

The Mayors' Forum: Strengthening governance for sustainable WASH service delivery in the Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area

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Figure 1 – Mayors' Forum session in Kampala. Source: Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA).

Summary

Strong government leadership is needed to ensure that sustainable Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) is prioritized for investment and that WASH interventions are coordinated to reach the most marginalized. Without government leadership, WASH interventions will be fragmented, unaligned to government policy and may not reach a larger scale. Through the Sustainable WASH project implemented by WaterAid in collaboration with Kampala Capital City

Authority (KCCA), a framework Memorandum of Understanding has been developed and adopted by all Mayors from the Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area (GKMA), defining modalities for coordinated leadership, joint city-wide planning and cross-learning on WASH. Using Kampala as a nucleus of the Mayors' Forum on WASH, WaterAid has stimulated consistent dialogue between the political and technical leadership within the GKMA on policy matters related to improving coordinated WASH service delivery in this area. The Forum has also provided a platform for strengthening institutional collaboration and capacity development of technical and political leaders in government where Mayors, working closely with technical teams, have played a key role in the design and implementation of WASH change projects. The model extended to the active participation of political leaders in critical international WASH discourse, particularly the African Water Association (AfWA) Conference 2020 convened in Kampala. As a result, the Mayors in GKMA are demonstrating greater leadership and commitment for improvement of WASH in their respective divisions. Three Mayors have used their own resources to convene 'WASH clinics/dialogues' to coordinate WASH activities and raise awareness of the importance of good WASH. The clinics have also proven a useful mechanism for communities to raise concerns with the Mayors, most notably in relation to solid waste management and toilet availability.

Overview

Geographical information

Country: Uganda

Region: Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area

City population: 3,600,000



Problem

- Uncoordinated urban planning for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area (GKMA).
- Limited engagement of political leadership in promoting WASH.

Solution

- Formation of a WASH Mayors' Forum to steer coordinated planning by the political leaders.
- Facilitating policy discourse on coordinated urban WASH planning among political and technical leaders in GKMA.

Problem

The GKMA is the largest and most dynamic urban area in Uganda. The most developed urban jurisdictions and authorities in GKMA include Kampala, the capital city of Uganda, and the five municipalities of Entebbe, Mukono, Kira, Nansana and Makindye Ssabagabo. In addition, GKMA comprises rapidly urbanizing sub-counties and associated town councils within the districts of Wakiso, Mukono and Mpigi. GKMA has a population estimated in 2021 to be about 3.6m inhabitants, of which 36% live in Kampala, 38% in other municipalities and the remaining 27% in town councils and sub-counties.

The GKMA presents Kampala city as an economic and administrative hub and a major investment destination and therefore needs to transform Kampala into a sustainable city that can meet the current and future needs of all its stakeholders. However, the GKMA poses policy and institutional challenges since Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) has no jurisdiction over the

greater Metropolitan area. Mayoral and local authority leadership is key in the identification and implementation of solutions to address WASH challenges by linking local realities with the appropriate policies, technologies and citizen engagement. However, there are weak coordination mechanisms through which the Mayors can meet and interact with their technical teams to discuss service delivery bottlenecks objectively. This is partly attributed to the power dynamics and tensions between the two leadership wings (technical and political), yet these are meant to work together in harmony for the benefit of the common person. Kampala has long been challenged by this unhealthy relationship which not only derails service delivery but also compromises accountability of roles and responsibilities from the leaders which subsequently affects service sustainability.

Solution

Kampala Capital City Authority with support from WaterAid Uganda (WAU) implemented the Sustainable Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (SusWASH) Project to address systemic blockages that affect WASH service delivery and behaviour sustainability. The five-year project (2017-2022) implemented in Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area (GKMA) leveraged existing government structures and service delivery mechanisms in Kampala and the surrounding municipalities as a pathway to service sustainability.

Strengthening alignment and coordination between the political and technical leadership of KCCA was identified as a good entry point for WaterAid's system strengthening work. In 2018 KCCA's Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation supported project collaborated with WaterAid's SusWASH project to set-up a WASH Kampala Mayors' Forum. As such, a framework Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was developed and adopted by all Mayors from the GKMA. The MoU defines modalities for coordinated leadership, joint city-wide planning and cross-learning on WASH. In addition to playing a leadership role in mobilizing political support to strengthen regulation on sanitation in Kampala, the forum has fostered coordinated WASH planning, governance, and accountability.

