



## UGANDA WATER AND SANITATION NETWORK (UWASNET)



## SUMMARY REPORT ON CSOs' CONTRIBUTION TO THE NATIONAL RESPONSE TO COVID-19 IN UGANDA

Submitted by;

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## **Background**

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the coronavirus (Covid-19) as a pandemic on March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020 following the confirmation of coronavirus cases worldwide and the possible and sustained risk of further global infections. “This is not just a public health crisis; it is a crisis that will touch every sector. So every sector and every individual must be involved in the fight,” Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the Director General - WHO said at the time during the media briefing.

On March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020, Uganda confirmed its first case of Covid-19 in the country. And as of June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020, there were a total of 705 confirmed in Uganda by Ministry of Health. Resolvedly, the Government put in place a number of measures aimed at curbing the further spread of Covid-19 in the country including the institution of a national lock-down, promotion of social distancing and frequent hand washing with soap and water.

A number of stakeholders including Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have and continue contributing to the national response to Covid-19 through different initiatives.

As the national coordination organization for CSOs in the Water and Sanitation sub-sector, UWASNET has been and continues to work collaboratively with its members and partners to mobilize their contribution towards the national response to Covid-19.

This report documents the contribution of UWASNET to the national response to Covid-19 in Uganda from grass-root, district and national level.

## **Introduction**

UWASNET was founded in 2000 as the national umbrella organisation for all non-governmental organisations operating in the Water and Sanitation sub-sector of Uganda. UWASNET works through the Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) to contribute to the National Development Plan of poverty alleviation through ensuring universal access to sustainable safe water and improved standards of sanitation and hygiene through partnership with Government through Ministry of Water and Environment, line Ministries of Health, Education and Sports, Sector Development Partners, Private Sector, Academia, and CSOs in Uganda.

UWASNET has a total number of 197 active WASH CSOs in its database. Out of this number, a total of 139 CSOs are duly registered with UWASNET as member organisations. Out of these, 79 organisations are national CSOs, 33 are international CSOs, 17 are Community Based Organisations, 09 are Faith Based Organisations and 01 is Private Sector. These organisations work in different parts of the country in the thematic areas of water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion, Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), Climate Change mitigation and adaptation, WASH in Emergency, Water for Production, WASH advocacy and lobbying etc.

In Uganda, the Ministry of Health is spearheading the national response to Covid-19 including the coordination of state and non-state actors towards controlling the spread of Covid-19 in Uganda.

## **UWASNET’s Contribution to the National Response to Covid-19 in Uganda**

At sector, level, UWASNET has been working hand in hand with the Ministry of Water and Environment through the National Hand Washing Secretariat to respond to Covid-19.

As part of the national response to Covid-19, UWASNET has mobilized its members to contribute towards the national efforts to curb the further spread of Covid-19 throughout Uganda.

