



# THE WATSAN EYE

Is an email newsletter produced by UWASNET to share highlights and the contribution of CSOs in the Water and Sanitation sub-sector.

April 28<sup>th</sup>—May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Volume 1, Issue 5

## Editorial

This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Issue of The WATSAN Eye newsletter focusing on the contribution of CSOs to the national Covid-19 response in Uganda.

In this issue, a total of fifteen (15) member organizations' share their contribution to the national Covid-19 response plan. In the 1<sup>st</sup> Issue, thirteen (13) member organizations' work was profiled and shared with partners.

Since the confirmation of the first cases of Covid-19 in Uganda in early March 2020, the Government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Health has and still is spearheading the Covid-19 national response. A number of partners including Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are contributing to the national response. We share their contribution as part of reporting, and facilitating UWASNET members' visibility, accountability and transparency to the mother sector—Ministry of Water and Environment. This newsletter also presents opportunities to learn from other CSOs and inform your organizations' development programs.

**If you want your work profiled in this newsletter, email a one-pager & pictures to the Editor—Rehema Aanyu via [raanyu@gmail.com](mailto:raanyu@gmail.com) by May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020.**

## Amref Health Africa Covid-19 WASH interventions at grass-root level



*Alex Ayok, a Health Assistant at Okungyedi Health Centre II in Amuru district showing residents how to use the tippy tap to frequently wash their hands with soap as a preventive measure against Covid-19.*

*Photo provided by Amref Health Africa*

Amref Health Africa is supporting Ministry of Health in curbing Covid-19 in Uganda through the following WASH interventions;

Amref Health Africa has provided Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) to health workers in Arua district. It also trained the health workers on how protect themselves against Covid-19 infection.

At grass-root level, Amref Health Africa trained Village Health Teams (VHTs) in all its project areas.

In Arua district, Amref Health Africa trained 136 VHTs and provided hand washing facilities, soap and disinfectants to facilitate hand washing with soap and water. Arua district is a porous border town with a total of 120,000 refugees.

Amref Health Africa partnered with Arua and Amuru district leaders and media to provide health messages that will enable communities understand what Covid-19 is and how they can protect themselves against infection. *Continued on Pg. 2*



# Amref Health Africa Covid-19 WASH interventions at grass-root level *continued from Pg.1*



*A woman washing her hands before accessing the market. Phot provided by Amref Health Africa*

Amref Health Africa provided connection to safe water Atiak Health Center, a selected isolation facility for Covid-19 patients. A total of other eight (08) health facilities in Amuru district were supported by Amref Health Africa with safe water connection to facilitate hand washing with soap. Additionally, Amref Health Africa also provides actual supplies to these health facilities including soap and disinfectants.

In addition, Amref Health Africa supports community awareness on Covid-19 through radio. Amref Health Africa is supporting Covid-19 response in Kabarole, Bunyangabu and in all the 09 districts in Lango region.

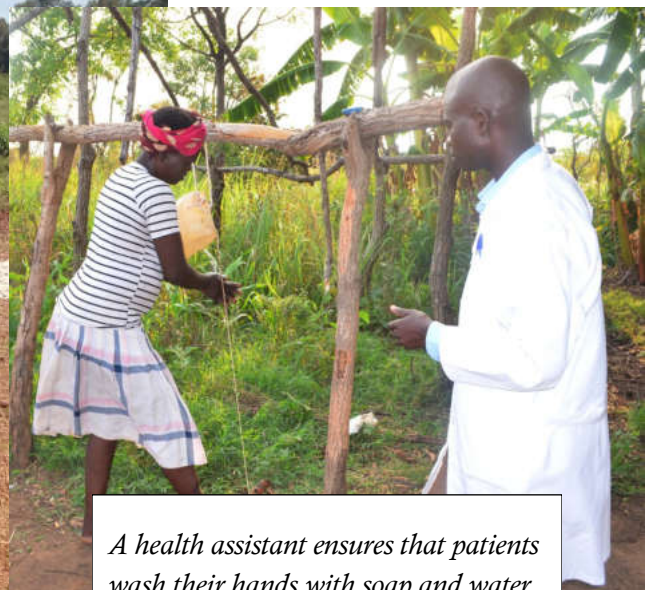
Amref Health Africa continues to support Ministry of Health by providing advise at district Covid-19 task-force meetings at both national and district level.

