

Learning for Practices and Policy on Household and School Sanitation and Hygiene

A partnership of SNV, IRC and NETWAS

Case study

Name of client: District Local Government of Koboko and Arua

1. Context description

The Memorandum of Understanding between SNV and Arua and Koboko District Local Government identified water, sanitation and hygiene as key areas of support and mutual cooperation. Both districts are situated in the West Nile region and both district border with DR Congo and for Koboko it also borders with Sudan.

The Ministry of Water and Environment assessed in 2007 the following situation for Arua and Koboko¹; Arua district has a population of 429,707 and Koboko has a population of 119,088 inhabitants. The districts have poor sanitation coverage; Arua has coverage of 57 % and Koboko 50%, compared to the country average of 59%. For schools, the pupil stance ratio is estimated at 108:1 in Koboko, while the national standard is 40:1 and the national average ratio stands at 69:1. Moreover, the outbreaks of Cholera and other water born diseases in the two districts indicate a very low level of hygiene awareness and behavior of communities.

In the national setting, the three line Ministries; Ministry of Water and Environment, the Ministry of Education and Sports and the Ministry of Health, are responsible for hygiene and sanitation; The Ministry of Education and Sports is responsible for hygiene and sanitation at schools, the Ministry of Health is responsible for sanitation and hygiene at the household level, while the Ministry of Water and Environment is responsible for sanitation in the rural growth centers and around water points. However, these three Ministries do not jointly identify hygiene and sanitation as a key intervention area; The Water Department, which only plays a minor role in hygiene and sanitation, focuses on water supply. *As for the majority of Primary Health Care Grants are allocated for drug provision, with only 1-5% of the budget going to sanitation, compounded by a general lack of emphasis on preventive health. The Ministry of Education, that has the responsibility for sanitation at schools, also does not consider sanitation to be a high priority when weighted up against other pressing needs².*

These three ministries are responsible to coordinate they working plans and develop a multi-sectoral approach. At the national level there is the National Sanitation Working Group (NSWG) which aims at joint planning and reviewing work plans of the stakeholders. *However the sectors remain fragmented in terms of resource allocation and coordinated implementation.... ..it is generally acknowledged, by all stakeholders, that there is poor coordination at national and district level across the line ministries².* At the district level the District Water Sanitation Coordination Committee (DWSCC) is the coordination structure for jointly planning and reviews between the three departments (Water, Health and Education) together with the NGOs operating in the district. This structure serves to improve coordination, harmonization and collaboration;

¹ Source: Water and Sanitation Sector Performance Report 2007, Ministry of Water and Environment, Uganda

² Source: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Policy Analysis, Roz Saad, SNV Uganda 2008

however the reality is that *these meetings have a poor quality of inputs and lack coordinated actions resulting from them. The Committees tend to share information about activities rather than truly collaborating and undertaking joint planning*².

The sector faces under-funding as the annual budgets for water, sanitation and hygiene have been reduced over the period of FY 2004/5 to 2008/9³, affecting the outreach of the interventions. Moreover, this under-funding is exacerbated by Uganda's fast growing population. To address this budget decline and population growth, sector innovation can compensate this by increased effectiveness and efficiency.

However until the intervention started, there was no learning tool to facilitate sector learning at the district level. The resource centers in Kampala were not reaching out to the districts upcountry and there was a very limited flow of information within and between districts. Experiences, which were successful in other parts of the country or abroad, would barely reach these districts. Consequently sector innovation at district level was low. Methods, approaches and technologies used by the stakeholders remain the same, while the sector faces less funding every year.

Political will and leadership is key in improving hygiene and sanitation, as mentioned in the annual sector performance review; *An important lesson from the better performing districts and municipality in Uganda with respect to hygiene and sanitation is the active involvement of leaders at all levels is important for allocation of budgets to hygiene and sanitation and enforcement of local sanitation by laws*³. Before the intervention started, hygiene and sanitation was not a priority on the political agenda. Leaving an opportunity unused to mobilize political leaders to improve hygiene and sanitation in the district.

This situation clearly displays constraints in Governance for Empowerment to improve hygiene and sanitation. It demands to increase coordination, harmonization and collaboration of stakeholders, focus of stakeholders on hygiene and sanitation, integrate political leadership to bring hygiene and sanitation on the agenda and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of interventions.

