



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.

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UWASNET calls for prioritization of WASH in national planning & budgeting to effectively address Covid-19 & other WASH related illnesses



(L-R) Ms. Lillian Nabasirye (SNV) was the moderator, Ms. Juliet Abaliwano, representing the AFD, WASH Lead Donor, Mr. Alfred Okot Okidi, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Water & Environment, Ms. Alice Ninsiima, the Technical Monitoring Officer for the Water and Environment Sector, Budget Monitoring Unit, MoFPED & Ms. Yunia Musaazi, Executive Director—UWASNET & Hon. Silas Aogon, MP –Kumi district & Executive Member of UPF-WASH were panelists at the webinar

UWASNET has called on Government

to prioritize WASH in national planning & budgeting to effectively address Covid-19 & other WASH related illnesses in Uganda. This is part of continued advocacy aimed at ensuring universal access to WASH services in Uganda.

During a webinar organized by UWASNET on June 23rd, 2020, the Executive Director – UWASNET, Mrs. Yunia Musaazi highlighted that Covid-19 has put WASH at the forefront and that it is the time to

act. The webinar was held under the theme, ‘*Prioritization of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in national planning and budgeting to effectively address Covid-19 and other WASH-related illnesses*’ and was attended by key sector partners and allies.

Mr. Alfred Okot Okidi, the Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Water and Environment participated in the webinar and shared the milestones made by the sector towards ensuring access to WASH

services and highlighted the need to act

now to ensure that everyone, everywhere has access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene.

“WASH services are a key driver for social economic development and an essential ingredient in attainment of majority of SDGs,” he said.

He noted that Covid-19 has highlighted the urgent need to accelerate adequate & sustainable access to WASH services for all.

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Mr. Alfred Okot Okidi called for increased financing to facilitate safely managed WASH services, Operation and Maintenance (O&M) subsidy especially for rural water systems and the need to address inadequate capacities to deliver WASH services especially in Local Governments and private sector.

He highlighted that limited sector funding is a critical challenge to meeting both the national and SDG targets. He called for continuous advocacy, sensitization and awareness creation to ensure sustainability of WASH services.

Eng. Johnson Amayo, the Deputy Managing Director – Technical at National Water and Sewerage Corporation (NWSC) shared the different milestones achieved by NWSC in spite of the challenges as a result of Covid-19 pandemic.

He noted that NWSC is committed to water infrastructure development and providing for adequate Operation and Maintenance (O & M) for WASH service delivery. He said that this investment is a huge task that calls for increased funding to the sector. He said that he was happy that UWASNET is advocating for increased sector funding.

Eng. Amayo said that in spite of the challenges, NWSC has been able to connect 258 towns in Uganda with piped water supply. He said that under the 100% service acceleration project, over 2,000km of pipe lane to reach out a number of people with over 60,000 connections made this year. He noted that 1,070 public



(L-R) Ms. Lillian Nabasirye (SNV) the moderator, Mr. Alfred Okot Okidi, Permanent Secretary, MWE, Ms. Alice Ninsiima, MoFPED, Hon. Silas Aogon, MP –Kumi district & Executive Member of UPF-WASH & Ms. Yunia Musaaazi, ED -UWASNET

stand points have been installed and that there are over 20,000 public stand points in country where people can access a jerry can of water at UGX50 whereby NWSC only charges UGX25 per jerry can.

He noted that NWSC has been able to conduct water infrastructure development with support from Development Partners for instance the Gulu water expansion project 1st phase has been completed including the water infrastructure development in Kapchorwa, Kapeka, Sembabule. He noted that the Katosi water infrastructure development will be completed next year and a number of projects are being planned with support from Development Partners and Government of Uganda.

Eng. Amayo mentioned that as part of the Covid-19 response, in spite of the challenges NWSC is optimizing

the limited resources collected to ensure business continuity and survival. He mentioned that in partnership with Kampala City Council Authority (KCCA), NWSC has installed 100 hand washing facilities in markets and taxi parks so that people can be able to comply with Standard Operating Procedures under Covid-19. With support from MTN and Sogea, NWSC has been able to install water 51 tanks in water stresses areas within Kampala and 21 more tanks are planned to ensure that communities have access to safe water.

Eng. Amayo said that as a challenge, NWSC has a minimum stock of inputs like chemicals and they are optimizing costs and coming up with innovations to overcome the challenges including minimizing risk of their staff during Covid-19.

