



Proposed Policy on Transition Management for Initiatives for Sustainable Ground Water, Sanitation and Solid Waste Management in Informal Urban Settings

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Preamble to the Policy Brief

Every quarter, Africa Leadership Institute (ALI) in partnership with the Uganda Management Institute (UMI) and with collaboration from the Cabinet Secretariat conduct the National Policy Forum on a topical matter arising from discussions in Parliament. On 5th February 2020, Hon. Beatrice Atim Anywar the Minister of State for Water and Environment (Environment)) made a statement in the plenary about the commemoration of the World wetlands day which is Internationally commemorated on 2nd February every year, but Uganda was due to commemorate it on 7th February 2020. The statement triggered comments and questions from Members of Parliament and the Right Honourable Speaker of Parliament. Given that water resources are at the centre of life, the discussion influenced the selection of the topic for discussion at the National Policy forum conducted on 19th March 2020 at the Uganda Management Institute and presentations and discussions informed content of this policy brief.

The State Minister for Environment Hon. Beatrice Atim Anywar presented as follows:

She thanked the Speaker for the opportunity to make a statement on the World Wetlands Day. She informed Parliament that the World Wetlands Day is commemorated on 2 February which marks the coming into force of the Convention on Wetlands. She notified the house that Uganda will commemorate the day on Friday, 7 February 2020, at Bumbaire Sub County Headquarters, Bushenyi District Local Government. She explained that the venue was selected to draw the attention of the local people and the general public on the increasing threats to the wetland biodiversity in the region due to on-going degradation activities in the area.

She updated the House about the ongoing preparations for the celebrations by a National Organising Committee at Central Government level and at local organisational committee at district level. She detailed that; The venue had been secured and would accommodate about 2000 invited guests. The District Organising Committee had confirmed that all matters to do with venue preparation for hosting the function were already in place. She added that they were expecting the Rt Hon. Prime Minister, Dr Ruhakana Rugunda, to be the chief guest though they were still waiting for confirmation. She further added that there was preparation for talk shows which were scheduled on 4th and 6th February on BFM Radio Station in Bushenyi.

She informed the house that the minister's statement, which was earlier recorded on 29th January 2020, would be replayed on 6th February on Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC) Television and newspaper supplements would also feature during the week including live streaming of the event on social media and NBS Television. Two field sites had already been identified; at Nyaruzinga Wetland, Nyakabirizi Division where there is a project, which is running alternative livelihood for the surrounding communities. A section of the degraded wetland would be planted with wetland vegetation. The second one is at the National Water and Sewerage Corporation intake point. She emphasized to the house that these sites demonstrated the theme and its relevance to Ugandans.

She further informed the Parliament that apart from speeches from invited guests, they had organised a youth dialogue, where the youth would be able to discuss the theme of the day and then present a Declaration to the Guest of Honour in addition to singing traditional songs, which feature the wetlands, the wetland run, cycling, tug-of-war for those who are



The Minister of State for Environment Hon. Beatrice Atim Anywar at the event to commemorate the International Wetlands day.

able and a painting competition among school-going children so that the participants would all be brought on board on that day, as they celebrate.

In collaboration with Nature Uganda, the Minister said; there would be a Public Talk on Wetland Day; 6 February 2020 at the Uganda Museum which was expected to draw participants from different fields and scientific papers. She further said that they had invited about 2000 participants from Government agencies, Embassies, institutions, schools and the civil society, and in a special way, were inviting members of Parliament to be part of the day.

Hon. Anywar reiterated that the regional de-concentrated structures of the Ministry of Water and Environment in south-western Uganda based in Mbarara, Kabale and Fort Portal were engaged in mobilising for that day. She further reiterated that this was the national event but events countrywide were also encouraged.

She concluded by stating that the purpose of the information paper (Statement) was to; Update MPs on the status of the preparations for the World Wetlands Day, 2020; and to request the honourable members to join us and commemorate this day in Bushenyi since it was a key turning point for showcasing our wetland protection.

