



November 2019

Learning exchange visit to Asutifi North District, Ghana on implementation of the district WASH master plan – 24-27 September 2019

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*“When a Ugandan says they are going to learn, they have already taken a step”
Dr. Kodjo Mensah Abrampa*

Background

With support from Conrad N. Hilton Foundation (CNHF) and USAID Sustainable WASH Systems (SWS) Learning Partnership, IRC Uganda assisted Kabarole District Local Government in developing a district water, sanitation and health/hygiene (WASH) master plan. The Kabarole District WASH Task Team (DWTT) was instrumental in leading the reflections and discussions that led to the development of the WASH master plan. The master plan was formalised in the district in December 2018 and was officially launched in February 2019.

The District Chairperson is keen to ensure that the WASH master plan is utilised by all WASH stakeholders and is effectively implemented. Working with the DWTT, IRC continues to support the district local government to roll out the master plan and ensure that it is implemented.

District WASH master plans are part of the district-wide approach in the CNHF Safe Water Strategy programme. Supported by IRC Ghana, Asutifi North District in Ghana was the first to develop a WASH master plan and they have been implementing it for over a year.

The learning exchange visit to Asutifi North District in Ghana

In September 24-27, 2019 IRC Uganda supported a selected group of technical and political officials from Kabarole District and IRC Uganda staff to participate in a learning exchange visit to Asutifi North District in Ghana.

This visit enabled the team from Uganda to learn and share experiences on how to effectively implement a WASH master plan and what the different stakeholders in a district are expected to do during the implementation process. The purpose of the visit was also to broaden the knowledge and skills of the team from Kabarole District. And to reflect and learn how to provide leadership during the implementation of the WASH master plan.

Participants from Uganda included:

Kabarole district technical and political officials:

1. Mr. Musinguzi Daniel, Kabarole District Senior Planner
2. Mr. Pius Mugabi, Senior Engineer- Kabarole District Water Office
3. Mrs. Tumuhairwe Olive, District Health Inspector, Assistant Water Officer for Sanitation
4. Ms Sanyu Phionah, Chief Administrative Officer Kabarole District Local Government
5. Hon. Aaron Byakutaga Muhindo, Secretary for Works and Technical Services
6. Hon. Richard Rwabuhinga- Chairperson Kabarole District Local Government

IRC Uganda

1. Jane Nabunnya Mulumba, Country Director
2. Martin Watsisi, Regional WASH Advisor

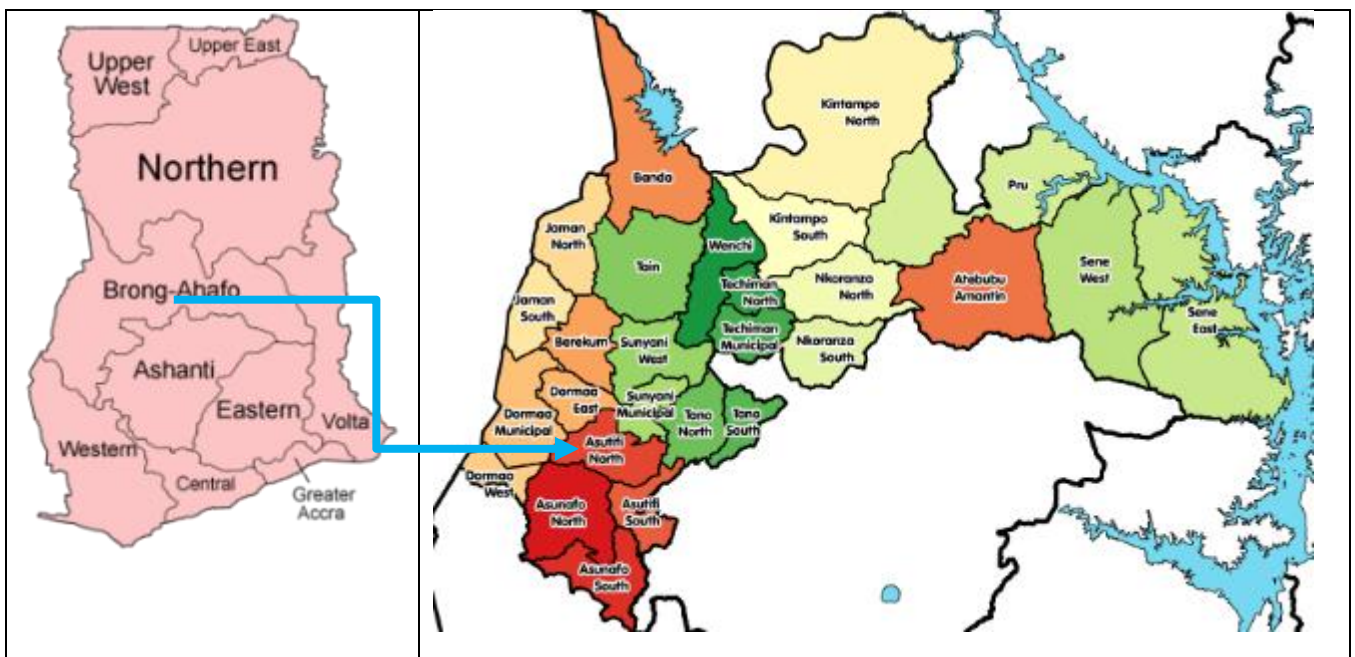
Specific objectives of the learning exchange visit:

- To interact with the IRC Ghana team to understand how they are facilitating Asutifi North District to implement the WASH master plan

- To enable the Kabarole District officials to interact with counterparts in Asutifi North District and share experiences on WASH master plan implementation including; involvement of WASH and CNHF stakeholders in the district, monitoring, communication and documentation efforts
- To develop strategies for increasing stakeholder coordination and contribution in Kabarole District to effectively align to the WASH master plan.

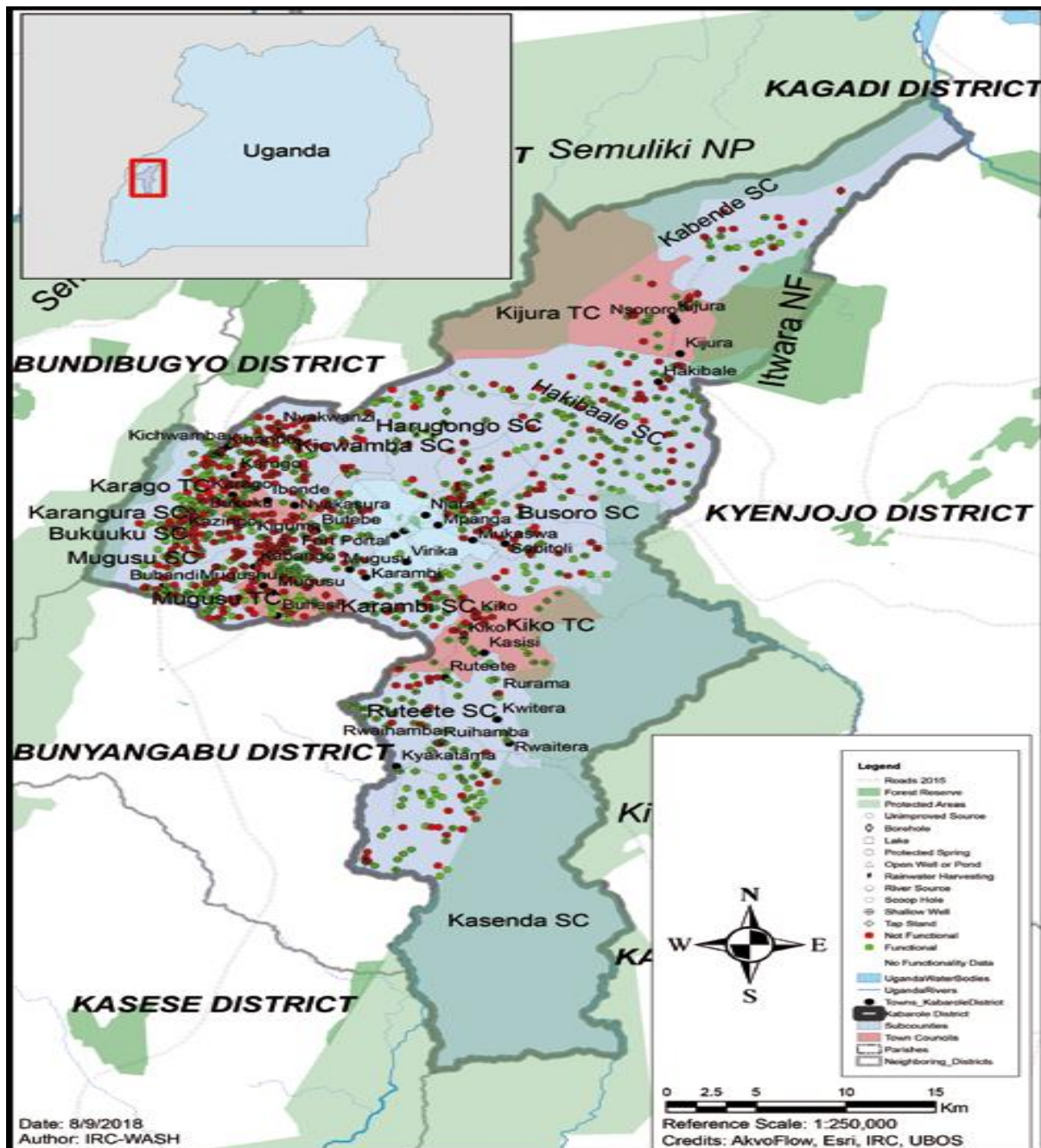
About Asutifi North District of Ghana

Asutifi North District is in the southwestern part of the Brong Ahafo Region, with Kenyasi as its capital. The region had an estimated population of 62,817 in 2017 with 68 % of the population residing in rural areas. The total land surface area is 936 km². The District's economy is predominantly agrarian, around 58 % depend on it for livelihoods. With support from IRC Ghana and with funding from the Conrad Hilton Foundation, Asutifi North District developed the first WASH master plan in 2017 and has been implementing it for the past two years. It organises an annual stakeholder forum to reflect on and plan for the implementation of their WASH master plan.



About Kabarole District

Kabarole District is located in Mid-Western Uganda and is part of the Kingdom of Toro. Its surface area is 1,814 km² and has a population of about 380,000 people with an average household size of 4.0 people. The district has one county (Burahya), 6 town councils, 11 sub-counties and 665 villages and one municipality - Fort Portal. Agriculture is the main source of livelihood and employs over 80 % of the population.



Key activities in the learning visit

District Assembly Technical Session with Ugandan delegation

This was the first engagement of the visiting team with the hosts in Asutifi North District on 24 September 2019. The main purpose of this meeting was to introduce the Ugandan delegation to decentralised WASH delivery within the local government system of Ghana. The meeting also enabled the delegation to understand the contents of the Asutifi North District master plan, known locally as the ANAM Initiative.

The meeting was held in the office of the District Chief Executive (DCE) with participation from key technical and political members of the District Assembly. A brief about the government system in Ghana was given as well as a detailed presentation of the WASH situation in Asutifi North District. Also, the Asutifi North District WASH master plan was explained. This included a detailed description of the process of developing the plan and how other stakeholders, especially partners funded by CNHF, were involved.