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Eng. Amayo mentioned that both umbrella organizations and NWSC are faced with significant drop in revenues and as such they have made a proposal to Government to provide some support.

He mentioned that there is need to find a way that will get people back to work, revive economic activities as soon as possible.

“There is need to scale up efforts towards improving WASH services to the population through increased funding and adoption of low cost technologies and protection of the environment,” he said

“As a country, we need to start building local capacity to have these inputs to be localized produced so that in future when we are faced with a crisis of this nature again, we are not badly affected,” he said.

Ms. Alice Ninsiima, the Technical Monitoring Officer for the Water and Environment Sector, Budget Monitoring Unit, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) highlighted that Uganda is a poor country operating under resource constraints and as such, every sector is essential and that Government is unable to finance all the needs at once.

She highlighted that the Water and Environment sector budget figures have been increasing in nominal terms. “On average this has been 3% and in FY 2018/19 it shot up to 5%,” she said.

She highlighted that MoFPED is in

the process of reprioritizing the Development Budget to cater for Covid-19 related expenditures. “The MoFPED has dialogued with the sectors including MWE, MoES, MoH and requested the sectors to identify proper WASH gaps and present the case to the Minister,” she said.

She also highlighted that MoFED has set up an Economic Response Unit (ERU) to coordinate government responses intended to mitigate the social economic impact of Covid-19 in Uganda.

Ms. Ninsiima presented that there need to strengthen the alignment between the planning, budgeting and budget implementation processes as well as coordination with development partners and civil society. The alignment of NDP, the national budgets and ministerial annual work-plans be strengthened.

She also presented that there is need to strengthen project preparation and appraisal to improve the implementation of projects.

She highlighted that there is also need for the Water and Environment sector to identify and exploit alternative revenue sources to complement domestic revenue collection.

She encouraged CSOs to continue advocating for prioritization of the sector through coordinated dialogues, make recommendations to relevant authorities and give the necessary technical guidance to planning and budgeting.

Ms. Juliet Abaliwano Onyango, representing the AFD, WASH Lead Donor mentioned that she was representing 15 Development Partners (DPs) in Water and Sanitation sub-sector. She shared that DPs have been involved in Covid-19 response with installation of water facilities, installation of sanitation facilities supporting media campaigns and supporting refugee response to curb the spread of Covid-19.

She mentioned that DPs have been flexible in reallocation of resources towards Covid-19 and have been mobilizing more funding to address the immediate challenges.

Juliet said that the DPs programs will not change drastically and the only concern is to see how the interventions can be more sustained in the long term.

She added that DPs are committed to investments to secure the integrity of water resources, investment in safe water supply in both rural and urban areas, promotion of irrigation systems, strengthening the weather and climate change response and supporting capacity and partnership development for both public and private sectors.

She mentioned that also DPs are supporting the scaling up of basic water and sanitation services, they recommend the adaptation of long term measures to ensure sustainable water availability for all.

Hon. Silas Aogon, Member of Parliament Kumi district & Executive Member of Uganda Parliamentary Forum on WASH (UPF WASH)

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“You can’t talk about Covid-19 without talking about access to safe water, soap or sanitation. Planning needs to change and there is need to coordinate between the Water and Environment sector, the CSOs, Members of Parliament and Government to best address the gaps and challenges identified,” said Hon. Silas Aogon.

He said that Members of Parliament are ready to work with the sector and CSOs to bring the evidence calling for prioritization of WASH on the floor of Parliament,” he said.

Mrs. Yunia shared the CSO Position paper calling for prioritization of WASH in national planning and budgeting including the priority areas of investment in order to effectively address Covid-19 and other WASH related illnesses.

The position paper highlights what CSOs want Government and other stakeholders to do as highlighted below;

Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development

- Clearance of arrears to cover operational costs of NWSC 76%/ and UA 92% (*short-term*)
- Allocate more funding to the sector to enable achieve sector goals

Ministry of Water & Environment

- Prioritize rehabilitation of non-functional water sources
- Undertake mapping of the unserved to “Leave No One Be-

hind”

- Scale up services to unserved areas
- NWSC and UA implement progressive tariffs and explore possibilities of providing free water for the next 6 months to the poor and unserved populations
- Establish long term systems and structures to maintain the status quo (*long term*)
- Enhance Coordination & M&E of different stakeholders (*long term*)

Development Partners (DPs)