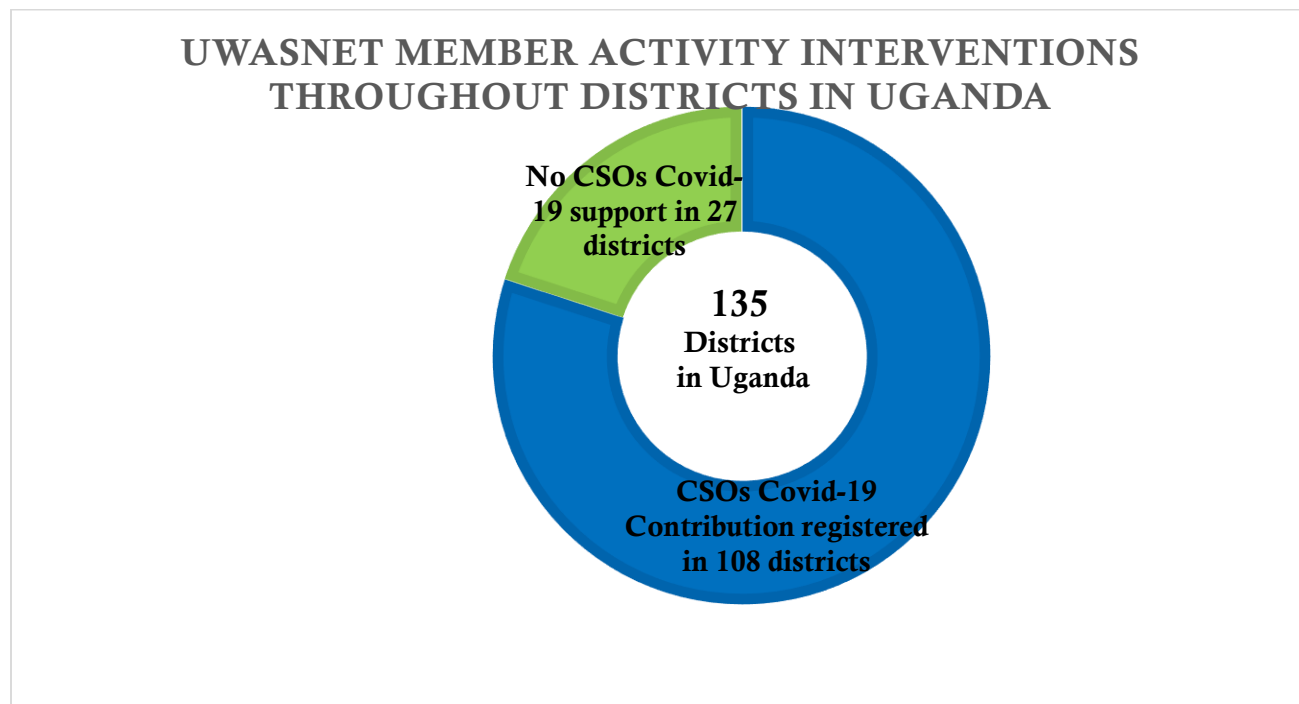
In March 2020, UWASNET developed a monitoring tool to facilitate the documentation of WASH CSOs' contribution to Covid-19 at grass root, district and national level. The monitoring tool was shared with CSOs on email and follow up phone calls to the organisations were made to ensure organisations submit their work.

**The findings are summarised below**

- i. Out of 197 CSOs known to UWASNET, a total of 111 CSOs reported contributions towards Covid-19 response at grass root, district and national level.
- ii. A total of 22 CSOs reported no activity due to effects of the pandemic and limited emergency funding,
- iii. A total of 43 CSOs were contacted and promised to share their contribution. However, at the time of developing this report, this information was still unavailable however, the Secretariat is still following up on their submission.
- iv. A total of 21 CSOs did not respond to the calls to provide data on their contribution to the national response to Covid-19.

**DISTRIBUTION OF ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT DISTRICTS IN UGANDA BY MEMBER CSOs**

- Uganda is made up of a total of 135 districts. Out of the 135 districts, CSOs' contribution/ interventions to Covid-19 was registered in 108 districts
- There were no reports of CSOs' contribution to Covid-19 in 27 districts.
- UWASNET member CSOs have covered and supported 80% of the country during the pandemic.