Key questions of this meeting are captured in the Q&A session following the presentations from both sides;

Question

Response

How do we engage the private sector like private companies, such as Tea Companies in Kabarole, the way you engage the mining companies in Asutifi for WASH improvements? Is it just Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) or is there a form of partnership?

In Asutifi North District, the contributions towards WASH implementation by the mining companies are part of a Memorandum of Understanding with the district. The district leadership continues to engage with the companies on making contributions also in the form of CSR.

How are you involving the cultural leaders and national house of chiefs at regional level?

The Traditional Chiefs (Nana Association) have direct representation in the District Assembly and offer good collaboration and involvement in the implementation of the ANAM initiative. They influenced the creation of the Asutifi North District and are therefore a key stakeholder. Key decisions are taken in informal settings like funerals.

How are the communities involved in the sustainability of the water systems?	Before the ANAM initiative, it used to be that the communities looked at the district as taking sole responsibility for service delivery and maintenance. However, the pay-as-you-fetch method has been introduced on key piped water systems to ensure sustainability.
Regarding community adoption and uptake of the initiatives, what did you use to ensure attitude change?	One community example of pay-as-you-fetch was used to persuade the communities to use this approach. It has now been set as a condition for any water intervention in Asutifi North District.
Does the 20 % of the district budget dedicated to WASH not cause a disadvantage to other sectors?	A four-year medium-term plan guided by national guidelines allows for this and WASH in Asutifi North District is seen as the main development driver, which contributes to other sectors. Every year annual action plans are included in the District Assembly's Fund.
How is water quality catered for under the ANAM initiative?	A water system's rate structure providing revenue for some form of water quality testing and treatment is instituted. There is also a water quality agreement with the Ghana water company stipulating the quality of water that should be provided by their services.
How are issues of WASH in health care facilities (HCFs) addressed by partners?	For any health facility to be allowed to operate, it must have a WASH infrastructure. Maintenance is done by the health facility and quarterly in-service training on Infection Prevention and Control (IPCs) and community health education are done. Improvements for WASH in HCFs are still ongoing with the help of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).