After the Minister's presentation, the Right Honourable Speaker of Parliament drew the attention of the Minister to the fact that that a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) called WWD was funding the districts in this activity and not the Government of Uganda. She wondered whether government had left it to the NGOs.

Hon. Betty Bamukwasa (FDC, Rukungiri Woman MP) raised a matter of National Importance on the delayed response of the ministry of water and environment to an urgent question on

the stalled construction works at the Kaheng gravity water scheme

Hon. Nathan Nandala -Mafabi (FDC, Budadiri County West, Sironko) thanked the Minister of Water and Environment for being hands on. He informed the house that gravity water schemes being talked about were not new in the country and raised a concern that there are those that were built but are without water. He specifically mentioned that majority of them are in Namisindwa, Sironko and Manafwa, where you see a huge thing but the equipment that were installed are not helping in the production of water.

Hon. Denis Oguzu Lee (FDC, Maracha County, Maracha district) questioned the minister why the Okororo Piped Water Project stalled for a very long time and what plans the Ministry of Water and Environment had to ensure that water and sanitary facilities were delivered to the community; and in what timeframe.

On 12th February 2020, Hon. Beatrice Anywar the State minister for Environment responded to the matter which was raised by Hon. Muzanira Betty Bamukwatsa while on 26th February 2020, she responded to the question raised by Hon. Denis Oguzu Lee.

This preamble provides us with a genesis of what triggered the selection of the topic for the National Policy Forum, the research to identify policy gaps and present policy proposals in the policy brief to improve Uganda's water policy.



Participants in group session at the National Policy Forum on 19th March 2020 at UMI

Executive Summary

Informal urban settings in Uganda continue to experience inadequate access to clean water, sanitation and waste management facilities despite Uganda's ratification of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 6) on access of water and sanitation for all. Additionally, minimal effort has been done at policy level to integrate stakeholders at village and household level in the management and sustenance of water, sanitation and solid waste facilities. Safe water, sanitation and solid waste management services remain too expensive and inaccessible to dwellers of informal urban settings in Kampala for a number of reasons including; high cost of services, unawareness, lack of skilled individuals to maintain water infrastructure in communities, ownership and power dynamics at community level and exclusion of non-piped water sources in water treatment system. T-Group conducted a four year research and intervention project titled Experimenting with transition management for ground water management in informal urban settlements operating in Kawempe division in Kampala. The purpose was to improve quality of water, sanitation and solid waste amenities among the urban poor population by way of sustainable measures for governance and management of water sources. T-Group research and intervention found that: ownership and structures for management of water sources were undefined and urban poor households consumed poor quality water and had minimal understanding of hygiene and water resource management. Where the water infrastructure was established, transition management was devoid of sustainability strategy. Owners and controllers of water resources at grassroots level are undocumented and side-lined by the formal structures of water management with no linkage to the designated agencies (MoWE, NWSC, KCCA). T-Group concluded that sustainable management of water sources and related amenities is a community responsibility that cannot be achieved without involvement of all stakeholders at grassroots level including the undocumented actors. This policy brief recommends that stakeholders redefine stakeholders in governance of water resources to include undocumented authorities in informal urban settings, prescribe steps of transition management for water infrastructure and establish awareness programs focusing on hygiene, solid waste and water resource management.



Sustainable management of water sources and related amenities is a community responsibility that cannot be achieved without involvement of all stakeholders at grassroots level including the undocumented actors.

Introduction

This policy brief is informed by a combination of research and interventions by T-Group, a coalition of partners interested in community level management of water resources in informal urban settings. T-Group research and intervention was attracted to Kawempe division by among others recurrence of flooding, construction in wetlands, open flow of sewage and absence of public dissemination of water resource management that commonly characterize urban poor settings. The T-Group research and interventions were conducted in Parishes of



Dr. Gerald Werikhe Wanzala discusses findings at the National Policy Forum.

