

ITORERO RY'IGIHUGU



The reintroduction of Itorero in 2009 aimed to develop a civic education program based on patriotic values that strengthen Rwandan citizens' contribution to the development of their country and the well-being of their society.

A National Itorero Commission (NIC), Itorero ry'Igihugu in Kinyarwanda, was created to drive the programme. It is an independent commission with responsibility for planning, implementation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of Itorero programmes at all levels of society.

The vision of the National Itorero Commission

The vision of NIC is to help to build a society with a shared mindset and values that promote unity and patriotism, as well as awareness of the goals of the country and how they can be achieved.

The main objectives of NIC are:

- To train Rwandans:
 - to better understand their shared values;

- to be good and active citizens who are patriotic and who actively contribute to national development;
- to be Intore who are worthy Rwandans at all levels of society and to be catalysts for positive change;
- to acquire the culture of volunteerism through national service.
- To promote respect for positive cultural values as a basis for coexistence and national development
- To collaborate with other public and private institutions and non-governmental organisations with similar objectives
- To prepare and monitor volunteerism through national service

The values of Itorero (Indagagaciro)

At the heart of the Itorero programme lies a set of values, which defines an ethical framework. Contemporary Itorero promotes the following values:

- Unity
- Patriotism
- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Responsibility
- Volunteerism
- Humility

Itorero training sessions

The main activity of Itorero is a series of training sessions that include lessons on Rwanda's history and culture along with physical activities; these sessions aim to educate Rwandans on positive cultural values which had been lost during colonisation. During Itorero sessions, trainings are adapted and tailored to the needs of particular participants. For example, teachers and health workers cover activities related to their profession while local leaders are trained in public service delivery and good governance.

During Itorero training sessions, presentations and discussions have the following aims:

- To endow participants with the capacity to analyse their own problems and to find solutions
- To promote Kinyarwanda as a language, as well as the Rwandan spirit and Rwandan cultural values, in order to build better social relations and achieve a good life
- To mentor participants to develop a spirit of cooperation and to embrace innovation and a culture of performance
- To inform participants about the country's most significant policies and programmes
- To sensitise participants about the importance of a range of valuable practices including physical fitness, cleanliness at home, environmental protection, a culture of debate, family conflict resolution mechanisms, compliance with the law, and the need to combat corruption and aggressive behaviour
- To sensitise participants about the importance of building and promoting a culture of peace that is based on mutual respect, trust, humility, democratic values, human rights, and the fight against discriminatory behavior and genocide ideology
- To sensitise participants on the importance of efficiency in service delivery, professional stamina, and the ability to deliver good and efficient work.

Participants

Itorero is designed for all Rwandans. Different curricula have been developed to suit the programme's varied participants.

Children of seven years and above take part in Itorero in their Imidugudu (Villages) to help them grow up to become responsible citizens. Others keen to participate are given the opportunity to do so according to their professional backgrounds.

Young Rwandans from the Diaspora on holidays in Rwanda can join Urugerero and a number of young Rwandans have organized Itorero in cities including London and Brussels.

Non-nationals who wish to participate and provide service to the country can also do so. University graduates and retired people who participated in Urugerero before and wish to do so again are also given the opportunity to join Itorero.

National Service (Urugerero)

National Service (Urugerero) is designed for those between the ages of 18-35 who have completed secondary education with the aim of developing a sense of fraternity, national identity and participation in national programmes among the Rwandan youth. Whilst the curriculum content of Itorero ry'Igihugu is particular to Rwanda as it is based on principles and values unique to the Rwandan culture; Urugerero (National Service), has much in common with what takes place in other countries.

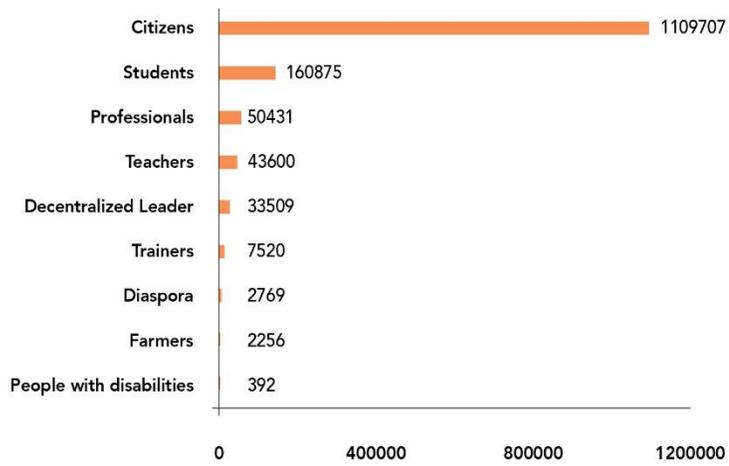
Under Urugerero, thousands of youths have built housing units for the vulnerable, set up kitchen gardens for disadvantaged households to help meet beneficiaries' nutritional needs, fixed roads and bridges especially in rural neighbourhoods, and played a part in mobilisation for vital socioeconomic causes. Districts have started to integrate Urugerero into their mainstream development and ecosystem services.