To address these issues the delivery channel *knowledge brokering* has been utilized, while using the product *Multi Stakeholder Process* to improve the hygiene and sanitation situation. In partnership with IRC and NETWAS a *Multi Stakeholder Learning Platform* tool has been developed and piloted in four districts; Koboko, Arua, Kamwenge and Kyenjojo. These platforms are called *Learning for Policies and Practices* (LeaPPS) and this case study focuses on experiences and lessons learnt in the districts of Arua and Koboko.

2. Goal of the assignment

The overall goal of the pilot project on Learning for Policies and Practices (LeaPPS) is to;

Improve the hygiene and sanitation status within the districts through learning on best policies and practices.

³ Source: Water and Sanitation Sector Performance Report 2008, Ministry of Water and Environment, Uganda

This goal can be achieved by reaching the following objectives set by the partners;

- I. Improving coordination, collaboration and harmonization between stakeholders,
- II. Improving documentation and sharing of best practices and experiences at the district and Sub-County level,
- III. Strengthening the policy and strategic framework towards hygiene and sanitation,
- IV. Increasing effectiveness and efficiency of the interventions through the usage of cost effective, innovative, pro-poor, gender sensitive household and school sanitation & hygiene technologies.

3. Main activities + time period

This learning alliance has been established by linking to the existing platform at district level, the District Water Sanitation Coordination Committee (DWSCC). By involving these stakeholders and expanding it with two Sub-Counties and supplementary contribution from

IRC and NETWAS a “Multi Stakeholder Learning Platform” has been established. The platform operates in a multiple event sequence. A total of six platform meetings, with in-between consultation and follow-ups, over a total duration of one and a half years, cover the whole assignment. The learning alliance has now been operational for a period of one and a half years and has finished its initial pilot period.

Effective Learning Structures for Practice and Policy in Local WASH

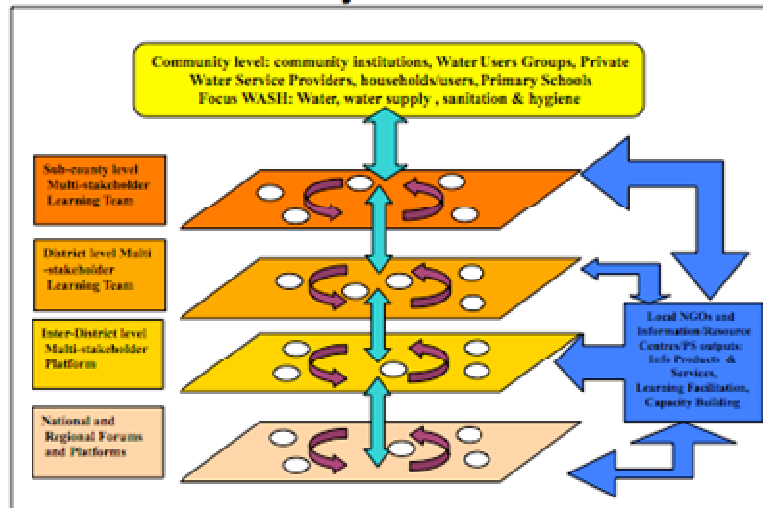


Figure 1; LeaPPS Learning Alliances⁴

By using participatory methods at the platform, the major issues constraining the sector were identified and analyzed. Additionally, experiences from the International, National, District and Sub-County level are shared with stakeholders at district and Sub-County level. Suitable experiences are transformed into lessons learned. The stakeholders are responsible for integrating the learned lessons into their own action plans.

⁴ Source: LeaPPS Inception Report 2007

4. Results of assignment

a) Output

The partners have jointly facilitated six Learning sessions in the four district. In this partnership the different partners brought specific issues to the learning alliance. IRC was able to utilize their knowledge of *International Learning Alliances* and brought approaches and best practice from the international level. NETWAS, with their National Resource Center, was able to share Ugandan “best practices” into the alliance. Specific SNV contribution was the access to the local network in West Nile, the facilitation of in-between consultations with the stakeholders, ensuring follow-up and providing Capacity Building to overcome constraints related to the actions points.

b) Outcomes

I. Improving coordination, collaboration and harmonization between stakeholders,

With the establishment of the learning alliance, improved coordination and collaboration has been strengthened. The first step in this process was to strengthen the coordination, which is the first step towards collaboration and harmonization.

