

Enhanced, sustainable and equitable provision of water and sanitation services for the urban population

Context

Despite abundant natural water resources, many urban residents in Uganda do not have adequate access to safe water and sanitation services, and the poor incur the highest costs. This is primarily due to limited financing for the sector, as well as management and governance problems in urban water supply and sanitation. Population growth and rising rural-urban migration have exerted additional undue pressure on inadequate urban facilities, leading to ill health from sanitation-related diseases and making it difficult for communities, institutions and individuals to realize their full economic potential.

Unless the above challenges are addressed through appropriate sector reforms to improve access to safe drinking water and sanitation services, living conditions - particularly for the urban poor - will worsen. Currently only 67% (two out of three people) of the urban population has access to a safe water supply and only 8% (one out of 12) are connected to a centralized sewerage system.

Background

In 2002, RUWAS was established to support the urban water and sanitation reforms as a joint project of the Ministry of Water and Environment and led by German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), commissioned by GTZ.



Yard taps for the urban poor: Access to safe water and sanitation services means a healthier and better life

The reform programme was initially organised in two phases, spanning six years from 2002 to 2008. However, in May 2007 a third 3-year phase is being planned to consolidate the implementation of the reform programme and shift focus to address the challenges of sector investment planning and sanitation and hygiene improvement.

Objectives

Based on the Sector Reform Study (2000), the main programme objectives are:

- To create good water governance
- To strengthen the sector's institutional and regulatory framework
- To improve sector performance in terms of operating and investment efficiency
- To improve management efficiency and sector financing through private sector participation
- To improve services, especially for the poor and vulnerable.

Reform of the Urban Water Sector (RUWAS)



NWSC's new Gaba III water treatment plant

Approaches

Ugandan partner institutions responsible for implementing reforms in the urban water sector include:

- Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE)
- National Water and Sewerage Corporation (NWSC)
- Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (Privatisation and Utility Sector Reform Project [PUSRP])
- Ministry of Local Government through Urban Councils
- Association of Private Water Operators of Uganda (APWO).

RUWAS's role is to provide **technical assistance** to the above institutions, mainly through long-term and short-term advisors, in-service training and subsidization, and provision of technical equipment.

The characteristic features of our approach to reforms in urban water and sanitation include:

- Broad stakeholder participation
- Sector-wide approach to planning
- Pro-poor orientation
- Fostering of private sector participation

Networks

RUWAS cooperates closely with partners at national, regional and international levels:

National: Water and Sanitation Sector Working Group; Uganda Water Sector Development Partners Working Group; GTZ Uganda Projects; German Development Cooperation (CIM, DED, InWEnt, KFW)

Regional: various GTZ water Projects in East Africa

International: GTZ Head Office, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

Activities and Services

RUWAS activities and services are focused around four main components:

1. Advising on policy and institutional reform:

- Advising the Ministry of Water and Environment on the policy and institutional developments necessary to achieve urban water and sanitation sector reform objectives
- Formulating and implementing a regulatory framework for the urban water sector.

2. Supporting internal reforms in NWSC:

- RUWAS support to NWSC has been formalized into a Memorandum of Understanding covering: Separation and strengthening of NWSC's core functions of asset-holding, investment and operations
- Development of information systems to improve operational and financial management
 - Optimisation of NWSC's Internally Delegated Area Management Contracts

3. Supporting development of private water operators in small town service delivery:

- Support to water authorities and operators in small towns to improve services and operating efficiencies. In addition to direct project support, this is partly facilitated through the Joint Partnership Fund, which receives a financial contribution of € 500,000 under Phase 2.

4. Developing a support strategy for sanitation and hygiene:

- Supporting the development of innovative solutions to improve urban sanitation services and hygiene behaviour, especially involving the private sector and users.



Reform of the Urban Water Sector (RUWAS)

Impacts

In close cooperation with KFW, which makes substantial investments, and DED, which offers field support, as well as other partners in urban water and sanitation, the implementation of the reform process will lead to:

Healthier population

- The sector reform target is to increase water service coverage to 73% in NWSC towns by 2008, and in the longer term, to achieve 100% access in all urban areas. This will help reduce the high incidence of diseases caused by unsafe water and poor sanitation and hygiene, especially among the urban poor and marginalized population.

Efficient institutions

- By increasing operational and investment efficiencies in the urban water sector, improving sector governance and attracting private sector investment, the reforms will contribute to development of sound sector institutions.

More sustainable development

- Urban water and sanitation sector reforms will contribute to achievement of the broad national goals of poverty reduction, economic development and improved living conditions for all Ugandans.



Achievements

- Access to safe water supply in both large and small towns has improved to 51% (Sector Performance Report 2006), due to improved management efficiencies and investments in infrastructure.
- Roadmaps for the separation of NWSC's asset-holding, investment and operational functions and strengthening the sector's regulatory framework have been agreed and implementation is on-going
- Awareness has grown on the need to focus on sanitation and hygiene improvement in towns.
- GTZ-RUWAS participates actively in the Sector-Wide Approach to Planning

Challenges

There are three major challenges facing the urban water and sanitation reform programme:

Financing: Sector financing has to increase to keep up with urban population growth, if the reform targets and those of the Poverty Eradication Action Plan and Millennium Development Goals in 2015 are to be met.

Performance measurement data: The framework by which the water and sanitation sector defines, establishes, validates and harmonises performance information needs to be revised, as it impacts on the planning of reform objectives and assessment of achievements

Sanitation: New focus is needed on sanitation and hygiene improvement in urban areas, with increased budget and private sector investment, to complement the successes in water supply reforms.



German Ambassador Alexander Muhlen (2nd right) exchanges a Memorandum of Understanding with the former Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Water and Environment, Eng. B. Kabanda



Basic Data

Programme name	Reform of the Urban Water Sector Programme
Sector/ Sub-sector	Urban Water and Sanitation
Planned Project duration	6 years Phase I: June 2002 – May 2005 Phase II: June 2005 – May 2008 <i>Phase III: June 2008 – May 2011 (In planning)</i>
Financing	2002 – 2008: Euro 5,856,000 Phase I: Euro 2,356,000 Phase II: Euro 3,500,000 <i>Phase III: Euro 3,300,000 (In planning)</i>
Counterpart organisation	Ministry of Water and Environment
Counterpart partners	Ministry of Water and Environment; Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development; National Water and Sewerage Corporation, and Association of Private Water Operators of Uganda
German Development Cooperation partners	KfW Entwicklungsbank, Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst (DED), Centrum für Internationale Migration und Entwicklung (CIM), Internationale Weiterbildung und Entwicklung gGmbH (InWEnt)
Responsible persons	Mr David O.O. Obong , Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Water and Environment Mr Hermann Plumm , Chief Technical Advisor, GTZ-RUWAS
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