



## East Africa Practitioners Workshop on Pro Poor Urban Sanitation and Hygiene Kigali, Rwanda, March 29<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> 2011

**Supporting Secondary Urban Centers in the Lake Victoria Region to Contribute to Millennium Development Goals' Achievement: The Experience of Using Systematic Action Research For Capacity Development in Sanitation in Kyotera Town council**



### 1.0 Country, Province/Region, District, Town / peri urban area

Country: Uganda  
 Province/Region: Central Region  
 District: Rakai  
 Town/Peri-urban Areas: Kyotera Town Council

### 2.0 Initiator of the 'Best Practise'

SNV-Netherlands Development Organisation in a partnership consortium that includes UNESCO-IHE (Institute for Water Education), Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and Gender and Water Alliance (GWA) with NETWAS International as the Local/Regional Capacity Builder are the partners



involved in the development and implementation of the Lake Victoria Water and sanitation LVWATSAN Training and Capacity Building Programme.

### 3.0 Background of the initiative:

Lake Victoria is the second largest fresh water lake in the world and the largest lake in Africa shared between Kenya (6%), Tanzania (51%) and Uganda (43%). The Lake catchment area provides livelihood to a combined population from the 3 countries of over 30 million people. Approximately 50% of this population lives below the poverty line. The populations of the towns in the Lake Victoria Basin are between 10,000 and 150,000 people. Their average annual income ranges between US\$ 90 and 270. The towns function as regional centers with a large daytime population. Yet inhabitants in the growing towns around this lake are confronted daily by low access to safe water and good sanitation facilities.

The causes of this situation are many. Among them are the unplanned growth of urban centres around the Lake, lack of basic infrastructure; daily population increases especially on market days placing a strain on existing basic service provision (public toilets); pressure on limited freshwater resources due to growing demand; pollution of water resources due to growing urban areas; agriculture and industrial activities; and investment in water, sanitation and solid waste management which has lagged behind the demand. In addition, infrastructure and basic services in these towns are characterized by low operating efficiency and inadequate maintenance. These are related to poor financial management whereby service providers are confronted with financial problems due to low tariffs, poor consumer records, and inefficient billing and collection practices; poor human resource management; and poor technical management seen in misuse of the catchment area, pollution of water resources, increasing cost of water treatment.

The absence of a clear and strong public policy on pro-poor urban sanitation has also been noted. Community support and participation is weak and representatives of stakeholders, especially “special needs groups” in town organizations are not strong. The lack of communication and collaboration between stakeholders especially the political and technical leaders, service providers and community stakeholders makes access to sanitation services in these towns more difficult.

Socio-economic surveys carried out in 2007 within 11<sup>1</sup> towns around the Lake established a baseline<sup>2</sup>:

- Total population – 525,170

<sup>1</sup> The Towns include: 1. Bukoba, 2. Bunda, 3. Muleba and 4. Mutukula (Tanzania); 5. Bondo, 6. Homa Bay and 7. Kisii (Kenya); 8. Kyotera, 9. Nyendo-Ssenyange, 10. Bugembe and 11. Mutukula (Uganda)

<sup>2</sup> Lake Victoria Water and Sanitation Initiative: Overview of the Pro-poor Approaches for Improved Access to Affordable Water and Sanitation Initiative of UN-HABITAT, 2010, page 8



- 399,129 persons (76% of the population) lacked access to sustainable supplies of safe drinking water
- 380,150 persons (72%) lacked access to improved sanitation
- Less than 5% of the garbage was being collected by the local authorities
- Limited institutional and human resources to manage water and sanitation programs. Service providers are covering less than 60% of their costs.
- Limited engagement of the communities in water and sanitation programs

These problems affect living conditions, environment and the fragile ecosystem of the lake. Women and girls are more affected by poor and inadequate access to sanitation services because of lack of privacy, poor access to facilities and traditional responsibilities for taking care of household's sanitation.