Technical discussion on the master plan in the DCE's office - Asutifi North District

Participation in the Asutifi North District annual stakeholder review meeting

The Asutifi North District annual stakeholder review meeting on the progress of implementation of the WASH master plan was held on 25 September 2019. It enabled the Uganda team to observe and learn how Asutifi North District conducts annual stakeholder meetings on the implementation of the master plan as a form of accountability, monitoring, learning and stakeholder mobilisation. For the Uganda team, this was the key event of their visit.

This review meeting is an annual event organised by the District Assembly in conjunction with the WASH Hub Coordinating office which includes implementing partners like World Vision, Aquaya Institute, IRC among others. The meeting is presided over by the District Chief Executive and the District Coordinating Director while the District Planner facilitates the discussions. This indicated that strategic direction is driven by the district political and technical leaders in Asutifi North District.

Discussions centred on updates of the progress of implementation of the WASH master plan; receiving feedback from stakeholders on status of implementation, challenges faced and forward planning for the next year. Discussions were carried out in groups to develop multi-sectoral strategies to implement the WASH master plan. The Uganda delegation also participated in the discussions with inputs from experiences in Kabarole.



Visiting team participating in the group discussions

Participation in the Asutifi North General Assembly Meeting

The General Assembly is the equivalent of the District Council in Uganda. The Uganda delegation was invited to attend and observe proceedings of the General Assembly Meeting, which is the highest decision-making body of the district. The Assembly deliberates, legislates and performs executive functions under the leadership of the Presiding Member (Speaker in Uganda) with the District Coordinating Director (Chief Administrative Officer in Uganda) acting as Secretary.

Kabarole District chairperson addressed the Asutifi North District General Assembly and expressed gratitude towards their generosity and strides towards universal access to WASH. He expressed interest to host a Ghana Delegation from Asutifi North District to allow cross learning on implementation of the WASH master plan. He officially invited the Asutifi North District Chief Executive and the Assembly to Kabarole district. This was accepted by the District Assembly.



Chairperson Kabarole district addressing the Asutifi North District Assembly

Field trip to identified project sites in the district:

The Uganda delegation was given an opportunity to visit several projects to learn first-hand of the activities covered under the implementation phase of the ANAM Initiative. These included the following;

Hub Office:

This is the coordinating centre for the ANAM initiative. It is mainly run by the implementing partners in the district, namely IRC, World Vision, Aquaya Institute and Safe Water Network.

Ntotroso Water Supply System:

A new community water supply system was installed and is being managed on the pay-as-you-fetch model. Aquaya Institute has supported the caretakers with a kiosk and start-up capital to enable them not only to manage the tap stands but also trade in merchandise to boost their income. It was noted, however, that the pay-as-you-fetch model is still a challenge, as is the case in Kabarole, because of alternative water sources where no user fee is being collected. The kiosk is also separate from the water tap and because of the need to display the merchandise, caretakers are not using the kiosk for the intended purpose. The team recommended a re-design of the kiosk to include the tap stand and fitted with shelves for display of merchandise.



At Ntotroso Water Supply System – Pay-as-you-fetch water kiosk

Panaba Community

The team visited Panaba community which had received a new borehole from World Vision. The community had agreed to maintain their water sources by adopting the pay-as-you-fetch model and a strict safe water chain is adhered to. The traditional chief/ Nana plays a key role in community management of the water systems. It was noted that only a small fee is collected which may not be sufficient for the community to do long-term replacement (Capital Maintenance Expenditure) or rehabilitation. The team was informed that while it has been embraced, some of the community members felt left out as they were not able to pay for water.



At Panaba Community borehole constructed by World Vision. The Uganda team made a contribution of 2 Ghana Cedis which was received and registered

Key lessons learnt

The different members of the Uganda delegation have submitted the following lessons learnt:

Pius (DWO):

Ability of the district to mobilise its resources from the local stakeholders to compliment the National Government transfers and contributions from CSOs or Development Partners. “I would like Kabarole District to take initiative to identify non-WASH stakeholders like tea estates, cement factories etc. to contribute towards WASH just like the mining companies support Asutifi North District WASH Master Plan”.

