



Government of Uganda
Ministry of Water and Environment

**A GENDER IMPACT STUDY OF THE WATER AND SANITATION
SUB SECTOR**

A FINAL CONSULTANCY REPORT

By



Socio-economic Data Centre

Ground Floor, Postel Building, Clement Hill Road

P.O. Box 10207, Kampala-Uganda

www.sedcug.info; info@sedcug.org

Phone: +256-782-439037/0752-790 594

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Executive Summary

Introduction and Methodology

This Gender Impact Study was commissioned by the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) with funding from the African Development Bank (AfDB) to assess the impact made in implementation of the strategic objectives of the Water and Sanitation Sub-sector Gender Strategy (WSSGS) 2010-2015. The study was carried out at national, district, sub-county, and community levels. A total of 10 districts from 8 Technical Support Units (TSUs) were covered. A sample of 1,547 water user households was selected in 10 districts. In addition, the study covered a total of 40 district and extension workers. Ten (10) FGDs with water and sanitation users and 53 in-depth discussions with water and sanitation committees (WSCs)/Boards were also conducted. At MWE Offices, interviews were held with staff in the Departments of Rural Water, Urban Water, Liaison Department, Water for Production (WfP), Water Resources Management, Human Resource and, Policy and Planning. Discussions were also held with TSU staff and NGOs.

Key Findings

Achievements in the Implementation of the Strategy

Uganda's gender mainstreaming agenda is guided by international, regional and national policies, legislations and agreements that inform and promote gender equality and women's rights. The WSSGS was developed within a strong and compelling legal and policy environment for integration of gender issues in development, including in the WSS sub-sector. The Strategy aimed at achieving five strategic objectives and 10 targets, which in a period of years were largely achieved.

Study findings reveal that Ministry Guidelines and Manuals developed after 2010 ably integrated gender. Key among these, include the National Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Plan for rural water and sanitation facilities, the District Implementation Manual (DIM), the RWSS Handbook for Extension Workers (Volume 1 and 2), the Community Resource Book, Urban Sanitation Implementation Manual, Monitoring Guidelines for TSUs as well as reporting Guidelines for Local Governments. At the close of 2015, a few unimplemented gender mainstreaming activities stood out. For instance, efforts to engender the WSS Golden Indicators and the M&E Systems were reported, but not completed, the sector's reporting formats have not been revised to enable collection of gender disaggregated data at all levels of implementation. Also, the Gender and Equity Budgeting Guide was not developed as planned. It worthy noting that gender mainstreaming received some level of attention in the Development Plans of districts and sub-counties. The Strategy achieved its objective of creating partnerships and networks for the implementation of the strategy.

Despite efforts in place, gender imbalances in the leadership and management of the WSS sub-sector persist at all levels. By 2012, top and senior management positions in the Ministry were held by 50 men and 13 women, reflecting a male dominance at 79.4% compared to only 20.6% women. By the close of the WSSGS II planning period in 2015, this situation had not changed much. Women constituted 16% of top

management and 22% of middle management, with the highest percentages realised at operational (44%) and support staff levels (39%). The district level is also reflective of the gender imbalances at the MWE, with the females grossly underrepresented in the District Water Offices (DWOs). However, study findings indicate that the target of increasing the number of women in key positions on the WSCs and boards was achieved and even surpassed the target. Most women as per this study occupied positions of Treasurer (72.5%) and simply ordinary members of the committee (64%) than men (36%). For the positions of Chair and Vice, the tended to be dominated by men—69.8% and 58.3% respectively.

In all the 10 sampled districts from 8 TSUs majority of households (79.4%) obtained water from an improved source compared to 20.6% that drew water from unimproved sources. Nationally, for the case of rural water, findings revealed mixed results; on the whole coverage for safe water remained static at 65% while in some districts and sub-counties notable improvements were registered. Some districts like Isingiro and Sembabule in the study sample had very low coverage of safe water. Regarding sanitation, the household survey results show that majority of the sample (88.7%) had latrines/toilets. Countrywide results from the desk review showed that improved sanitation was among the only three indicators where the five-year target was achieved; access to improved sanitation in rural areas increased from 70% at baseline (2010) to 77% in 2015 while in the urban areas, it improved from 70% to 84.1%, but fell short of the 100%. In the schools, the pupil to latrine stance ratio declined from 54:1 in 2010 to 67:1 by the end of 2015, falling short of the target (40:1). Gender mainstreaming in sanitation for the urban sub-sector is reflected in outputs under the pro-poor strategy, bearing in mind that the effects of poverty are more felt by women than men. Construction of public toilets did also not improve as planned, for this also depended on WSDFs and some District Local Governments (DLGs) using conditional grants.

Impact of Gender Mainstreaming in the WSS sub-sector

The WSSGS mandated all agencies involved in implementation of WATSAN activities to mainstreaming gender so as to contribute to improved access and utilisation of WATSAN services. Majority households in this study (85.0%) obtained water in less than 1,000 meters compared 15.0% that accessed water in over a kilometer. Almost a half of the households (49.7%) obtained water within less than 200 meters. Study results show a positive correlation between a distance of 200-1000 meters to a water source and decreasing household expenditure on watsan related diseases ($p = .000$). Almost a quarter household that collected water in a distance of over 1000 meters reported increasing expenditure on watsan related diseases.