One of the main challenges is to ensure improved effectiveness and efficiency of service



delivery and coverage through increased capacities for financial, technical and managerial sustainability of sanitation facilities and resources.

The Governments of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda in association with UN-HABITAT are implementing the Lake Victoria Water and Sanitation (LVWATSAN) Program, an initiative geared towards addressing the water and sanitation needs of poor people, living within 11 towns around the Lake Victoria region. This initiative has been designed to achieve Millennium Development Goal (MDG) targets for water and sanitation in small growth centers and has a clear pro-poor focus, intended to generate desirable outcomes that would have a lasting effect on the poor.

The objectives of this initiative are to support pro-poor water and sanitation investments in the secondary urban centers in the Lake Victoria Region and to build institutional and human resource capacities at local and regional levels for the sustainability of improved water and sanitation services.

The capacity development component of the Lake Victoria Water and Sanitation Initiative serves to secure sustainable and equitable delivery of services in 10 towns. The capacity development



activities have been formulated in response to specific circumstances, actors and issues in each town. Capacity development focuses on the thematic areas of drinking water supply, sanitation and environment; pro-poor governance; gender and vulnerable groups; and local economic development.

The expanded and improved pro-poor delivery of water and sanitation services to the population in ten secondary urban centers in the Lake Victoria Region is supported through cooperation between UN-HABITAT and a capacity building consortium. Members consist of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education, the Gender and Water Alliance (GWA), SNV Netherlands Development Organisation and Netwas international.

#### **Case example: Kyotera**

The town of Kyotera, which is the oldest and biggest commercial centre in Rakai District registered rapid economic growth and advance in the late 1960s, due to its central and strategic location in the fertile agricultural region of the Lake Victoria Basin. However the 1979 liberation war created a period of severe economic retardation and depression in the Kyotera urban economy which destroyed both its socio-economic and physical infrastructure. This was further compounded by the deleterious HIV/AIDS pandemic.

With a population of 12,751 and 2546 households, Kyotera has an exceptionally rapid growth rate of 6.8% according to the 2002 census. The population density is 3187 persons/km<sup>2</sup>. The sewerage and sanitation system before the Lake Victoria water and sanitation intervention was in a deplorable state. It had no off-site sanitation system. Domestic sanitation was managed at household level with little or no institutional support for design and adherence to construction standards as provided by the Public Health Act of 1964. It lacked water for public toilets and emptying services are absent.

#### **4.0 Description of the initiative**

Building institutional and human resource capacities at local and regional levels for the sustainability of improved water and sanitation services in the secondary urban centers around Lake Victoria is critical.

The capacity building actors began by defining issues that need to be addressed, and the capability of town actors to address these issues. This approach works with the whole system to unlock complex problems. The aim of the inquiry process is to build pictures of issues, actors (people and organizations) and the inter-relationships between them. It helps to develop insight into problems, why they emerge, how they are maintained, and how they become entrenched. This approach is based on a belief that not only is it right for local people to determine solutions to their own problems, but that unless they understand and own the process, any gains from capacity building are likely to be very short lived.

#### **Key objectives:**



- Supporting urban centres in the Lake Victoria Region to achieve the water and sanitation related Millennium Development Goals.
- Contributing to equitable and sustainable economic, social and environmental development of the Lake Victoria Region, to the benefit of the inhabitants of the region.

#### Infrastructure investments made

- Construction of Kyotera Town Water Supply Scheme (3 pumping stations, sump where disinfections take place, transmission line, reservoir (220cubic meters)
- Construction of 800 m of distribution main and 5 water kiosks
- 200 service connections plus Installation of water meters and valves in the network
- Construction of 5 public latrines in institutions and public spaces plus 1 health center
- Establishment of Micro Credit Facilities for 300 household latrines
- Supply of solid waste tractors with trailers, containers bins, construction of 4 waste transfer stations
- Supply of computers, lab equipment and tools
- Construction of a rainwater tank, sanitation blocks for boys and girls 7 schools
- Constructions of an abattoir



#### Status and Scaling-up:

Plans are in preparation to scale-up this initiative by extending the project to another 15 secondary towns.