With this platform (Figure 2), political commitment to WASH has been built and spearheaded by the Mayors through WASH-related campaign initiatives. It has also helped to clarify the roles and responsibilities of Mayors on WASH and created a healthy competition among political leaders in their respective divisions/municipalities with regard to improving WASH service delivery.



Figure 2 – The Mayor, Kawempe division, presenting during a Mayors' Forum session. Source: KCCA.

Since the formation of the Mayors' Forum, all mayors have been trained on the promotion of good WASH practices in their communities including monitoring WASH service levels, pit emptying and hygiene promotion, which they have cascaded to their electorates during public engagements. Through the established forum, KCCA and WaterAid have stimulated consistent dialogue between the political and technical leadership within the GKMA. This has enabled improved decision-making and coordination between the political and technical leadership especially in Kampala.

Lessons learned

- For technical teams in the different local authorities across the GKMA, the Mayors' Forum is an opportunity to consult, inform and secure the buy-in from the political wing about WASH plans, budgets and issues related to enforcement. WASH is arguably the first example of the political and technical teams coming together to achieve change. An example of this was the passing of Kampala's Sewerage and Faecal Sludge Management Ordinance. The ordinance was drafted by KCCA's technical team, but required buy-in, formal approval and promotion by the Mayors which is happening due to the healthy relationship enhanced by the Mayors Forum.
- While the incentives for the political and technical wings are different, the Mayors' Forum is a space in which both can benefit from their participation – to secure political buy-in (for

the technical wing) and to demonstrate their commitment to WASH to their constituents (for the political wing).

- There has been enhanced dialogue between Mayors and local representatives around urban sanitation challenges; working with sanitation experts at the city level to ensure customer satisfaction with sanitation and hygiene products and services; developing an overall vision aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at a local level.
- Further efforts are needed to strengthen WASH policy and legislation including increasing resource allocation by the respective local authorities towards sanitation service delivery.
- The Forum has thus provided an opportunity for leaders to convene their electorates and other stakeholders to deliberate on solutions affecting WASH service delivery without using the forum as a platform for political campaigning.

Useful links

<https://washmatters.wateraid.org/sites/g/files/jkxoof256/files/2020-10/suswash-global-learning-report-section-3.2-uganda.pdf>

Further reading and references

C. Kimbugwe, S. Sou, H. Crichton-Smith and F. Goff, 2022. Practical system approaches to realise the human rights to water and sanitation: results and lessons from Uganda and Cambodia.

About the author

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About the institution / organisation

Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) is the local government of the City of Kampala in Uganda.

www.kcca.go.ug/about-the-authority



WaterAid Uganda's vision is a world where everyone has safe water, sanitation and hygiene. We aim to reduce inequalities that prevent the poorest and most marginalized people from realizing their rights to water, hygiene and sanitation. We are passionate advocates for the rights of people living in poverty who are marginalized, especially women and girls. We promote the integration of water, sanitation and hygiene into other areas of human development, critical for poverty eradication and sustainable development. Using our past experiences and sector-led approach, we collaborate with academia, research institutions and gender-focused rights organizations to influence for WASH rights, strengthen services and boost the government's capability to deliver sustainable WASH.

<https://www.wateraid.org/ug/about-us>



About the IWA Inclusive Urban Sanitation Initiative

IWA's Inclusive Urban Sanitation initiative responds to a huge and growing public need - safe sanitation in combination with access to safe drinking water and hygiene underpins good health. The aim of this initiative is reshaping the global urban sanitation agenda by focusing on inclusive sanitation service goals--and the service systems required to achieve them - rather than the traditional singular focus on expanding sewer networks and treatment works. This forms part of IWA's larger agenda to promote inclusive, resilient, water-wise, and sanitation-secure cities.

About the Inclusive Urban Sanitation Stories

The Inclusive Urban Sanitation stories are documenting some of the policies, practices, and approaches that demonstrate how stakeholders especially those in urban areas (e.g., public sector, operators, academics, regulators, and other key actors) are taking part or contributing to Sustainable Development Goal 6 which require water and sanitation concepts and norms to look beyond technology and the usual focus on building infrastructure. Increased focus is on safety, inclusion, environment, public health, and multiple technology solutions tailored to different geographies and socio-economic contexts for building climate-resilient cities. The stories aim to inspire urban stakeholders to discuss ways for advancing inclusive urban sanitation, especially in low- and middle-income countries.