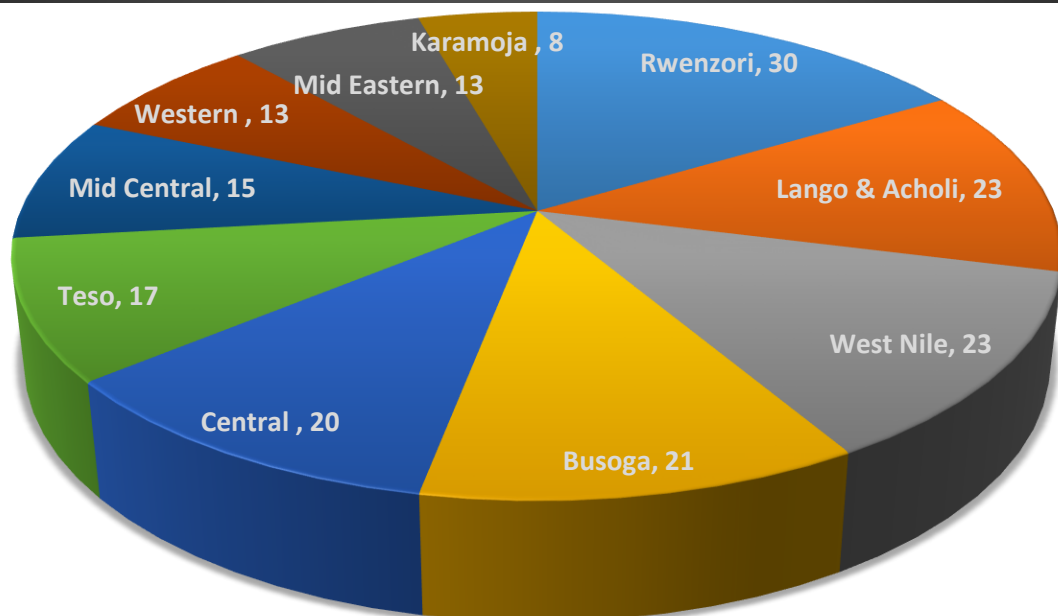


## CSOs SUPPORT PER UWASNET REGION

UWASNET is made up of 10 regions namely; Central, Mid Central, Karamoja, Lango & Acholi, West Nile, Teso, Western, Rwenzori, Busoga and Mid-Eastern. UWASNET member CSOs are distributed throughout these regions.

- Rwenzori region has the highest number of CSOs that reported contributions towards Covid-19 with 30 CSOs reporting out of 61 CSOs operating in the region.
- Karamoja region has the least number of organisations that reported contributions towards Covid-19 with only 08 CSOs reporting out of 35 CSOs operating in the region.

### MEMBER ORGANISATIONS THAT ARE CONTRIBUTING TO COVID-19 PER UWASNET REGION



### MEMBER ORGANISATIONS CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS ESSENTIAL ACTIVITIES DURING THE PANDEMIC

Contributions towards COVID-19 were grouped into five essential activities namely;

Hand washing facilities, Sensitization and Awareness, Providing Personal Protective Equipment, Food Relief and Engagement at National and District Task Force.

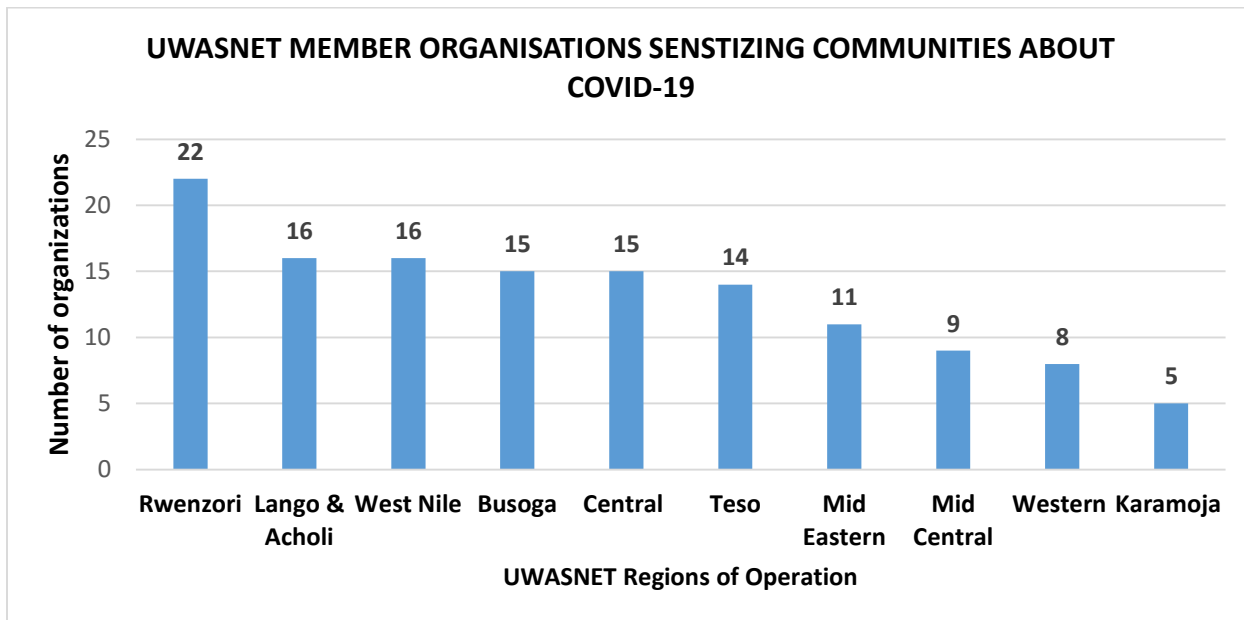
## Hand washing facilities

Member CSOs provided hand washing facilities throughout UWASNET regions of operation with Rwenzori having the highest number of CSOs that reported provision of hand washing facilities (16) and Karamoja having the least number of CSOs that reported provision of Hand washing facilities (3).