These towns are often neglected as development assistance mostly focuses on either the main urban centres or rural areas. In addition, the towns face challenges in service delivery due to their both urban and rural features. Their experience with rapid urbanization is usually ad-hoc and unplanned.

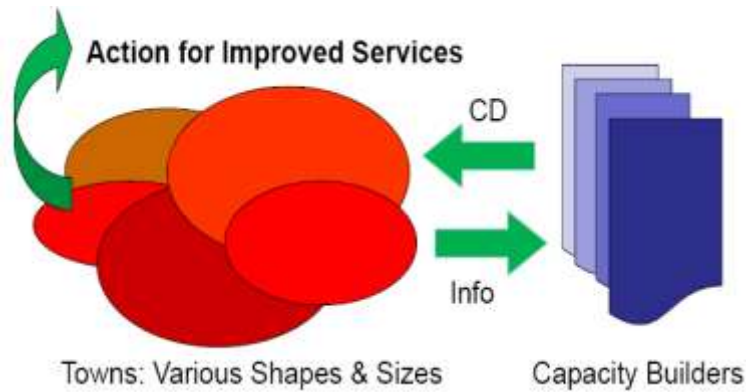
#### Challenges:

There are quite a number of challenges to overcome, including:

- Infrastructure is run-down with no major investment in the past decades
- Absence of a sewerage network
- Sanitation and solid waste are usually ignored

#### Objectives of Capacity Development

Local stakeholders' capacities were developed further with a view to securing sustainable and equitable delivery of services. These capacity development interventions responded to specific on-the-ground issues in Kyotera and within its Town Council.



### Approach to Capacity Development:

Initial Inquiries in Kyotera Town Council were made to identify issues, actors, and their mutual relations. Subsequently capacity development programmes were prepared to address issues related to sanitation and hygiene using cases and evidence of the training needs assessment was followed by the designing of various capacity development interventions and a training of trainers for Regional and /Local Capacity builder(R/LCB).

The capacity development implementation developed 27 courses in 5 thematic areas. The areas included water, sanitation and environment; pro-poor governance; gender and vulnerable groups; and local economic development. The main contents in the course focused on the vulnerable and poor women and men; towns institutions and organisations, service coverage and quality, public engagement and access, and public investment and processes.

The main approach used capacity development has been training targeting 2,990 people in the towns. The target groups include members of the multi-stakeholder forum, local and district local governments, water and sanitation providers, local entrepreneurs, non-governmental organisations, community based organisations, male and female citizens, users, and vulnerable groups. This was supplemented by ongoing inquiry and evidence gathering as well as coaching programmes, exposure visits, peer-to-peer support and mentoring. In addition capacity development emphasized knowledge development and sharing.



**Information and Data Collection:**

In order to collect information and data, reports and on-site observations were made. In addition, multi-day and multi-stakeholder interviews were held, including cross referencing by a multi-disciplinary team of 5+ experts per town (governance, economic development, gender and vulnerable groups, water, sanitation, environment).

**Major issues for Capacity Development:**

- Focus of efforts has mainly been on the vulnerable and poor women and men
- (Supra) Town institutions and organisations
- Service coverage and quality
- Public engagement & access
- Infrastructure investment and processes

**Capacity development Interventions in Saniation:**

Some of the key areas for capacity development for which Kyotera Town Council target groups have benefited include:

**Water, Sanitation and Environment**

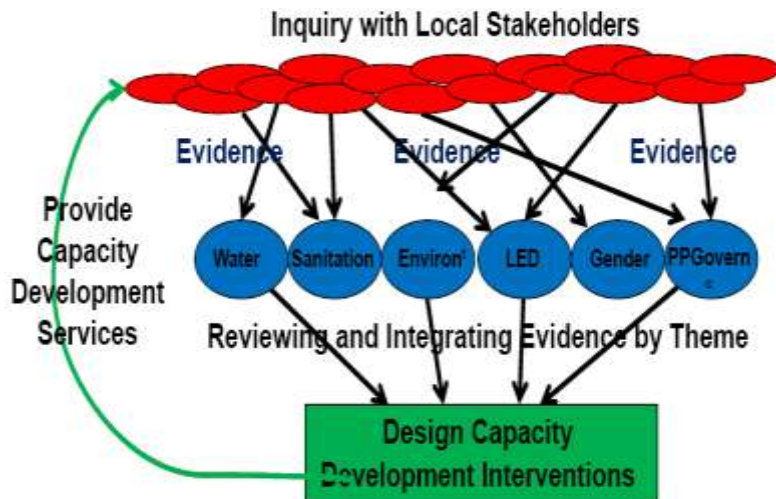
Governance and Management of WatSan Services ; Financial and Commercial Management of WatSan; Solid Waste Management and Treatment; Design and Operation of Decentralised Sanitation Systems; Environment, Public Health and Hygiene; and Protection of the Urban Environment.

**Pro-poor governance**

Revenue Mobilization for Services Delivery; Partnerships for Improved Services and Better Governance; Partnerships for Improved Services and Better Governance; Municipal Land Issues, Planning Systems and Legislation.

**Gender and Vulnerable groups**

Inclusive Participatory Water and Sanitation Management; Community Capacity Building for Responsible Action; and Equitable Demand Management for WaSH





## Local Economic Development

Opportunities in Solid Waste Management; Opportunities in Water and Sanitation; Legislative framework; Procurement process; Contract Management WATSAN; Business skills Development; Appraisal Skills; Small business development; Savings, borrowing and investment and creation of enabling environment for business growth



## Key steps to Systemic Research and Capacity Building

The process of capacity development in these towns involved seven steps: (a) The first step was a systemic action inquiry to get a deep understanding of what, how and why it is happening, where, and with whom regarding key sanitation issues facing the populations of the towns and their dynamics. This methodology rooted in

systemic thinking was used to identify capacity gaps and works with the whole system to unlock complex problems and aimed at building pictures of issues, actors (people and organisations) and the inter-relationships between them. It helps develop insights into problems, why they emerge, how they are maintained and become entrenched. This approach is based on a belief that not only is it right for local people to determine solutions to their own problems, but that unless they understand and own the process, any gains from capacity building are likely to be very short lived.

- (b) Detailed note-taking and photographing was undertaken in order to capture issues as far as possible in the words of those that say them.
- (c) Issues identified by stakeholders were documented to aid the transition from notes focused around stakeholders to maps focused on issues
- (d) Issue maps were made to highlight cause-effect relationships and patterns. In construction of maps, information was sought to help explain how and why these patterns and relationships exist. Whilst it is crucial to map what people say, it does not stop the inquirer from adding reflections as inquiry questions, but these should not be confused with "data" from the field.
- (e) Capacity building needs were identified and plans were developed. Two types of capacity building processes identified. The first addressed the relatively straightforward responses of stakeholder to needs such as provision of information, awareness or skills development. The second identified capacity development processes which support stakeholders to develop solutions to problems. A third element of capacity building was identified which requires one to understand how the whole system relates to the modification of existing infrastructure (where opportunities arise) and the development of plans for new infrastructure investment. For





stakeholders to meaningfully engage with the capacity development program, and for it to be sustainable, there has to be some ownership of both the analysis of the issues and interventions that follow. Feedback meetings were held with each of the 11 multi-stakeholder forums (MSF) at the end of the inquiry per town as a validation and ownership for the program. Stakeholders saw this process as a significant capacity building process in itself.