The DWSCC and SCWSCC (Sub County Water and Sanitation Coordination Committee) in the two districts have increased functionality. As for Koboko the DWSCC and SCWSCC were not functional at the time of inception. While during the intervention they started to hold regular meetings. For the moment it is only an information sharing committee, which is the first step. While for Arua, which had an active DWSCC at the time of inception, LeaPPS has strengthened the DWSCC. In combination with the assistance of SNV to strengthen the agenda & facilitation of the DWSCC, the meetings have increased the quality of their input. As quoted from a participant “*these meetings have become more lively and interesting every time we meet*”⁵. With assistance of SNV, the DWO has developed a reporting format on which the stakeholders have to report on, which is the first reporting format for water, sanitation and hygiene coordination purposes at district level in West Nile and maybe even the first in Uganda. The DWSCC is still not committee were joint action plans are being made and reviewed, but information is being sharing and feedback given by stakeholders.

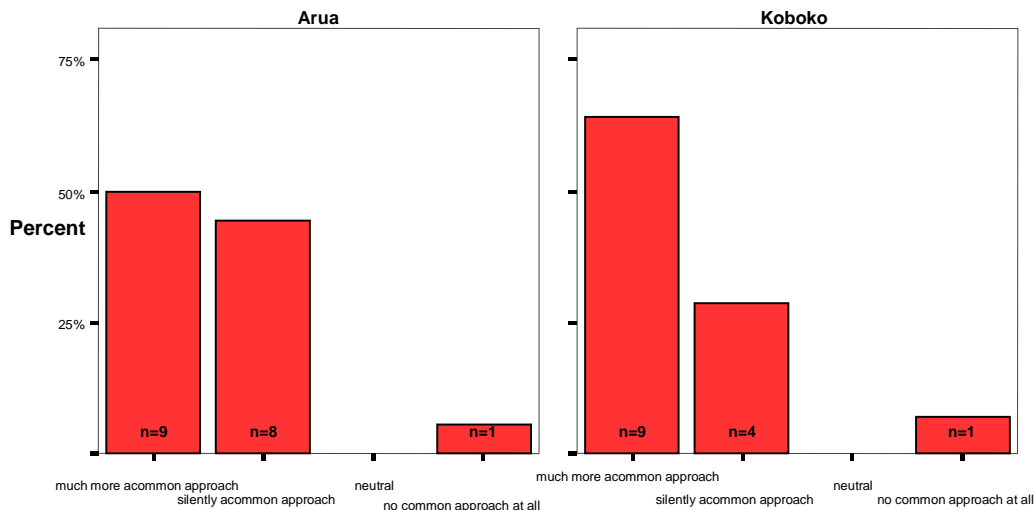
As a result of the sharing at the platform, the Department of Health in Koboko was triggered to conduct a full household census to measure the hygiene and sanitation status in the district. This department has successfully conducted the household census and with assistance of SNV the data was analysed. This data has been shared with the stakeholders at the LeaPPS sessions at district and sub county levels. This should enable the stakeholders to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the hygiene and sanitation interventions. According to TSU1 *this is the first full household census to be conducted in West Nile, if not in the country*⁶.

Political buy into Hygiene and Sanitation has been established. The LC5s and LC3 invited for LeaPPS were consisted in their attendance during the sessions. The LeaPPS sessions has empowered those leaders who are willing to fight for improving hygiene and sanitation at households and schools, as was acknowledged by the Sub County chief of Ario Sub County,

⁵ Statement of: Gladys Adiru; Project Officer Youth Development Organization (YODEO)

⁶ Statement of: David Ibuyat; Public Health Specialist, TSU1, during LeaPPS #4 August.

Do you feel that because of the LeaPPS session helped you and others to work using a **common/ same approach** towards hygiene and sanitation?



Do you feel the LeaPPS session helped you to **coordinate more** with others in **planning and activities** towards better hygiene and sanitation?