### Sensitization and Awareness

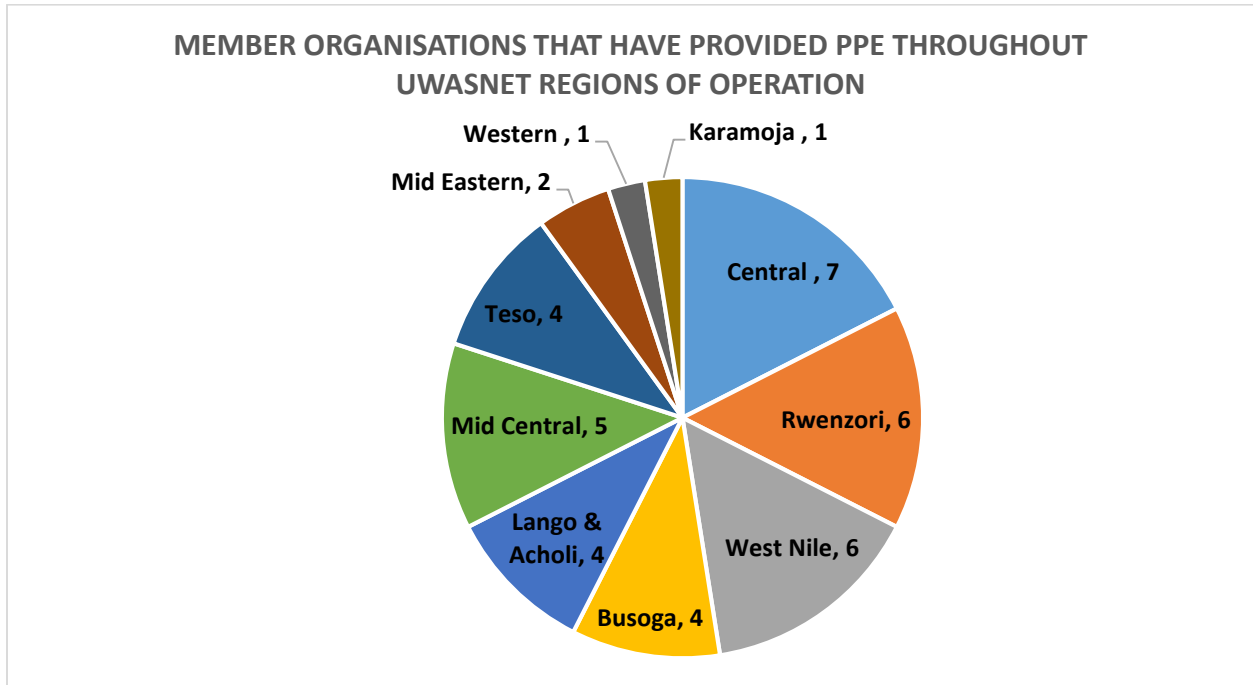
Dissemination of the right information is essential during this period of the pandemic, UWASNET member CSOs supported in awareness and sensitizing communities through radio talk shows, community drives, Megaphones, printed IEC materials from Ministry of Health and WHO which they distributed to communities. Rwenzori has the highest number of CSOs that disseminated information (22) and Karamoja has the least number of organisations that disseminated information.



### Providing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Member CSOs provided PPE throughout UWASNET regions of operation to essential staff on the frontline for example Village Health Teams, District Task Force and medical personnel. Central region has the highest number of CSOs that reported provision of PPE (7) and Karamoja has the least number of CSOs that reported provision of PPE (1).