- Provide rapid, flexible funding and technical assistance to MWE to enable rapid provision of much needed WASH services. These investments should focus on government-led efforts to extend water and sanitation services to those who do not have them, including to healthcare facilities and promote good hygiene and behavior change programs. (*short term*)
- Embrace partnership to implement programs at scale (*long term*)

Ministry of Health

- The Ministry of Health (MoH) should continue large-scale nationwide hygiene promotion campaigns that focus on the importance of hand washing as the first line of defense against COVID-19 (*short term*)
- Sensitization of communities on safe disposal of solid waste such as masks and promote circular

economy (*short term*)

- Hand washing facilities (equipment, water, soap, and sanitizers) can be availed in places like schools, health facilities, public spaces, reception centers as an emergence measure (*short term*)

With in-put from its different members and partners, UWASNET developed a CSO Position Paper, an advocacy tool that will be submitted to key stakeholders towards increased advocacy for prioritization of WASH in national planning and budgeting. Key of these stakeholders are Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Members of Parliament under the different committees including the Natural Resources Committee of Parliament, the Budget Committee and Members of Parliament under UPF– WASH.

This initiative is part of a long term advocacy calling for the prioritization of the Water and Environment sector in national planning and budgeting.

The webinar was moderated by Ms. Lillian Nabasirye, representing SNV, the Vice-Chair of the UWASNET Sanitation and Hygiene thematic working group.

Lillian is also the Technical Director, USAID funded Uganda Sanitation for Health Activity (USHA) implemented by Tetra Tech, SNV, FSG, SSG & BRAC and working in partnership with Rotary International.

Water For People’s Covid-19 response

Water For People is an NGO working in the water sector of Uganda with headquarters in Denver and country presence in Uganda since 2012.

Water For People has joined the rest of the WASH sector actors in Uganda to curb the spread of Covid-19 in the districts of Kamwenge, Kampala and Luuka.

Our mission is to bring clean water and sanitation solutions to communities for generations to come.

In our approach, we partner with local governments, businesses, and individuals, providing the support they need to bring clean water and sanitation systems to their own communities. Then we ensure they have the resources they need to maintain those systems now and in the future.

Support towards the Kamwenge District Local Government Health Department

Water For People has supported Kamwenge District Local Government with ensuring constant supply of flowing water and electricity at Rukunyu Health Center IV and Rwamwanja Primary School, which are the “go to” places handling any Covid-19 related threat in the district.

Water and Electricity bills worth UGX5,000,000 was paid upfront to ensure the facilities are well equipped with water and lighting.

Provision of handwashing equipment in Kampala and Luuka district

Water For People has invested UGX45,600,000 in the procurement of hand washing facilities of 150litres and 500litres capacities and foot



(L-R) Peter Kaujju, KCCA’s Head of Public and Corporate Affairs, Cate Nimanya, Country Director—Water For People & other officials from KCCA as they received the hand washing equipment from Water For People

peddle-operated. Together

with Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) and Luuka District Local Government, plans to install the hand washing facilities across high transient population points in Kampala and Luuka DLG are under way.

The first phase will include installations in Kampala in May 2020 at public schools, and installations in Luuka District in June and July 2020. Even as the lock down is being eased in phases, there is anticipation of great volumes of people surging back into the city and trading centers win search of economic activity, as such the needs for promoting hand washing with soap is still great.

Water For People is working with Community Activation Teams, Health Assistants, particularly the Weyonje team to ensure hand washing behavioral change and adoption. In Luuka District, Water For People is working with the task

force headed by

the District Health Officer. In Kampala, the first phase of 30 handwashing containers was donated towards the Education department. Peter Kaujju – Head of Public and Corporate Affairs, Juliet Namuddu Nambi-Director Education & Social Services, Daniel Okello - Ag. Director Public Health Services and Environment, Jude Byansi- Manager Waste Management, Dr. Najib Lukooya - Deputy Director for Public Health and Environment and Richard Mutabazi – Supervisor Sanitation were present to receive the equipment.

Water supply in Malere, Kamwenge District

Water For People together with the Mid-Western Umbrella of Water and Sanitation have ensured continuous supply of clean safe piped water to aid handwashing in line with the directive from the Ministry of Water and Environment not to disconnect any customers.

Water For People’s Covid-19 response

Ongoing construction of Kabambiro Water and Supply System in Kamwenge District

In line with the directive by Ministry of Water and Environment for partners and entities to fast track supply of flowing water, Water For People has fast tracked the construction of 1 piped water supply system serving 31 villages in Kabambiro sub-county in Kamwenge, and rehabilitation of 30 boreholes. Investments worth 798,000USD.

