

1. National Policies and Guidelines finalized and launched

i) Guidelines for District Local Governments and Hand pump Mechanics Associations to improve Operation and Maintenance of Rural water facilities

Triple-S Uganda made a breakthrough in influencing national policies and guidelines, strengthening institutional capacity for post construction support and harmonization and coordination of actors at the district level. After three years of mentoring HPMAs, documenting their work on post construction, and sharing emerging issues with stakeholders in the sector, The Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) was able to use the lessons from the work of Triple-S work to complete the development and publication of the Guidelines for District Local Governments and Hand pump Mechanics Associations to work together in the Operation and Maintenance of Rural water facilities. The guidelines have been disseminated to all districts in the country and will be used to streamline operations of the HPMAs and put in place a mechanism for regulating them.

ii) District Implementation Manual for water and sanitation

With support from IRC/Triple-S Uganda to the MWE, the process of reviewing and updating the District Implementation Manual (DIM) was finalized and the revised DIM was published and launched. The DIM is a key document that sets standards and guidelines for all stakeholders involved in the provision of water supply and sanitation services at district and sub-county level. It will guide and harmonize implementation of WASH initiatives at decentralized level and will also be used as a tool for capacity building and monitoring and to align activity reports to set standards

During the official unveiling of the revised DIM, Honorable Betty Bigombe, State Minister for Water stressed that *“if all actors adhere to the DIM, Ugandans can expect similar standards of water and sanitation services delivered across all districts, with no disparities and variations in services and that and that this will ensure that Ugandans will get the level of water and sanitation services they require in order to live healthy and productive lives,”*

2. Uptake of Sub county Water Supply and Sanitation Boards (SWSSBs)

From the successful testing of SWSSBs four sub counties in Kabarole districts and four sub counties in Lira district, the two district local governments supported the scaling up of the SWSSBs to six (6) additional sub counties (four (4) in Kabarole and two (2) in Lira) without support from Triple-S. This brings the total number of sub counties piloting the SWSSB model to fourteen (14).

The Technical Support Units and Umbrella Organizations for Northern and Mid Western Uganda have also taken on the SWSSBs and are providing direct technical support to the Boards. MWE also incorporated the SWSSBs as one of the institutional mechanisms that will work with HPMAs in providing post construction support to service providers. The SWSSBs were also included in the Guidelines for District Local Governments and Hand pump Mechanics Associations and in the Sector Guidelines for Financial Year 2013/2014.

The SWSSB Handbook, a key tool that is guiding operationalisation of the SWSSBs was finalised by MWE with support from Triple-S Uganda and the District Local Governments of Lira and Kabarole. The Handbook also guided the Umbrella Organisations for Northern and Mid Western Uganda to

provide capacity building to SWSSBs in areas of financial and management to enhance their professionalism

3. Improved functionality of rural water supply facilities and structures

There was an increase in functionality of rural water supply facilities in the Triple-S pilot districts. In Kabarole functionality improved from 80% to 82% while in Lira district it improved from 73% to 74%. The increase in functionality is partly attributed to Mobile Phones for Water (M4W) initiative and the SWSSBs model.

M4W is a mobile phone-based system, which enables water users to report faults at their sources, enabling timely response and repair, and ultimately reduced downtime of water sources. In Kabarole alone 58 non functional sources were repaired using information from the M4W system. This accounted for the repair of 15% of the non-functional sources. On the other hand the SWSSBs have contributed to increased collection of water user fees. The collections of SWSSBs in Lira increased by 30% between March and May 2014 as the number of Water Source Committees (WSCs) subscribing to the SWSSBs increased also by about 30% in the same period.

In Kabarole district, the SWSSB in Kicwamba Sub County revamped 37 WSCs for tapsstands which then started collecting user fees using proper receipts and records books. In Busoro Sub County, 18 WSCs collected funds which were used to pay for routine maintenance of hand pumps.

Key challenges in the year

- i) The M4W system provides opportunity for reporting functionality of rural water supply systems in real time and triggers response from HPMs to conduct assessment. However, for repairs to be done, funds have to be available either at the district (for major repairs) or with the WSCs (for minor repairs) for repairs to be done.
- ii) The process of uptake of service delivery indicators by MWE has been slow. This has been attributed to the challenge of finding the right balance between promoting a comprehensive set of service delivery indicators and prioritizing a few indicators that can add value to the existing golden indicators with increasing the cost of data collection. The Triple-S team has developed a plan for phasing uptake of the indicators to address the challenge.