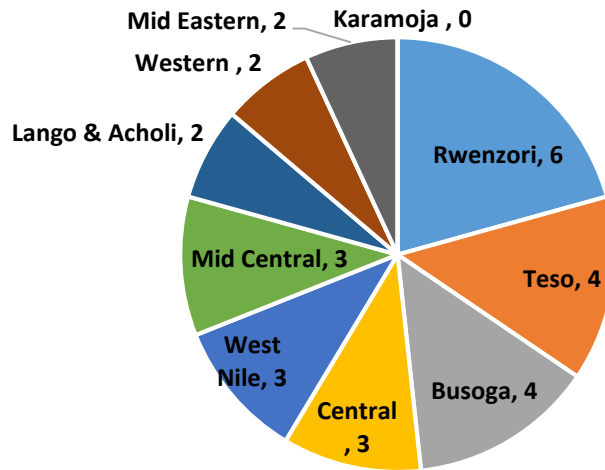
Examples of the PPE provided included; facemasks, gloves, gown, head cover, goggles, face shield etc.



### Food Relief

Due to the local down many communities were left without food, Member CSOs supported communities and households with food items like maize flour and beans. Rwenzori had the highest number of CSOs that provided food relief support (6) and karamoja reported no member CSO that provided food relief support.

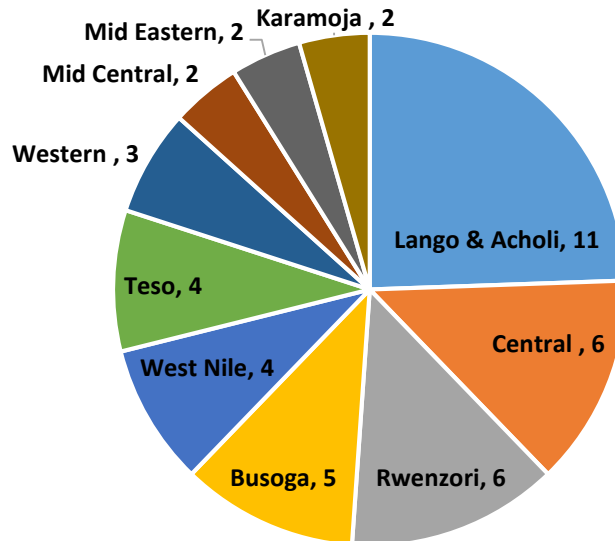
**MEMBER CSOs PROVIDING FOOD RELIEF THROUGHOUT UWASNET REGIONS OF OPERATION**



**Engagement at National and District Task Force**

Member CSOs supported the district and National task force throughout regions of UWASNET operation in terms of providing fuel, cash, sensitisation and awareness, HWFs, Food relief and direct engagement in meetings, Lango& Acholi region reported the highest number of CSOs engaging with the task force (11) and Mid central, Mid Eastern and Karamoja region reported the least number of CSOs directly engaged with the task force (2).