Challenges faced

- Delayed implementation of community engagement software activities a head of the hardware water supply interventions given the Presidential Directive banning gatherings of more than 10 people. However, the program will work backwards to ensure communities fulfill their roles and obligations relating to the household hygiene and sanitation and O&M.
- Slow material and personnel mobilization for the construction works; This slowed down greatly the pace of the hardware project implementation since the two are the major constituents for timely implementation and completion of projects.
- Reduced revenue collection for the water scheme operators; this has greatly affected the business/profit margin of the operators, the funds collected is used for O&M and remuneration of the scheme staff, it therefore poses a great threat to the routine functionality of the system

Lessons learnt

⇒ Unless emergencies are mainstreamed in WASH program-



Grace Kanweri— from Water For People handing over proof of payment to the District Health Inspector- Kamwenge district & below, installation of the pipe to supply water . Photo by Water For People

ing, the pursuance of attainment universal access to sustainable WASH services can remain a shifting target. For example, in public institutions where hand-washing was considered to have reached full coverage, has since ceased given the increase in the number of needed hand-washing with soap terminals and critical times due to Covid-19.

⇒ There’s a need for fast adaptation of all sector working strategies including capacity building and resource mobilization ones

to integrate



Below, a beneficiary collects water from the installed piped water system

Covid-19 response and resilience building related mechanisms; this will ensure coordination amongst stakeholders in the area of post Covid-19 programming.

GIZ-CUSP provides face masks to UWASNET Secretariat staff



UWASNET Secretariat staff wearing masks from GIZ-CUSP

Despite the Coronavirus pandemic, the UWASNET Secretariat in Kampala has continued its work by working mobile from home and since the lifting of a few measures also more often at the office.

To keep the staff members safe, the “Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme” (CUSP), which is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and funded by the European Union and the German government, supported the UWASNET Secretariat team with face masks.

Two reusable and washable face masks were received by each Secretariat staff member to support them in their work in a safe way while adhering to the guidelines of the Ministry of Health to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus.

In 2018, UWASNET signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with GIZ under



the Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme (CUSP) aimed at strengthening and improving the capacity and efficiency of civil society in Uganda. The Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme (CUSP) is part of GIZ Uganda’s Strengthening Governance and Civil Society Programme (GCSP), with the specific objective of strengthening and improving the capacity and efficiency of civil society in Uganda.

CUSP is funded by the European Union and the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development.

Under CUSP, GIZ is supporting the UWASNET Secretariat in strengthening its’ organizational development.

JESE supports the districts of Bunyangabu, Kabarole and Agago to respond to Covid-19

Joint Effort to Save the Environment (JESE) with support from Simavi, Welthungerhilfe and the Waterloo Foundation has supported the district Covid-19 Task forces of Bunyangabu, Agago and Kabarole in the following ways;

- ⇒ Provided 100 Hand washing facilities of 135 liters each containing stand and basins. These were mainly supplied to health centers and public places like market to promote handwashing
- ⇒ Procurement of Personal Protective Equipment that included 100 boxes of surgical masks, 2500 pairs of surgical gloves, 3000 liters of liquid soap detergent, 50 liters of hand sanitizers, 250 liters of disinfectants (Jik)
- ⇒ Direct Cash contribution of UGX3,000,000 shared amongst the 3 districts including UGX1,000,000 worth of fuel.
- ⇒ Airing Eight radio talk shows (04 on Wang O radio in Agago, 04 on VOT radio in Kabarole) on the Covid-19 crisis and community management,
- ⇒ Trained 45 community based trainers, coaches and VHT's on Covid-19 response and risk management, 750 posters to the with communication messages on the Covid-19 pandemic were developed and distributed in 06 sub counties,
- ⇒ Supported 22 community sensitization drives (06 in Agago, 12 in Bunyangabu and 04 in Kabarole) on Covid-19

JESE is still committed to continue supporting the districts in conducting community awareness interven-



The RDC Kabarole District, Mr. Asiimwe, Fort Portal Municipality Member of Parliament Hon. Alex Ruhunda, the Mayor Fort Portal Rev. Willy Muhanga and the LCV Kabarole District, Mr. Rwabuhinga Richard receiving some of the items.



A collection of items procured to support the District Covid-Task force.

Photos by JESE

tions as well as supporting improvement in community and institutional hygiene and sanitation uptake as

key elements in the addressing the Covid-19 crisis.