Amref Health Africa is a member of the national Partners Taskforce Response to Covid-19 and uses this platform to inform the national strategy on Covid-19 response in Uganda.



*A VHT supervising hand washing at a boarder point in Arua.*

*Photo provided by Amref Health Africa*



*A health assistant ensures that patients wash their hands with soap and water. Photo by Amref*



# Katosi Women Development Trust (KWDT)'s interventions on Covid-19

Katosi Women Development Trust (KWDT) works with rural fisher communities in Mukono district. It works through established women's groups and supports their economic empowerment, improvement of health through increasing their access to clean safe water, improved standards of sanitation and hygiene.

Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated the vulnerability of disadvantaged rural fisher communities.

KWDT response includes;

**Awareness creation on Covid-19:**

KWDT translated a guide shared by arche noVa (partner), to disseminate information against the spread of Covid-19. The water user committees, toilet committees, waste management committees, and WASH committees in the groups are channels through which KWDT is disseminating information on Covid-19. KWDT is also ensuring that the guidelines and directives passed by the Ministry of Health and the President of Uganda are observed.

Community radios present, in each of the 11 landing sites have been engaged to disseminate information on Covid-19.

KWDT observed social distancing and handwashing with soap for all training participants a day before the lockdown. In response, restaurants in the trained landing sites, established hand washing facilities for their clients as mobilized by the Local Council (LC) Chairman.

**Increased access to clean water to promote easy hand washing:**

KWDT constructed 132 water points benefiting over 39,718 in the

two decades. It has encouraged all the water user committees to ensure that all community members can access clean water at all times regardless of the monthly user fee payments. KWDT has emphasized that committees ensure water sources remain functional at this critical time.

**Promotion of good hygiene practices in fisher communities:**

KWDT established permanent hand washing stations in 8 landing sites at toilet facilities and promoted construction of hand washing facilities at household in 8 communities.

**KWDT also supports income generation in communities focusing on enterprises that are responsive to Covid-19 like soap production.**

KWDT had trained 250 women in 10 women's groups in soap production. Additionally, 2 of the 11 new WASH committees had completed their training on local soap production so as to increase access to soap especially with the outbreak of Covid-19.

KWDT has continued to support 12 groups in production of soap during this pandemic.

**Hunger in fishing communi-**



*A community member using a loud speaker to disseminate preventive messages on Covid-19. Photo provided by KWDT*

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Alt-

though farming has continued under the lockdown, fishing and fishing related activities were suspended. Fisher communities depend on fish for income and food, with fishing suspended hunger is widespread, many women are requesting KWDT to intervene with food relief.



*Women learning to make soap.*

*Photo provided by KWDT*

# Link to Progress' efforts to fight Covid-19

Link to Progress' (LTP) efforts towards curbing Covid-19 include the following;

## Conducted radio talk-shows

LTP conducted radio talk shows with Kole district leaders and focused on what Covid-19 is, how it is spread, bad practices by the communities that can accelerate the spread of Covid-19, protective measures against Covid-19, and called on the community members to abide by the directives shared by Ministry of Health and the President of Uganda.



*LTP representatives and district officials during radio talk-shows on Covid-19 prevention*

## Production and airing of spot messages on radio.

A spot message in the local language with information on prevention of Covid-19 was produced and were aired for a month by a local radio stations.

## Production of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials.

### Stickers

Link to Progress developed stickers with messages on Covid-19 prevention emphasizing the need for good hygiene practices like handwashing with soap and ensuring good operation and maintenance of water sources. The stickers are being distributed to communities so that they follow the messages.

### T-shirts procured

T-shirts with messages on prevention of Covid-19 were produced and disseminated.

## LTP is a member of the Oyam district Covid-19 taskforce

As a member of the district taskforce, LTP was permitted to continue to work in Oyam but with Covid-19 information dissemination and to



*A picture of the sticker that was produced and disseminated with Covid-19 preventive messages. Photo by LTP*

follow up on the water sources to ensure that they were functional.