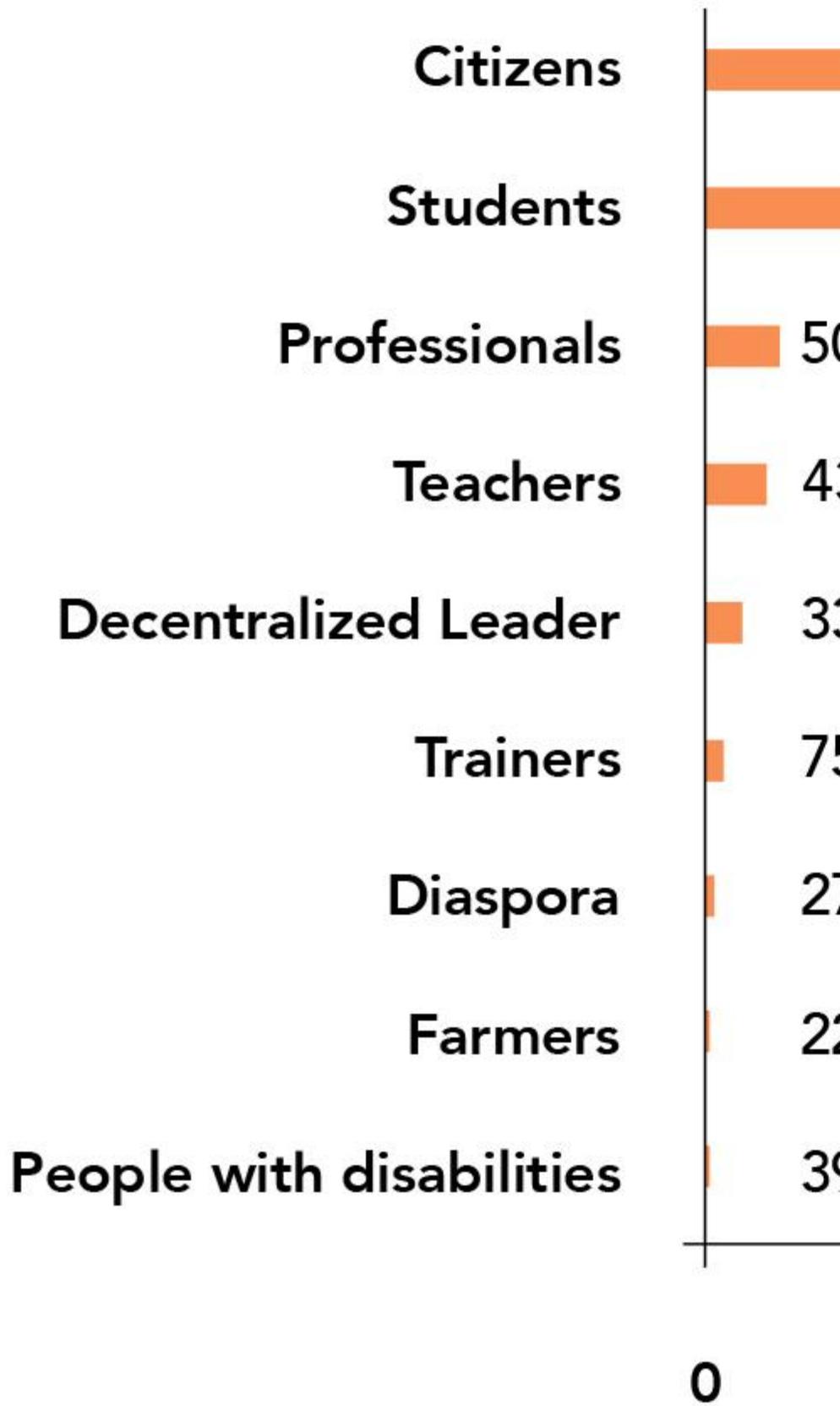
Urugerero is still developing and reaching out to potential partners which may include government organs, businesses and non-governmental organisations, in order to expand the scope of the activities available to youth.

The main achievements of Itorero

From 2007 to 2017, over 1,700,000 people from both public and private institutions were trained under Itorero from all walks of life, as shown in the figure below.

Categories of Itoero trained from 2007 to 2017





NUDC Amazina y'imitwe y'Intore 2017.

Itorero complements other government programmes and policies, contributing to strengthening intangible elements that make these programmes work such as a sentiment of ownership and a sense of civic responsibility and accountability.