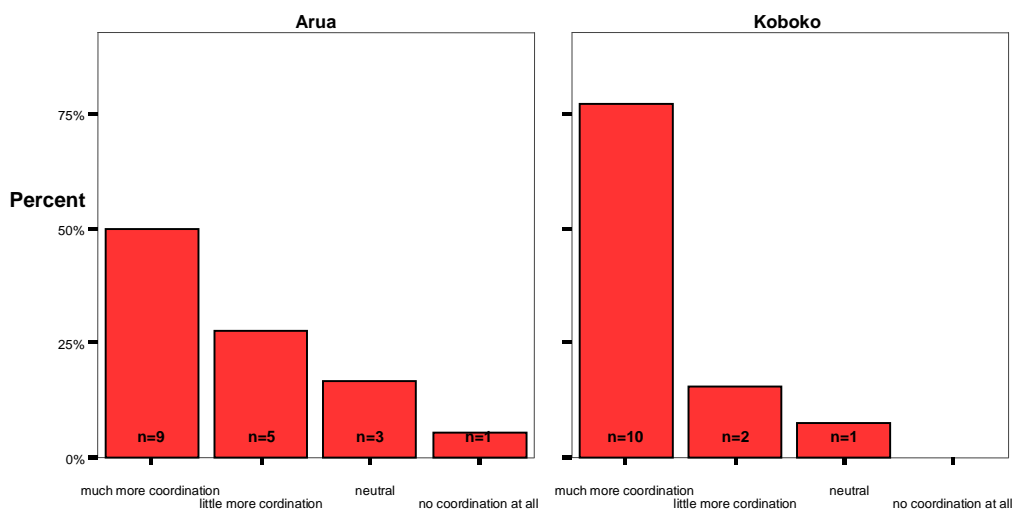


Figure 2; Relevance of LeaPPS to develop a common approach and improve coordination by the organizations towards hygiene and sanitation⁷

The questioner, held during LeaPPS#4 addressed at the participants, revealed a positive response towards working together (see Figure 2). The attitude of the participants was very positive; LeaPPS has helped them to develop a common approach and improved coordination. However the specific common approaches or coordinated activities mentioned in the questioner were less explicit. This could disclose that there is a positive attitudinal change towards working together, however factual actions are rather limited.

⁷ Source: LeaPPS; Measurement for Succes and Improvement Report, August 2008; Joshua Wesana

II. Improving documentation and sharing of best practices and experiences at the District and Sub-County level.

The alliance allowed participants to share their “best practices” amongst themselves. Sharing each others experiences has lead to interesting results, which can be best illustrated by the case in Arua. In LeaPPS session #4 in Arua; a local Faith Based Organization, PARUDA, was able to present their approach to the other stakeholders in a field visit. Based on this field visit, the stakeholders got interested in adopting the participatory approaches used by PARUDA and eight organizations listed themselves to receive a training on participatory approaches¹. This training will be implemented in partnership between SNV and PARUDA.



Figure 3; A field visit in Koboko district, a hand washing facility made from low costing/ local materials⁸.

The alliance has also triggered stakeholders to learn from other “best practices” outside the alliance. For example the DWSCC of Arua implemented a field visit to share best practices of a model village outside the district.

The questionnaire held, showed most organizations (over 75%) were more documenting their “best practices”. However sharing and usage of these “best practices” was below 50%. The Giving practical examples of this documentation, sharing and adoption were scarce or less relevant. This could indicate a positive attitude change towards documentation, sharing and adoption of “best practices”, but factual sharing and adoption of “best practices” has not reached it’s full potential and needs attention and to be developed further.

III. Strengthening the policy and strategic framework towards hygiene and sanitation,

While using the platform, the stakeholders were able to identify the weakness in strategy framework at district level towards hygiene and sanitation. During the sessions crucial discussions came up, specially focusing on the distribution of roles and responsibilities amongst the three departments in charge of sanitation and hygiene. This has been taken up by the various departments. During the follow up meetings in Koboko and Arua the district

⁸ Source:: Workshop Report LeaPPS #4 Koboko, 19th – 20th of August 2008

officials have acknowledged to have worked closer together to develop joint works plans. This discussion is ongoing and is expected to result in a strengthened strategic framework.

