

## UGANDA OVERVIEW: WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

### Summary

Uganda has a vision of achieving access to safe water supply of 79% (rural) and 95% (urban) by 2020 and access to basic sanitation services of 80% by 2020 (Second National Development Plan). To achieve these targets, Uganda will require US\$206.8 million for water supply and \$32.2 million for sanitation and hygiene annually, with significantly higher investments in the short term. Currently, the financing gap is estimated as \$80 million for water supply and \$26 million for sanitation and hygiene per year. The ambition is highest for rural sanitation where coverage basic level services are at 79% and will require significant household participation to eliminate open defecation while progressing to universal access to basic sanitation services. In addition, access to water and sanitation services is significantly lower in poorer communities and among vulnerable groups.

#### *Five major actions to ensure an aggressive approach to progress include:*

- Monitor Local Governments' signed commitments towards implementation of the domesticated international, regional and national commitments on sanitation {Sanitation and Water for All Partnership's High Level meeting, AfricaSan, Water and Sanitation for Africa (WSA) and others like World Toilet Day and Sanitation Week}, which are aimed at accelerating implementation towards attainment of the SDGs.
- Re-prioritisation of sector plans and budgets to re-focus on preventive interventions especially community mobilization and empowerment through the creation of the directorate of Public Health.
- Scale-up strategies and participatory approaches, such as community led total sanitation and Follow Up Mandona (FUM), to eliminate open defecation and increase access to improved sanitation. Climbing the sanitation ladder.
- Increase regulatory oversight in urban water supply (District Water and Sanitation Development Facility Programme) and improve quality in order to achieve the new standards for safely managed services and enable utilities to be attractive for private operators' engagement.
- Investing in the construction of decentralized fecal sludge management plants for improved service delivery.
- Continue lobbying for increased sector financing from government, donors, civil society organisations, and private sector partnerships for increased service delivery and sustainability.
- Continue advocacy to all political leaders at all levels of government for prioritization of WASH and increased allocation of resources. Also initiate a "Sustainable Sanitation Drive" commitments signed with all implementing districts.

### 1. Overview

The water, sanitation and hygiene sector in Uganda is guided by the Vision 2040 and the National Development Plan II (2015- 2020). The country prioritizes the elimination of open defecation and achieving universal access to safe water and sanitation services by 2030.

In 2015, Uganda achieved coverage of 65% for water and 77% for sanitation. This was insufficient to achieve the respective MDG targets for water and sanitation. The more ambitious WASH targets and standards under the SDGs significantly raises the bar for what is required. Uganda will aim to achieve universal access to safe water supply and universal access to sanitation by the year 2030. The main challenges are:

- Inadequate funding for sanitation, hygiene and water for both rural and urban areas.
- Inadequate human resources and capacity gaps to manage and implement sanitation and hygiene and water services. Staffing levels for Environmental Health Workers currently at 52% and District Water Officers at 60% in the whole country.
- Appropriate and expensive technology options which cannot be affordable and suitable for the majority of the population who live in the rural and informal urban settlements. This cannot help the country achieve the SDG number 6 of universal access to water and sanitation with such disparities.
- Data quality and validation at all levels. This hampers proper planning for sanitation and hygiene interventions. Discrepancies in standardizing measurable indicators for in country specific and JMP programme of UNICEF and WHO.
- Difficulty in tracking sanitation and hygiene financing due to its being scattered in different line Ministries and country programmes.
- Programmes not yet fully inclusive of all the populations (universal access) to cover everyone so that no one is left behind as per the SDGs guidelines.
- Sustainability of results for both facilities and behaviours.

The critical bottlenecks to overcome include: a heavy reliance on public financing and absorption challenges; human resource constraints and limited funding due to competing priorities. If these are not resolved, progress will remain slow and the SDGs will remain a dream.

Fig. 1 Sixty seven per cent of the population in Uganda has access to safely managed water supply

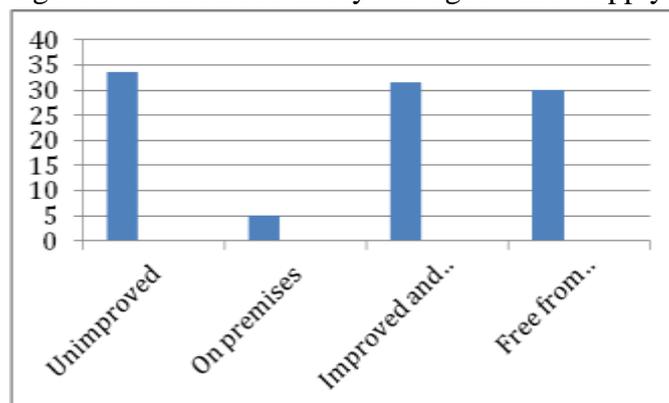
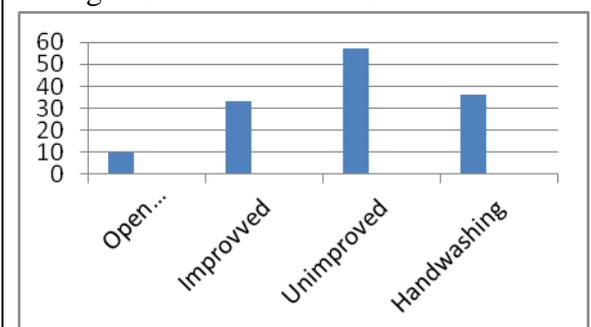


