the children in the morning before they leave for school.



*Marie Louise Mukamanzi from Nyanje Sector after receiving her energy efficient kit*

Dansira Uwimana from Kinigi Sector is a farmer and does weaving on the side. She always has limited time to do her weaving but is now sure the three hours she takes to cook dry beans alone will be reduced and allocated to other activities.

Tess Kazuba, the Coordinator of the project at UN WOMEN told beneficiaries to use well the equipment they received because they will help them improve livelihoods.

Kazuba said the energy efficient kits are meant to reduce time spent doing unpaid care work, reduce firewood used, reduce conflicts in families and improve family relationships.

She further indicated that UN Women is dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women, explaining that there were also men given the energy efficient kits to be ambassadors in changing the mindset that home care work is not meant for only women but men should also support their partners and recognize

the hard work they endure.

Uwimana emphasized the need they had for the stoves because getting or buying firewood is very costly and sometime they even fail to get enough.

She said that the time that will be saved because of the energy efficient stoves and the flask will be utilized in weaving which brings in extra income for her family.

A study conducted in Rwanda to assess how long do women spend on household chores, findings showed that rural women were spending over eight hours daily in unpaid care work.

This led to UN Women in Rwanda to try find ways to unburden rural women in work they do that is unrecognized by finding innovative ways to reduce time they spend on some household chores.

Among major burdens for rural women is finding firewood and taking most of their time cooking, this stove known Save80 will save more time for these women.

The Save80 stove is said to save up to 80% energy than the normal charcoal stoves using small wood sticks as fuel for cooking.

The stainless steel cook stove is one of the most efficient firewood stoves and perhaps the most convenient needing only a small amount of sticks due to the high quality of the equipment.