As for Arua the district reported that ordinances have been formulated for sanitation and hygiene for the local councils. Previously the local councils were using resolutions for enforcement. This is a direct achievement in creating an enabling environment.

V. Increasing effectiveness and efficiency of the interventions through the usage of cost effective, innovative, pro-poor, gender sensitive household and school sanitation & hygiene technologies.

It has been confirmed that the platform has increased the utilization of participatory methods by the stakeholders. Evidence is, as the DWO of Arua has budgeted and implemented a training of their health extension workers with the Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation tool “PHAST”⁹. Within Arua District, Ario Sub-County has even overtaken the district by using these participatory tools in their sub county after it was discussed at LeaPPS #3 in March 2008. The DWO and the Sub County Chief of Ario both acknowledged that this PHAST training and implementation was a directly related to the 3rd LeaPPS session. Usage of participatory tools will empower communities and will result in responsive interventions driven by the factual needs of the people and strengthen community ownership. As the WHO states: *The PHAST approach helps people to feel more confident about themselves and their ability to take action and make improvements in their communities. Feelings of empowerment and personal growth are as important as the physical changes, such as cleaning up the environment or building latrines*¹⁰.

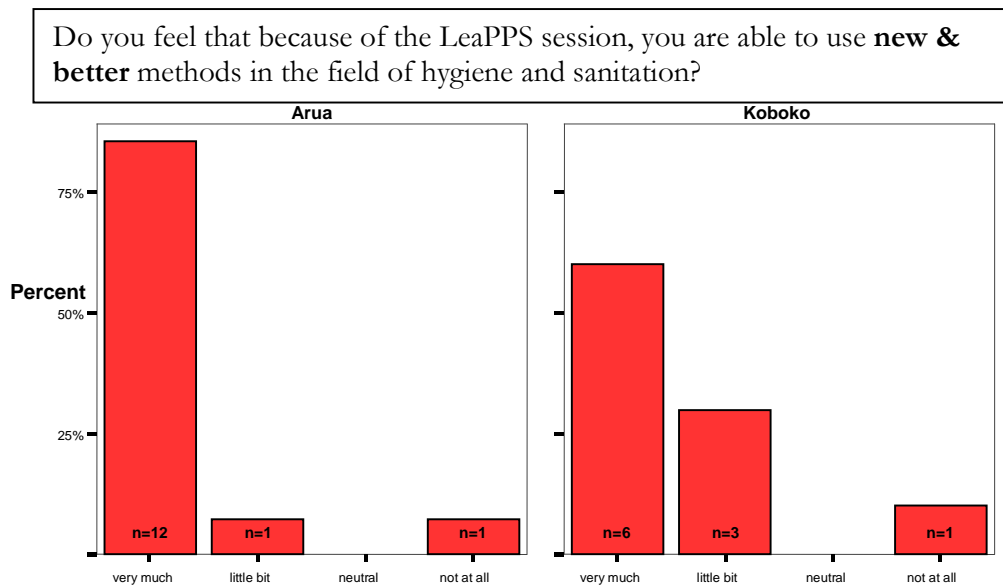


Figure 4; Attitude of LeaPPS sessions to adopt better methods by organizations towards hygiene and sanitation⁷

⁹ Source: Departmental Progress Report on Water and Sanitation Section- Arua, Works and Technical Service Committee Meeting – June 18, 2008

¹⁰ Source: http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/hygiene/envsan/phastep/en/index.html

The questioner, revealed a positive response towards the adoption of innovative methods (see Figure 4). The attitude of the participants is very positive; according to the participants, LeaPPS was catalysing the adoption of new and better methods. The methods mentioned were mostly related to Participatory approaches as PHAST, which is being confirmed with the actions of the stakeholders. The success might be related to the availability of training tools from TSU1 and further assistance by SNV and others.

c) Effect /impact of the assignment

Outcomes registered while using the Learning Platform can be categorized as; a. an increase in the sharing and usage of best practices, coordination has increased between stakeholders and stakeholders are adopting innovative approaches and methods. This has enabled the stakeholders to work closer together and to enable them to increase the sanitation coverage and improve the hygiene behavior at the household and school level. With the disclosure of alternative and appropriate technology, it is expected that the price of household and school sanitation will be reduced.

