Sanitation for Millions – Uganda

SUSTAINABLE SANITATION IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS AND COMMUNITIES: A CONTRIBUTION TO ADDRESSING PUBLIC HEALTH CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH RAPID URBANISATION AND MIGRATION

Sanitation for Millions

Sanitation for Millions is a multi-donor programme set up to provide access to adequate and equitable sanitation. A special focus is on the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. Sanitation for Millions has started implementation in three countries (Jordan, Pakistan, and Uganda).

Sanitation for Millions strives for sustainable solutions considering the entire sanitation chain and applying sustainability criteria to ensure long-lasting results in line with the ambitions of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The programme directly contributes to the achievement of SDG 6, SDG 4 and SDG 3. Sanitation for Millions is supported by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) as lead donor, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the UK-based solidarity fund Water Unite and the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is leading the programme implementation. GIZ cooperates closely with local partners in the respective implementation countries as well as with national and international NGOs.

Sanitation challenges in Uganda

According to the World Bank (2017), Uganda incurs a loss of about 177 million USD annually because of a lack of appropriate sanitation. This affects the economic development of the country and deprives the population of the human right to safe sanitation. In addition, Uganda hosts about 1.2 million refugees (February 2019), according to the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and World Bank, out of which 70% are women and children who are often hit hardest by the lack of services. Latest statistics show that an estimated number of 90,000 refugees and asylum seekers live in Kampala. In northern Uganda, the sanitation situation is equally insufficient and precarious. Besides the lack of adequate infrastructure, the services along the sanitation chain in most urban areas are currently inadequate and insufficient and neither fully regulated nor controlled.

Intervention of Sanitation for Millions in Uganda

Sanitation for Millions started its intervention in Kampala in May 2017, in close cooperation with the Government of Uganda. Through co-financing of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Sanitation for Millions is now expanding its activities within Kampala and to several small towns in Northern Uganda, in Apac district. Sanitation for Millions targets the improvement of the sanitation and hygiene situation in urban areas along the following lines of intervention:

- Improvement of sanitation and handwashing facilities and building strong hygiene routines in public schools, with special attention to the needs of girls and disabled students
- Sustainable operation and maintenance of sanitary facilities in public schools
- Advisory services to political stakeholders in order to create enabling framework conditions for delivering sustainable sanitation services
- Support to private service providers for the improvement of services along the sanitation chain
- Exploring and testing innovative financing of sanitation infrastructure on household level.

The head teacher of St Paul Kyebando Primary School in Kampala being awarded for having excelled in the TMG school competition and becoming a model school for Kawempe division school.
Currently, infrastructure development targets more than 20 public schools, while broader interventions, aiming at quick gains in advocacy and behaviour change, for example through school competitions and handwashing campaigns, reach a broader number of schools. Implementation is being done in close cooperation with the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA), as well as with the political partners in Uganda, namely the Ministry of Water and Environment, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health. In Northern Uganda, the interventions concentrate on upscaling of sanitation services based on comprehensive town sanitation plans.

Sanitation for Millions draws on the global experience of GIZ in implementing the Fit for School approach, which applies health interventions in schools through existing managerial structures and integrates hygiene measures into school routines and curricula. Furthermore, the global programme incorporates national and international best practices on menstrual hygiene (MHM) and faecal sludge management (FSM) in order to assure sustainability.

Results and stories

Through the “models that work” approach, qualitative and inclusive infrastructure has been constructed in five schools so far, accompanied by introducing suitable operation & maintenance practices and hygiene routines. More construction activities in additional schools and health centers are underway.

Appropriate onsite sanitation (OSS) infrastructure model designs and investment cost estimates have been prepared and are ready for funding under Sanitation for Millions and/or partners wishing to collaborate with the programme. With regard to triggering action through monitoring, a self-monitoring tool is being rolled out which will support WASH in Schools (WinS) performance tracking in line with the national 3-star approach of the Ministry of Education and Sports.

Moreover, momentum for improving WASH in schools was created by introducing the first international Toilets Making the Grade (TMG) school competition, with all public schools in Kampala participating and amplifying a collective sense of responsibility. Collaboration with the School Management Committees and KCCA has yielded school-driven WASH budgeting and planning as a routine to implement identified WASH related solutions and interventions.

A proof of the positive impact of Sanitation for Millions’ interventions at Kampala’s public schools is the recent reduction of O&M related cases reported to KCCA’s Directorate of Education and Social Services. In Northern Uganda, several towns of Apac district have developed and established sanitation bylaws, following the successes of the former town sanitation planning (TSP) project. Together with the urban councils, aspects of sanitation safety planning have been integrated into the TSP measures. Implementation of the TSPs is supported by Sanitation for Millions for example through FSM trainings of the operators of the local faecal sludge treatment plant. Moreover, sanitation services for emptying & transport are being set up to support the upscaling of sanitation services in the coming months.

Outlook

Based on the learning experience and success stories from other implementing countries, Sanitation for Millions intends to expand its measures into a scalable ‘incentive driven approach to community-wide sanitation’ in the present project locations and beyond.

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