Positive correlation was found between improved source and decreased expenditure on watsan related diseases ($p = .005$). Positive correlation was also established between households accessing water in a distance of over 1000 meters as well as unimproved source and forfeiting expenditure on other household items in order to treat watsan related diseases (i.e., in both cases $p = .000$). Women in households that collected water from a distance of < 200 meters and 200-500 meters were respectively about 5 times ($p = .013$) and 6 times ($p = .004$) more likely to engage in IGAs than those who collected water from a distance of more than 1000 meters/a

kilometer. Results reveal no correlation between distance and saving time to be spent on social activities.

Majority households reported taking less than 30 minutes to collect water, although only over a half (51.8%) reported to obtain adequate water “always”. Over a third (35.7%) obtained adequate water only “sometimes” and 12.5% never obtained adequate water. In over a tenth of sampled households, an adult, or a child below five (5) years had suffered from any of the WATSAN related diseases in the last six (6) months preceding this study—16.9% and 13.7% respectively. The study results reveal a positive correlation between distance to a water source and prevalence of watsan related diseases ($p = .000$). The same relationship is also noted in the prevalence of watsan related diseases and type of water source ($p = .000$).

Study results show that of the 53 water sources that were visited during this study, majority (62.3%) were fully functional while a fifth (20.8%) were partially functioning. Over a tenth of the sources (15.1%) were not functioning. Dysfunctionality of water sources including partial functionality potentially worsens the burden of water collection on women and children. Majority of water sources with women holding the key positions were found to be functioning normally/fully functional compared to those where men occupied similar key positions—e.g., Chairperson (82.2%); Vice Chairperson (70.0%); Secretary (72.0%) and Treasurer (62.2%).

Across the 10 districts covered, it was reported that time saved especially by women has been used for a variety of productive tasks, but principally starting income generating activities (IGAs) including more time for women to attend to their gardens/farming. Thus, this has freed-up more people in rural households to engage in the garden work. In places with low safe water coverage, women and children still suffer a huge burden of water collection, which makes it difficult for them to save time for engaging in IGAs.

Challenges in the Implementation of the Strategy

The study has revealed notable challenges that impacted on the implementation of the Strategy, some stemming from the understanding and conceptualisation of “gender”. Other challenges include inadequate financial resources allocated for software activities, which constrained implementation of the Strategy. All District Water Offices reported decline in the water and sanitation conditional grant, which further worsens efforts to mainstream gender. The Strategy was unequivocal on capacity building as a vehicle to mainstream gender, but this activity of capacity-building is not adequately budgeted for. Of greater concern noted in this study is the limited capacity among the workforce to implement the Strategy and persistence of gender stereotypes in communities.

Conclusion

The impact of the WSSGS II on the sector has been to increase awareness and responsiveness towards policy and legal requirements for gender at the different levels. From the sample of policies and guidelines developed, the terms of references for consultancies and designs of water source technologies gender is recognized and accorded status as a crosscutting issue. Further, the Strategy has greatly contributed

to improvement in the general acceptance of gender mainstreaming. Access to safe water has been largely engendered and it is generally appreciated that there is a big improvement in maintenance of water sources with a gender team prior to when there was no gender team.

Recommendations

- Mainstreaming gender in the WSS sub-sector should begin with Strategy dissemination and distribution of adequate copies. TSUs are well positioned to perform this role. Sharing soft-copies can also go a long way in reducing on the cost of print paper.
- The capacity in both the local governments and the centre needs to be strengthened and skills improved in gender analysis, planning, budgeting and monitoring. Capacity building activities need to be planned, budgeted for, implemented, and evaluated.
- Training in gender mainstreaming especially at central need should also target mid and top level management to ensure better appropriation of resources both financial and human towards mainstreaming gender.
- There is a challenge of coordinating software activities and staff across the board that number about 80 with one Principal and two seniors currently appointed. All 80 Sociologists report to one Principal and two seniors, which poses co-ordination challenges. Departments should have senior/ Principals coordinated under a Division led by an Assistant Commissioner in the WESLD.
- The mandate of O&M, gender mainstreaming, capacity building of technical staff at district level who are in fact at a higher rank, development of policies and guidelines to facilitate community mobilization for sustainable management of water and environment resources, demand for a well-organized and coordinated division.
- Allocate a budget line to implementing gender specific activities as much as gender is a crosscutting issue. Aspects such as training, advocacy, and IEC materials, monitoring and evaluation need to be budgeted for rather than subsumed in general budget items
- Community sensitization needs to be strengthened and conducted on an ongoing basis in order to keep gender and especially the participation of both women and men in the planning and management of water and natural resources for sustainable use.
- With NWSC taking over some of the WSS in urban centres there is a danger that gender aspects might not be prioritised. Thus, NWSC should ensure gender participation as it takes over from CBMS.
- Study results have shown cases of women participating in IGAs including village savings and loan associations as well as SACCOs while young people are also increasingly participating in IGAs that are water related—brick laying, car/motor cycle washing etc. These two groups, however, tend to lack basic management skills in running economic enterprises. In order to stimulate economic empowerment and skills development, the new WSSGS should have an objective on skills enhancement and economic empowerment of women in WSS providing for the following proposals:
 1. *Design vocational, entrepreneur, managerial and numeracy skills training programmes targeting especially women and youth. The curricula should be flexible to fit rural men and women's needs.*

2. *Consider skills training in gardening, block making, sewing and weaving.*
 3. *Provide post-training services such as access to credit or savings programmes, business development services, training in marketing etc.*
 4. *Design and promote micro lending programmes*
 5. *Promote formation of savings and credit groups – cooperatives*
- Implementation of future similar strategies should be preceded by a baseline survey. MWE should budget and conduct baseline at the start of a new strategy.