LTP staff also conducted home visits to educate people on Covid-19. Oyam district task force gave LTP two stickers for a car and a motorcycle carry on the work on engaging community members on Covid-19 while following the guidelines provided by Ministry of Health and the presidential directives on Covid-19.

LTP will also rehabilitate 20 boreholes and construct 25 new boreholes with support from Charity Water to ensure that communities have access to adequate water for hand washing.

## Contribution to the Oyam district task force

In an effort to enhance the efforts of Oyam district task force in fighting against Covid-19, Link to Progress also contributed Ugx2,000,000 to the task force to be used by the district to implement the activities of the task force.





# CIDI launches media campaign to fight Covid-19

As Uganda endeavors to curb the spread of Covid-19, it should be noted that this fight is generally surrounded by a great deal of widespread misinformation.

With support from the Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) and Danish People's Aid (DPA), CIDI launched a media campaign to create public awareness and sensitization on Covid-19. The media campaign aimed at giving the public effective, timely and factual information on staying safe and free.

The media campaign also provides a good platform to advocate to duty bearers mainly government and National Water and Sewerage Corporation (NWSC) to allocate more resources to ensure access to clean and safe water during these hard times and after.

## Focus of on radio programs

Talk-shows on Radio One (*Akaboozi ku biri*) and aired in Luganda (a widely spoken local language) targeting the audience of people living in Kampala's informal (urban poor) settlements. During the radio talk show, CIDI called upon communities to adhere to government measures put in place measures to contain the spread of Covid-19 through regular handwashing with soap to reduce its spread.

"We also used the radio talk show to call upon Water User Committee members to ensure the cleanliness of their water sources and also adhere to the social distancing recommendation of at least one meter while collecting water," said Rose Mwambazi from CIDI.



*Communal handwashing facility in Kasubi market: Regular handwashing with water and soap is the first line of defense in tackling the COVID-19 pandemic. Photo provided by CIDI*

Local leaders were called upon to liaise with CIDI and National Water and Sewerage Corporation (NWSC) to repair non-functional water sources in their communities. In addition, a request was made to NWSC not to disconnect any water points but rather to ensure that all non-functional water sources are repaired.

## Government: make WASH sector your funding priority

"As CIDI we are also using our media campaign to call on the Uganda government and donor community to increase investment in WASH sector. The World Health Organization has already revealed that handwashing with soap is the first line of defense in tackling the Covid-19 pandemic," said Helena Kasujja

from CIDI.

The provision of safe water, sanitation and adequate hygiene (WASH) is essential to protecting human health during all infectious disease outbreaks. Government should therefore step in to provide the needed resources and put in place an overall enabling environment for improving access to WASH since it helps to prevent human-to-human transmission of the Covid-19.

The messages developed also included;