Bwaise III, Bwaise II, Makerere I and II, Kasubi and Nabweru South specifically in Katoogo, St. Francis, Tebuyoleka, Mukubira, Makerere zone C, Kawaala and Kafunda zones. Residents of the intervention areas are defined as urban poor and their common water sources, largely unpiped water, are not specifically catered for in the Water Act (cap 152) hence the special attention from researchers and interventionists. Such populations practice dangerous disposal of waste, are prone to consumption of contaminated water and outbreak of water-borne diseases and are unable to afford the chlorine treated piped water. T-Group mainly aimed at improving the quality of water resources, improving community access to clean water, improvement of the quality and quantity of the groundwater and establishing effective mechanisms for governance and management of water sources to benefit current and future populations.

Rationale

The existing framework for water management is founded in The Water Act 1997 (Cap 152) that prescribes structures and procedure for installation and management of water, sanitation and waste disposal. The act specifies social and administrative units crucial for delivery of water, sanitation and waste management services with minimal consideration of undocumented actors embedded in the social fabric of informal urban settings that are growing rapidly (Richmond, 2018). Informal actors emerge from the genealogy of urban poor families

known for occupying and transforming non-gazetted residential areas into human habitats and establishing their own social structures and power centres that influence delivery of social services. Involvement of these actors in delivery of water is crucial for effective transition management of water, sanitation and waste disposal services. Transition management entails building a foundation for acceptance, utilization and profitability of services established in the community. It may be futile for interventions to hand over water infrastructure to beneficiary communities whose actors are not recognized by authorities just as it is futile to hand over to overly formal structures that do not command influence at grassroots level. The potential for urban poor to transform themselves and their dwellings into sophisticated residential zones is well documented (World Bank, 2011) and avenues for this process including informal actors, may be integrated by interventions to improve water, sanitation and waste disposal services. There is need for actors to devise policy driven strategies to enable actors in the water sector to install community owned clean water systems to improve access and utilization by urban poor living in informal settings. This policy brief is therefore founded on the reasoning that existing policy framework should be revised to emphasize inclusiveness, affordability and engagement of urban poor to ensure comprehensive utilization and increased profitability of water services in informal urban settings. The rationale for this policy brief is therefore grained in the need to recognize and integrate informal functional structures with potential to improve water, sanitation and waste management in informal urban settings.

Methodology/Approach

The T-Group research and intervention entailed observation of management of water resources in the community with specific interest in the users and controllers of water amenities, identification of local actors and mobilization potential. T-Group renovated water sources and provided technical advice to communities and potential managers of the resources selected from within community members to ensure effective transition of the project to residents. This provided a foundation for effective management of water resources. The intervention and research entailed problem identification, experimentation and strategizing for sustainability of identified mechanisms for delivery of water, sanitation and waste management services. The findings of T-Group's research and interventions were subjected to critical analysis at an interactive public policy dialogue attended by policy makers, technocrats, academia and the general public at Uganda Management Institute. The critical analysis was used to generate pragmatic ideas for this policy brief. With this approach, T-Group was able to capture policy concerns, locate service gaps, collaborate with and support communities to organize and sustainably maintain water sources.

Findings

The research identified policy issues, avenues for inter-community collaboration, conflicting policies on access to water sources and barriers to implementation of current policy including cost of service delivery. T-Group intervention and research found a multiplicity of micro-organisms in the water consumed by dwellers of informal urban settings that could cause illness. The challenges of water resource maintenance are compounded by absence of clear understanding of the ownership and maintenance strategy for water infrastructure in urban poor settings by mainstream sector agencies. Key challenges included poor quality, high cost and informal governance and management of water resources including infrastructure which affects sustainability of interventions. Water consumed by urban poor in informal

urban settings was found contaminated and in dire need of treatment. The population of urban poor was found to be high with potential to overwhelm the water delivery system. Delivery of water, sanitation and waste management services turned out to be a community based phenomenon that needs a bottom-up approach to equip the technical teams across implementing agencies in the water sector with an understanding of contextual interests so that interventions may engage relevant actors and target the right populations with appropriate interventions.

Basic yardsticks for service delivery like price of water, number of families accessing the water resource, measures to maintain water infrastructure were controlled by undocumented but locally recognized actors who do not appear in The Water Act (cap 152).