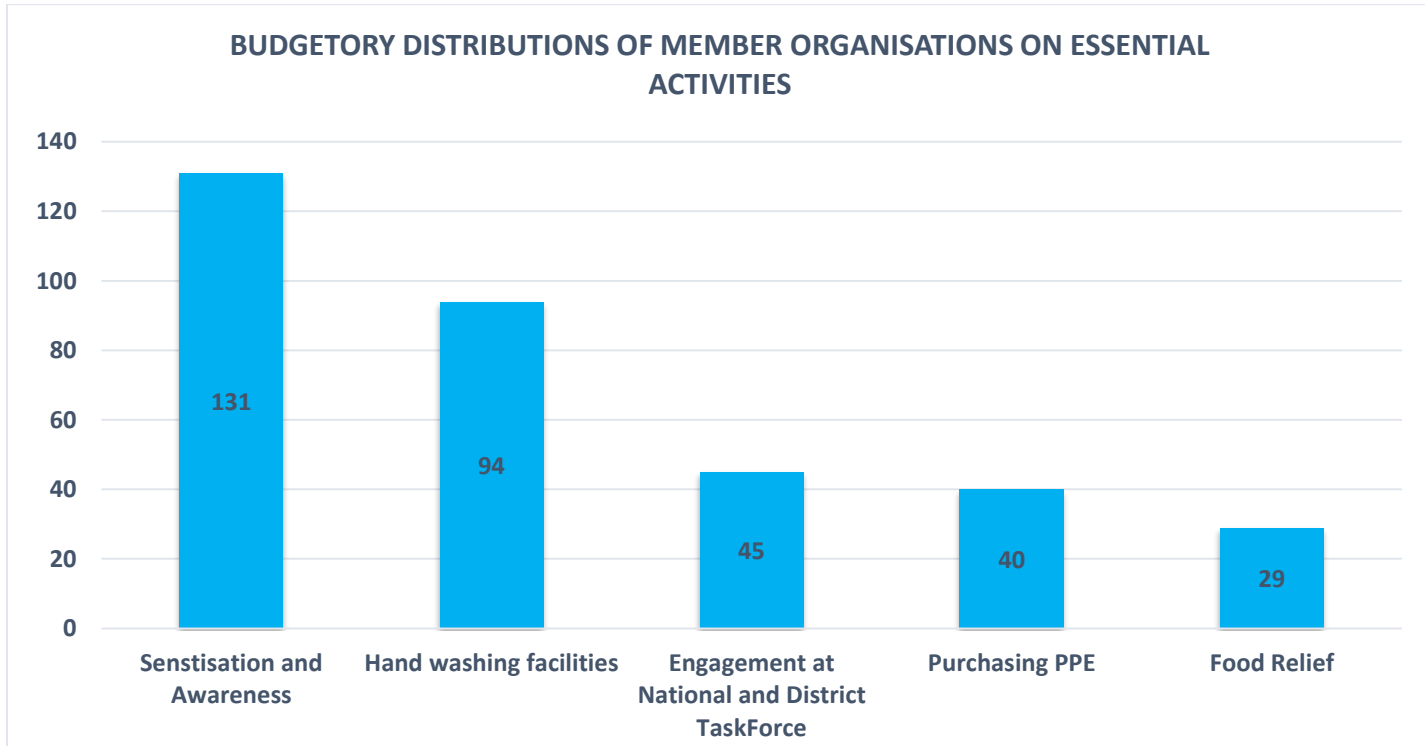
**MEMBER ORGANISATIONS ENGAGED AT NATIONAL & DISTRICT TASK FORCE**





### **BUDGETORY DISTRIBUTIONS OF MEMBER ORGANISATIONS ON ESSENTIAL ACTIVITIES DURING THE PANDEMIC**

The analysis reflects the magnitude of support on essential activities by member CSOs in their budgets, sensitization and awareness had the highest level of support from members and food relief has the least support from members.



### **CHALLENGES FACED BY MEMBER CSOs**

- Limited financial resources to meet the demands for this COVID-19 response and the ongoing lockdown that is hindering us reach to other vulnerable groups in our catchment areas.
- Increased cost of hand washing facilities due to high demand.
- Delays in getting clearance for office vehicles.
- The biggest challenge currently is the big number of people who are in need of supplies or basic items like food compared to the little resources we have at the moment.
- Lack of enough transport options to current outreaches more so in the hard to reach areas due to restricts in transport options.
- Lack of enough protective gears like face masks and others.
- Poor interpretation of the information about covid-19 in rural areas.
- The presidential directives due to the pandemic that does not allow free movements and closer of some businesses affected the procurement process.
- IEC materials are not in some local languages.
- Over whelming numbers of communities/persons to be served.

## **LESSONS LEARNT**

- Learnt to encourage our people to save more
- People are cooperative when sensitized and results are evident
- Response preparedness and it needs to be swift in the society.
- More security to avoid people entering through porous borders.
- Need to have clear structures for sensitizing communities when there is a pandemic
- As we do work we need to empower farmers to manage their projects even in our absence
- We need more water sources in our community.
- There is need for constant sensitization of the communities on Covid because during the interactions it was observed that they are still not as cautious, The media is a powerful ally during this crisis, more focus needs to be placed behavior change towards hand washing with soap at all times
- People need to consider sanitation as a very serious issue.
- Having sufficient participant data facilitates, rapid relief responses during emergencies. To enable dispersion of funds to families using their mobile money accounts.
- Communities members not aware of the outbreak, some members are pointing out that the disease is for the people living in towns only

- Bad to rely on one source of funding (tourism for our case). Communities need to be trained to save so as to overcome such periods.