*"Stay safe, stay home, wash your hands regularly with water and soap."*

# Save the Children Apolou Response to Covid-19 in Karamoja *continued to Pg.7*

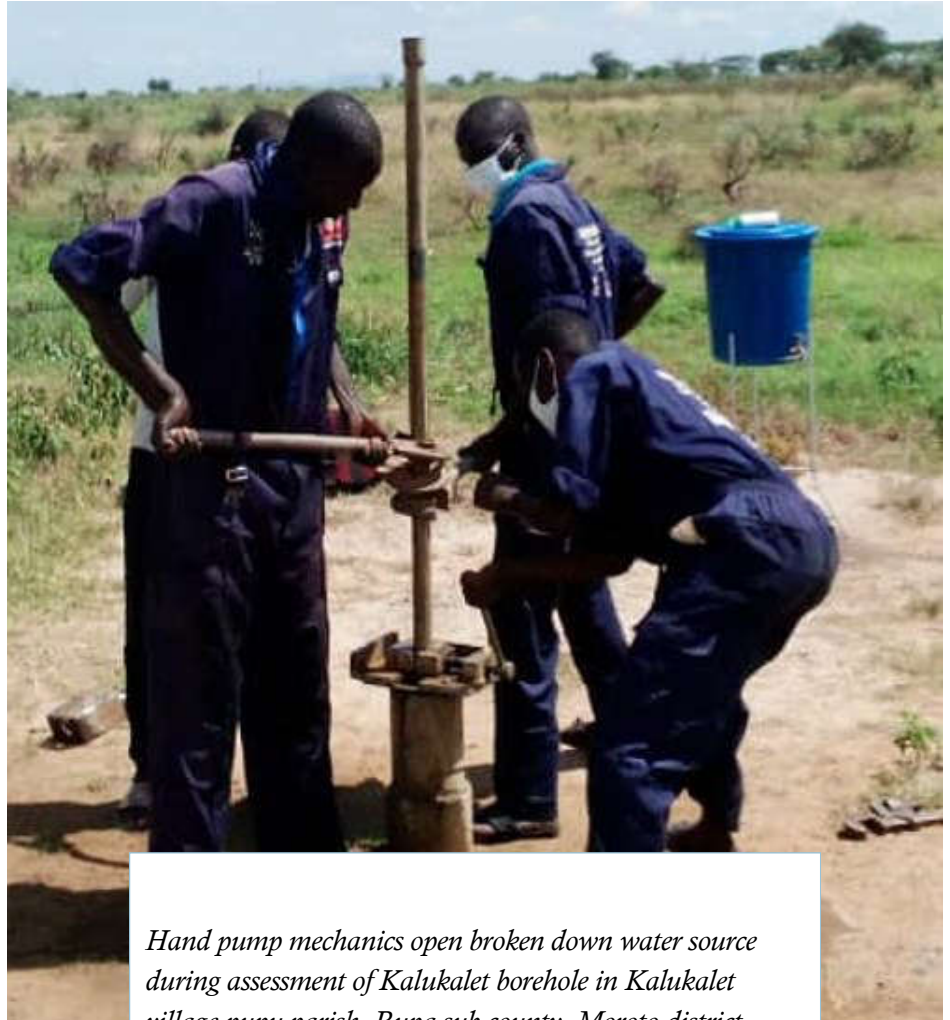
Well as there are no Covid-19 fatalities recorded in Uganda since the pandemic was confirmed in March 2020, there is concern of what might happen in light of the weak health care systems, inadequate surveillance and lab capacity, scarcity of necessary human resources and limited financial means to address a global pandemic of this nature.

In addition, Uganda is currently dealing with a number of complex challenges with populations that are especially vulnerable to disease and further economic uncertainty.

The Government of Uganda continues to implement national measures to limit the spread of the disease including banning public and private transport, no gatherings of more than five people, closure of non-food shops, curfew and physical distancing, among others.

## Save the Children Response through Apolou Activity

While there have not been any cases confirmed in the Karamoja sub region, the 310,000 community participants Apolou aims to reach are vulnerable individuals in vulnerable households all at the risk of coronavirus infection. Apolou activity plans to rollout Covid-19 prevention activities within existing Apolou communities plus messaging at a population level. Proposed response to Covid-19 Apolou Activity includes a package to help contain and mitigate the impact of Covid-19 within targeted vulnerable communities, adapted from current programming. The area of response for Apolou includes:



*Hand pump mechanics open broken down water source during assessment of Kalukalet borehole in Kalukalet village, pupu parish, Rupa sub county, Moroto district*

*Photo provided by Save the Children*

**Covid-19 Radio Spot:** The Apolou SBCC support to districts includes development and broadcasting of the coronavirus prevention radio spot, adapted from the Ministry of Health Covid-19 strategy and campaign known as *Tonsemerera* (don't come close), which primarily stresses the aspect of social distancing. The spot outlines key Covid-19 prevention actions which individu-

als, families and communities should adopt personally and communally. The spot is also translated in the local languages to make it applicable to the Karimojong community in the districts of Moroto, Kotido, Kaabong and Karenga as well as to the Pokot community in Amudat district.

Apolou will air the Pokot spot on Kalya Radio (broadcasting from across the border in Kenya)



# Save the Children Apolou Response to Covid-19 in Karamoja *continued from Pg.6*

and the Ngakarimojong spot on Ateker Moroto FM, Voice of Karamoja and Radio Maria Moroto FM.