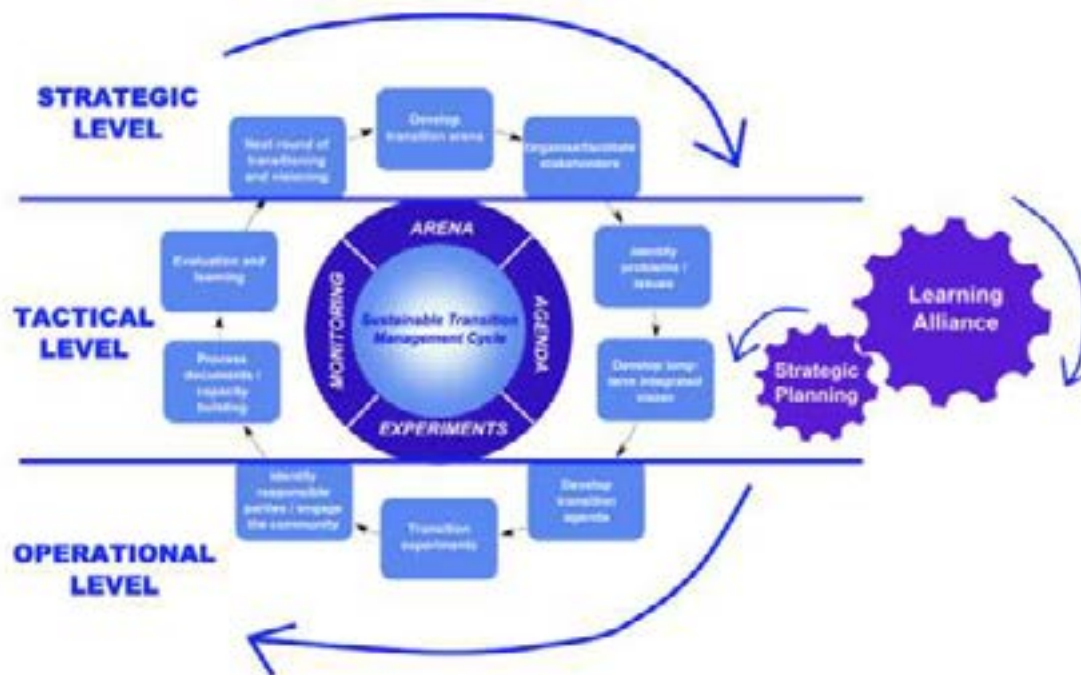


Fig. 1: Transition Management Cycle (Sourced from T-Group)

According to T-Group, transition management for water resource infrastructure entails identifying and working with beneficiary communities to ensure sustainability of the water resource systems. T-Group contends that the transition management must be participatory, long-term, strategic, documented and evaluated for actors to consistently adjust to emerging issues including calls for systemic change.

Some of the problems identified concerned policy implementation gaps in the systems of management. The stakeholders at the public policy dialogue and observations of the technical team at T-Group observed that there was a disconnect between sector agencies and grassroots actors that needs to be addressed.

Conclusion

The current stakeholders in management of water infrastructure and service delivery across urban poor settings are not sufficiently engaged by formally recognized agencies in the water sector. Absence of formally recognized structures at grassroots level affects quality and uptake of water services. Elevated services like piped water remain unaffordable and difficult to access by the urban poor populations who resort to alternative non-piped water which is not effectively utilized by water agencies with capacity to treat and avail clean water to the population.

Recommendations

MoWE and NWSC should work together to improve The Water Act (Cap 152) to make it inclusive of actors at grassroots level that are currently not recognized by formal agencies in the sector.

MoWE and NWSC should sustain anthropological studies and interventions to be on the lookout for evolvement of social dynamics that affect local understanding and maintenance of water, sanitation and waste disposal in communities.

MoWE and NWSC should incorporate non-piped water sources for regular treatment and cleaning alongside regular awareness programs for urban poor populations.

Revision of consumer prices for water, sanitation and waste disposal should be prioritised to attract urban poor populations to take up piped water.



Participants in group session at the National Policy Forum on 19th March 2020 at UMI

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