- (f) The actual capacity building by the consortium partners focused on supporting NETWAS International that is constituted by people with different skills in 5 thematic areas to concentrate on development of knowledge and skills needed for planning, implementation, sustaining and maximizing the benefits of investments undertaken. The capacity development services were delivered by the R/LCB with active support by the partners.
- (g) Development of the capacity development modules
- (h) Capacity building by NETWAS International
- (i) Further inquiry in Kyotera to assess progress and monitor performance of the NETWAS International.

## 5.0 Major drivers of the process and success

The Town Clerk of Kyotera and the Multi-stakeholder forum have been very instrumental in the implementation of this project.

The investments done by UN-HABITAT have also been critical in the success of the capacity development activities.

The need for improved sanitation services greatly propelled this project in Kyotera Town Council.

Finally, the unique approach used by the partners in implementing this project was critical for the success of this project. It encouraged and sustained enthusiasm among all stakeholders involved.

## 6.0 Successes

With the infrastructure investments made there is a recognized improvement in services access and management. Functionality of sanitation facilities in the Kyotera town is now at a record high of 94%. As a result of the skills acquired from the training, more youth and vulnerable people such as women and the disabled are engaged in management of the public toilets and solid waste management through the self-help groups that they constituted. This is benefiting the program in two ways: firstly, by generating employment and consequently improving income; and secondly, by ensuring that the town dwellers own the infrastructure and value its benefits.

The town council coffers are also benefiting from the capacity development process. This is seen from change in attitude towards revenue generation from the sanitation infrastructure that was in the past despised.

An enabling environment for firms owned by youth and women plus the vulnerable groups is gradually being established. Compared to 2009/10 financial year when only 5 firms owned by women, youth and vulnerable groups were contracted by the town council to provide services on sanitation, in 2010/11, 12 companies have been hired. This is a result of these groups complying with requisite standards plus the Town opening up more opportunities to the firms.



As a result of this process, there has been improved sanitation coverage of over 47%. Kyotera is fast turning into a model town in Rakai District regarding cleanliness of the streets.

## 7.0 Lessons learned

Although SNV provides overall management guidance, each of the partners remained responsible for the development and delivery of the training and capacity building materials and programmes in their thematic areas and for the financial arrangements with UN-HABITAT as described in the individual cooperation agreements. SNV focused on local economic development; UNESCO-IHE – water, sanitation and environment; FCM – pro-poor governance; and GWA – gender and vulnerable groups. NETWAS dealt with the actual delivery of the capacities to the target groups

- Single organizations although effective in achieving change rarely achieve the change in areas as large as a town. The only way to achieve this is to work with and through more actors.
- Raising awareness and stimulating dialogue on pertinent issues affecting pro-poor sanitation development and effect on functionality and sustainability is a continuous process that requires commitment and patience.
- Making use of local knowledge, experiences and resources that have already been tested and adapted involves building on local opportunities and practices and working through local service providers to ensure continuity and sustainability.
- The collaboration between the partners worked very well, albeit that the methods for conducting fieldwork differ substantially between the social and natural sciences. The adopted approach of systemic action research provided a unifying framework.
- The shared objectives and approach enabled the Consortium to develop an integral program of town-wide Capacity Development interventions.
- The systemic action research produced high quality information on actual water and sanitation services, the stakeholders, their relationships, and the issues.
- Systemic action research enabled ownership of the Capacity Development process by stakeholders by inviting them to share and contribute their knowledge, experience, opinions and ideas to the process.
- Findings from the further inquiry confirms the need for strong and timely links between infrastructure investments and capacity development.
- Getting to agree on dates for field exercises was not easy. This was due to the number of partners each with different programmes. However compromises were made resulting in work being undertaken over weekends, an issue in which UNHABITAT expressed its concern.
- There was a high risk of side tracking the capacity building agenda due to the technical focus by some key stake holders. However the consensus by all the partners on the concept of capacity building helped to keep the right focus.

## 8.0 More information:

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### 9.0 Further reading

Burns, D. (2007) **Systemic Action Research: A strategy for whole system change**. Bristol: Policy Press  
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