It is too early to directly attach major impacts to the outcomes of the learning alliance within a period of 1,5 years. However comparing the national available statistics, this gives an interesting improvement of the hygiene and sanitation status in Koboko district. Some of this improvement could be attached due to the success of LeaPPS.

Indicator	District	FY 06/07	FY 07/08 ³	Variation
Pupil Stance Ratio (School level)	Arua	-	68:1	-
	Koboko	108:1 ¹¹	81:1	-27
	<i>National Average</i>	<i>69:1³</i>	<i>47:1</i>	<i>-22</i>
Latrine Coverage (Household level)	Arua	57% ³	57%	-
	Koboko	50% ³	61%	+11%
	<i>National Average</i>	<i>59%³</i>	<i>62.4%³</i>	<i>+3.4%</i>

Table 1; Impact Indicators of LeaPPS of Arua and Koboko District

Note should be taken that these figures are not as reliable as desired. This data is being mostly collected by the LC1 at parish level, who report to the DHI and fed into the national figures. This method of data collection is rather un-transparent, since it can not be verified if the LCs really went down at household and school level¹². Especially significant improvement of the pupil stance ratio at the national level can question the reliability and validity. According to the Household census of Koboko, the latrine coverage should be at 63.3%, which is a relative small variation with the figures for the Ministry of 61%.

Indicator	March 2008	August 2008	Variation
Latrine coverage	70.2%	75%	+4.8%
Bath shelters	50%	90%	+40%
Refuse pits	60%	81%	+21%
Drying racks	65%-	85%.	+20%

Table 2; Impact Indicators of LeaPPS of Ario Sub County¹³

¹¹ Source: Koboko District Estimate 2007.

¹² Interview with: Kalisto Onama, District Health Inspector Arua District

¹³ Source: Workshop Report LeaPPS #4 Arua, 21st and 22nd of August 2008

In Ario, exemplary leadership has led the way to a significant improvement in the hygiene and sanitation status². Four indicators of hygiene and sanitation on the household level given by Aria Sub County representatives, during LePPS #4, are fed into Table 2. This table clearly displays an improved hygiene and sanitation. It can not be said that this improvement is only due to LePPS session, but the leadership has acknowledged that their interventions have benefited from the LePPS sessions^{Error! Bookmark not defined.}. Therefore this improvement can be attributed as *impact* from the LePPS sessions.

5. Critical success moments

The intervention had a number of critical moments. However two critical moments can be best summarized as “ownership”, “approaches of communication” and “scaling up”.

In order to have a successful learning alliance, the stakeholders must have a sense of ownership of this alliance. To generate this ownership a number of actions have been integrated into the approach; 1. The consultation session, before the learning session, provided a “menu” of topics, which the stakeholders could choose from, 2. The action points made after a session specifically addressed to the individual stakeholders. The next session involved presentations from the stakeholders on their achievements on these action points. 3. A focal person/ champion within the group of participants ensured that issues could be carried further. The DHO of Koboko was for the LePPS team such a person who was fully supporting the program, and even planned to duplicate the sessions for all sub-counties.

The topic of the third learning session “approaches of communication”, where approaches ranging from top-down to bottom up were discussed, provided a real eye opener for the participants. Before the session there was a general consensus amongst the stakeholders that law enforcements were more effective than bottom up approaches. During the workshop, the participants recognized that these methods were not competitive but complimentary; an intervention can use participatory approaches as well as enforcements addressing complementary elements. This concluded that the participants were triggered to learning more about participatory approaches and tools were requested & provided by the Technical Support Unit (TSU)¹ of Directorate of Water Development. This has resulted into a PHAST training for the health extension workers of the District Water Office in Arua⁹.

To upscale this concept there are several success moments recognized; I. up-scaling within SNV (Uganda), II. with the Ministry of Water and Environment (Uganda) and III. internationally.