**Provision of critical WASH NFIs:** Save the Children-Apolou procured 10,000 twenty litre jerry cans, 10,000 five litre jerry cans, 408 cartons of soap and 185 twenty litre handwashing stations for public places and institutions. The above WASH NFIs will support communities observe proper handwashing practices and will also ensure that in public places such as health facilities, market places and public eating places observe handwashing in order to prevent infection spread

**Access to water:** During the current Covid-19 crisis, water access in communities is key to ensure communities practice proper handwashing practice. In Moroto and Amudat some communities are indeed water stressed and Save the children has conducted assessment of 05 boreholes in Amudat and 05 boreholes in Moroto earmarked for



*Truck delivers 5 litre handwashing facility, 20 litre jerry cans for safe water storage and soap to Amudat district taskforce support community practice handwashing during Covid-19 period . Photo by Save the Children*

rehabilitation. Through the Save the Children partnership, borehole rehabilitation will be expedited in Amudat and Moroto Districts through certified hand pump mechanics and in close consultation

with Whave Solutions and the District. through the above activities, the rehabilitated water sources will provide 11,200 community members access to clean safe water.

## UEEF sending SMS to community members to wash their hands regularly with soap & water

The Uganda Environmental Education Foundation (UEEF) started sending mobile SMS messages to community groups they work with urging them to regularly wash their hands with soap and water.

In addition, the organization also facilitated its community groups to



by President of Uganda and

teach community members how to construct / install and repair tippy taps to facilitate hand washing with soap as directed

Ministry of Health in its guidelines and BCC messages on radio and television and on flyers.

This was conducted on Nama sub-county

# Busoga Trust facilitating communities' access to clean water

Busoga Trust has responded to the fight against Covid-19 through provision of money, food items, WASH materials and raising awareness on local radio and television stations.

Using these communication platforms, Busoga Trust re-emphasizes the messages communicated by Ministry of Health and the President of Uganda. Such messages promote hand washing with clean water and soap, promote the use of sanitizers to disinfect hands and contaminated surfaces.

The messages also encourage social distancing, tracking, isolating and testing suspected people and lastly, treating the sick.

Busoga Trust has focused on ensuring that;

All water points constructed remain functional. Busoga Trust facilitates the Hand Pump Mechanics and its staff to monitor the water points and ensure that they are functional. The organization has also repaired and rehabilitated some non-functional water sources.

The institution has also provided hand washing facilities to every water point repaired to ensure that whoever comes to collect water washes hands with soap before pumping

The institution has also provided financial support of Ugx1,000,000 to the district Covid-19 task force as contribution towards fuel

Busoga trust will repair twenty (20) non-functional boreholes in



*Hand Pump Mechanics repair a non-functional borehole in Buyende District*

*Photo by Busoga Trust*

Buyende district to ensure communities have water to use during this period. So far 8 boreholes located in the sub counties of Kidera, Buyende and Kagulu have been repaired.

“Rusted Cylinders, GI pipes and rods were removed and replaced with new stainless parts that are more durable and resistant to hard water, which is common in this area. Most of these wells had been dis-functional for over two years due to high maintenance costs and



*Busoga Trust staff attend Buyende district Covid-19 taskforce meeting*

lack of proper local management structures,” said Moses Mugabane, the Research and Development Officer at Busoga Trust.



# VAD distributes hand washing facilities

In an effort to fight the Covid-19 pandemic in Uganda, Voluntary Action for Development (VAD) in partnership with Signpost International has implemented a project titled, *Hand washing campaign to minimize COVID19 in Uganda* whose goal is to fight against Covid-19 in Central and North Eastern Uganda and below are the achievements so far;

- i. Procured and distributed 20 hand washing facilities (HWFs) each with 135 liters to 20 selected sites namely; Apeitolim health center, Amaseniko health center, Apeitolim trading center, Lomokori trading center, Oditel trading center, Amaseniko trading center, Kotirai trading center, Kaaingatuk trading center, Oditel Primary School, Amuria Primary School, Agwara kuju Primary School, Amaseniko Primary School, Apeitolim Primary School, Lomokori Primary School, Kotirai Primary School, Nakakwa Primary School, Kaaingatuk Primary School, Narengekitoe CPS, Naberati CPS, St Noa Mawaggali. Note that, from the initial plan of procuring 20liters each HWFs, we were advised by the local leaders there that at least a big container serves the purpose better. The full package of the HWFs comprised of a drum (135 liters) with a functioning tap, a stand, a basin and liquid soap to be used. The team managed to hire a bigger vehicle that safely transported the equipment to their respective destinations.
- ii. We were able to hire a public address system that was used to verbally disseminate

information related to hand washing at all times and other dangers associated with the Covid-19. The information was disseminated into local language and we were able to move to all stations.