Fig. 2: Thirty-three per cent of the population in Uganda has access to safely managed sanitation services



## 2. Review of the sector – State of the Sector Building Blocks and Collaborative Behaviours

The WASH sector in Uganda has greatly improved on the planning, monitoring and review building block. A National Development Plan was developed and aligned with the SDGs. There are some gaps which need to be addressed in sector financing and capacity development.

### **Building Blocks: -**

- i. **Policy and strategy:** Sector policies are in place and are aligned to Vision 2040 and the NDP II. The strategies to operationalize these policies at all levels of government are also in place and they include; The Improved Sanitation and Hygiene (ISH) strategy, Water Sector Strategic Investment Plan, Uganda Sanitation and Hygiene Investment Plan.
- ii. **Institutional arrangements:** Government implements WASH programs through the existing structures in line with the Long Term Institutional Arrangement (LTIA). Separation and clarification of roles is clear for all subsectors including governance, regulation, ownership, and operations. Institutional coordination mechanisms allow inclusiveness. Local governments have developed ordinances and bye laws to effectively enforce hygiene, sanitation and water standards.
- iii. **Sector financing:** In Uganda, the Health Sector has been implementing a Global Sanitation Fund Project for the last five years in 30 districts expanding to 8 more districts starting next financial year. This has been under the oversight of Environmental Health Division of the Ministry of Health. This has increased sanitation funding to the tune of \$9 million by donor for the last five years. The sanitation sub-sector has also developed a five-year Sanitation and Hygiene Investment Plan for funding (2018-2023). The achievements will contribute to universal access to sanitation by 2030 in line with the SDGs. The Ministry of Water and Environment has also started the process of reviewing the Water Sector Investment Plan for the period 2015-2030.
  - The Water Sector, the Head of State has directed for provision of a water source per village in promotion of universal and equitable access to safe water supplies which is in line with SDG number six.
  - A study of fecal sludge management was conducted and the country as divided into 50 fecal sludge management clusters. In addition to the fecal sludge management plants in large towns under the National Water and Sewerage Corporation, an additional five fecal sludge management plants have been constructed in Buwama, Kayunga, Nakasongola, Kiboga and Kitgum.
  - Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have mobilized and engaged the Private Sector and Financial institutions. So far 3 banks (Housing Finance Bank, Post Bank Uganda and Orient Bank) have started giving sanitation loans.
  - Despite of all such efforts the sector financing has remained inadequate to address the ever-increasing demands of the sector.
- iv. **Planning, Monitoring and review:** A monitoring framework supported by an information system which integrates data of the WASH is in place. Annual performance of the WASH sector is also reviewed at the annual joint sector reviews for the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Water and Environment, Ministry of Education. Midterm Joint Technical Reviews also take place. Efforts are being made to include WASH at health facilities.
- v. **Capacity development:** There is inadequate funding for the Environmental Health at all levels of

government. Despite the government's efforts to recruit Environmental Health Workers, the staffing level is at only 52%. The sector still continues to face the challenge of inadequate transport for the field workers. The Staffing levels in the District Water Offices is currently at 67% with a high rate of attrition.

### **Collaborative Behaviours**

In terms of the SWA **collaborative behaviours**, all sector processes (planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation) are government - led supported by development partners, Civil Society Organisations and Public Private Partnership. These work together to improve the ways of working in the water, sanitation and hygiene sector. All the stakeholders align their programmes and funding to the achievement of the government-led processes.

While the government performance measurement framework is robust, greater use of the findings captured by information systems and reports is needed to drive performance improvements.

### **2. Strategies to close the financing gap and improve efficiency**

As earlier on indicated in the summary, the strategies to close the financing gap and improve efficiency include the following:

- i. Development of National and District WASH Investment Plans
- ii. Lobbying for increased donor funding through Grants and Loans
- iii. Continued lobbying government for increased funding to the WASH sector
- iv. Promotion of Private Public Partnership
- v. Working closely with civil society organisations
- vi. Marketing to increase investment by households

Government has made a commitment of \$2 million as government counterpart funding for the Uganda Global Sanitation Fund Project / Uganda Sanitation Fund (USF) for FY 2017/18 – 2019/2020.

A sanitation and hygiene Investment plan has been developed while the Improved Sanitation and Hygiene (ISH) strategy is being reviewed.

There is strong engagement with civil society organisations. For example, the NGO Water for People, in complementing governments efforts towards the development of the supply chain. So far 3 banks have started giving sanitation loans. Promotion of community initiatives such as Village Savings and Loan Associations-VSLA) being implemented and promoted in all districts.



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