- I. SNV WASH has fully integrated this approach of a *Multi Stakeholder Learning Platform* as a tool under the *Multi Stakeholder Platforms* products. A partnership with DED on a series of EcoSan *Multi Stakeholder Learning Platforms* clearly displays the interest of other international players in this tool and is being implemented in four districts over a period of one and a half year.
- II. The Directorate of Water Development (DWD) has expressed interest in upscaling LePPS to all 81 districts in Uganda. SNV-IRC-NETWAS are in negotiations with DWD to play a (paid) advisory role to test the modalities of up-scaling, which can feed into the Partner Resources Mobilization (PRM) strategy.

III. Internationally, the LeaPPS case was submitted and presented to a “*WASH sector learning seminar*” held by IRC in the Netherlands November 2008. This workshop was attended by several international organizations and benefited from the LeaPPS experiences in Uganda. This paper has also been submitted to the next WEDC Conference Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 18-22 May 2009, but at the time of submitting this case study, no correspondence has been received yet.

6. Lessons learned

Out of this assignment there are key lessons learned;

- Making use of partnerships greatly enhances SNV’s contribution to deliver basic services, especially in WASH as it brings in an element of skills mix from the different organizations;
- Transforming lessons learned, through an adjusted conceptual thinking, into improved approaches and methods, is an extended process. Drivers behind adoption of learning and transforming into action, needs to be further explored to fully optimize this learning alliance;
- According to the participants, there is a need for factual pilot projects to test the “best practices” on the ground and to increase learning on “best practices”;
- Measurement of outcomes is challenging, there is a need to measure outcome and impact more accurately. The Learning Alliance used a questionnaire to measure outcome & impact at the stakeholder level, which showed very positive attitudinal results. However, mentioning factual actions was more challenging for the participants. There is a concern around the validity and reliability of this measurement tool. Therefore the alliance is developing multiple ways to measure the results;
- Ownership of the platform by the stakeholders is a vital element of success, since disseminating knowledge and information is not enough to trigger actions. This ownership also obstructs the trickling down of information from district to Sub-County level remains weak;
- There is a genuine demand for learning at district level, a learning alliance at district level can supply this need;
- Coordination between departments and other stakeholders remains an issue and needs continuous support;
- The Learning Alliance was successful in enabling stakeholders to identify their own capacity gaps and weaknesses. Capacity Building interventions linked with a Multi Stakeholder Learning Platform are essential to fulfill optimal learning;
- There is a delicate balance between learning and commitment; learning without commitment towards the lessons learned, does not trigger actions of stakeholders; However, focusing on applying the lessons learned can undermine the learning environment of the alliance.

7. Recommendations for learning and follow up

Based on the experiences of the learning sessions the following recommendations are formulated;

- Utilizing partnerships with complementarities increases the outcomes and impacts of SNV interventions and should be encouraged;
- To increase learning, Action Research for schools and households for complementing the learning alliance is recommended. This Action Research is being implemented using a SIMAVI fund for schools and households;
- Facilitate the formation of learning platforms (LeaPPS) at the Sub-County level to ensure that the learning takes place at Sub-County level;
- To measure outcomes, impacts and drivers behind learning and intergration of learning into actions, the partners are exploring multiple ways for measurement. The partners are using feedback sessions, questioners and are currently involved in the process to contract an independent consultant to map the drivers and motivations behind learning and actions of the stakeholders;
- Ownership of a learning alliance by the participants is a continuous focus of attention. By consultations, involvement of the program, identifying champions, appointing, focal persons and/or steering committee, creating a demand driven agenda and follow-ups of actions points this ownership can be enhanced;
- *Multi Stakeholder Learning Platforms* for the WASH sector in Uganda is a successful intervention for the purpose of learning at district level for improved practices and policies. This tool is recommended to be used for other sectors such as Education and PIE and could be utilized throughout the East African Region;
- Coordination between stakeholders can be improved using a learning alliance, but should be combined with other interventions, such as strengthening stakeholders and follow-up meetings;
- Link Capacity Building programs to any Multi Stakeholders Learning Platform to enhance further learning;
- A balance has to be found between learning and commitment on implementing the lessons learned. This can be achieved by providing symbolic rewards for best performing stakeholders, who are champion at implementing “best practices” and “lessons learned”.

8. Specific Data

PP days spend in 2008	75 days
PP days to be spend in total	125 days
Starting Date	July 2007
Expected end date:	December 2008

9. Primary Responsible Advisors / Portfolio Coordinator

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