- iii. The team procured the Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) namely face masks and gloves for the staff and a few contact people in the community. These PPEs helped to protect implementers and they were also used for demonstration in the community for those who can afford to buy them.
  - iv. Facilitation of at least 3 enterprise groups; this activity is still on a stand still because we can not access the materials in the stores due to the lock down. By the time the funds arrived the lock-down was already effected. However, we are set to move on as soon as we get access because the group members are aware and are already mobilized.
- Major challenge encountered;**
- The abrupt total lock-down resulted into delay in implementing project activities particularly in Wakiso. To successfully execute these WASH activities you have to first secure permission from the office of Resident District Commissioner. For example; the service provider for the stands could not move forward until we secured permission from RDC Soroti which was granted hence work commenced.



*HWF installed at Amaseniko health center in Kapelebyong district. Photo by VAD*

In conclusion, we can firmly say that the project was to a larger extent successfully executed.

The RDC of Soroti, Amuria, Kapelebyong and Napak extended their sincere gratitude to VAD & SI for their support towards helping their communities to overcome the Covid-19 pandemic.

Similarly the communities that received these HWFs were also thrilled and they thanked the organization. We therefore thank all people who have played a role in executing this project including VAD staff, local leaders, community, RDCs.

In a special way we thank Signpost International for the financial support.

## Pamo Volunteers fighting stigma against Covid-19 in Kumi district

Pamo Volunteers in Kumi district is responding to the fight against Covid-19 with focus on the following intervention areas;

- ⇒ Minimizing stigma and misinformation about Covid-19
- ⇒ The health and safety of our rural communities.
- ⇒ Creating healthier lives and more resilient livelihoods through greater diversity in what we grow and eat.

“We have involved people living with HIV/ AIDS in disseminating

information about Covid-19.

Minimizing stigma and misinformation about COVID-19 is very important. People with HIV have experience in dealing with stigma and are good allies in preventing Covid-19 stigma. The preventive measures for COVID- 19 is social distancing and personal hygiene (stringent hand-washing with soap). This is very important to every one of us,” said J.M.S Omagori, the Executive Director of Pamo Volunteers.

“We have also sensitized the rural

communities where we work on ‘Eating right’ and this can best be done by beginning to plant home gardens. A vegetable garden brings peace of mind in two ways: It is calming work to tend vegetable crops and the knowledge that some fresh food will be available at home can go a long way toward alleviating anxiety about the reliability of the food supply,” he added. These activities are implemented in Aojamorok community in Mukongoro sub-county, Kumi district.

## Kyempapu distributes food & soap vulnerable communities in Bukomansimbi district

Kyempapu tried and is still trying to intervene in our communities in different modules during the lockdown. We tried to pioneer the campaigns of washing hands, staying home, keeping social distance and following the government directives to our communities.

During the early days of the lockdown, this was challenging as most people in our communities could not afford sanitizers, masks and even soap . Worse still, there is water scarcity in most of the communities. Additionally, most households lacked food and did not have gardens where they could grow food. And they have big families ranging from 5—12 or even more individuals which made it difficult for people to stay home because they needed food.

Kyempapu mobilized some funds

and we reached out to 150 most vulnerable households with children in the villages of Kirinda, Nakuusi, Kala-ga, Busabala in Kitanda sub-county in Bukomansimbi district. “We gave them a bar of soap, 3 kilos of beans, packet of salt, 6 kilos of rice, 6 kilos of maize flour, for every household,” said Marvin Magambo, a staff.

Kyempapu delivered these items door to door using a bicycle.

He said Kyempapu has a target of reaching 500 households with food and soap items during this lock-down.



*A family that received the food and soap items .  
Photo by Kyempapu*