In addition, the use of data to influence and inform key decisions is important. Implementation of the Asutifi North District WASH Master Plan is driven by data. “I am keen on seeing us harmonise data collection and centrally manage WASH data to guide implementation of the WASH master plan”.

Olive (ADWO- Sanitation / Health Inspector):

To implement the WASH master plan, all partners work together as a team behind the district technical staff. “That is why I have adopted the same style of ensuring all partners come together for sanitation work. This will ensure that all of us focus on Karangura and Harugogo Sub Counties. It is also important to map stakeholders and pay attention to what each stakeholder is interested in or has strength in such that the whole spectrum of WASH provision is met. For example, I have noted HEWASA are interested in community/social aspects of WASH, Protos is on IWRM and IRC is more in capacity building and coordination...”.

Aaron (Secretary for Works & Technical Services):

Key solution taken from the Ghana exchange learning visit is how they have organised intersectoral coordination under the District Planner. He uses the master plan to guide the entire district development, making sure all sectors are inter-linked. “Also, the WASH data hub and joint financing with partners were key lessons I drew from the exchange learning visit and we need to push for the same in the technical teams and within the political leadership.”

Martin (IRC Regional WASH Advisor):

The WASH master plan can be used as a strong tool for mobilising resources from within the district and from support agencies only if all partners unite and believe in it. This calls for robust dissemination mechanisms for the Kabarole District WASH master plan to all WASH and non-WASH partners and within the district establishment.

Jane (Country Director IRC):

There is a challenge of ensuring that nobody is left behind following the equality and non-discrimination qualities of service provision. The Asutifi North District is fully in charge of the implementation of the WASH master plan with both the Coordinating Director and the District Chief Executive highly interested and understanding the ANAM initiative. Key meetings like the stakeholder review meeting are organised by the district local government with financial contributions from all implementing partners.

The media and other networks should be used to disseminate information about the master plan, and to also involve the communities e.g., use at least one radio station to promote outreach

programmes related to the plan, organise recorded or live programmes. Other partners in the district can be called upon to participate in such meetings as panellists/discussants. It would be important to harness the role of cultural institutions like Toro Kingdom the way Asutifi North District has fully engaged the Nana Council.

Like in Ghana, the role of IRC Uganda in the implementation of the Kabarole WASH master plan is of a facilitator enabling coordination, reporting, communication, monitoring and working with the district as a partner.

Daniel (Senior Planner):

As the District Planner, the inclusion of budgets of development partners in the district budgets and work plans demonstrates collective effort and streamlines implementation. “Also, the central coordination of all projects at the planning unit gives the district a clear view of where they are heading and who is making which contribution towards the development. We need to increase the coordination of all implementation in Kabarole under the planning unit”. The mainstreaming of the WASH master plan into district programming as done in Asutifi North District also needs to be done in Kabarole.

Phiona (Chief Administrative Officer):

The exchange learning visit was very helpful to me as district technical leader. “It gave me exposure to storm out of the comfort zone to embrace and nurture changes for the district’s overall development. For instance, I realised that decentralisation should be far grounded to enable the person at lower level to demand for a service best needed such as improved WASH. Synergy between government /public sector, private sector and cultural institutions is the vibrant driver to the robust development at lower levels of governance”.

Richard (District Chairperson):

I am grateful to have led this team to the learning journey. “While the two countries and districts have a great resemblance, I learnt a lot about ensuring that the District Local Government leads the implementation of the WASH master plan by coordinating efforts of all stakeholders. Me and my team came up with action plans which we must implement and have progress to show by the time we host our colleagues from Ghana”.

Action Points for Kabarole District Local Government

S/N	ACTION POINT	AUDIENCE OR PARTICIPANTS	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
1	Hold a planning meeting to dissect and digest the WASH master plan by district level platforms for purposes of thorough understanding and having a common vision.	District Executive District technical planning committee WASH task team	Chairman
2	Hold WASH conference	DEC, DTPC, WASH task team S/County & parish chiefs, Health facility in-charges, head teachers, CSOs, religious institutions, corporate institutions	Chairman
a	Budgeting cycle at parish and sub-county levels	All stakeholders	District Planner
b	Rolling out of the DDPIII	All stakeholders	District Planner
3	Appointment of a focal person to fast track implementation of the WASH master plan	District HR	Chief Administrative Officer
4	Setting up an information hub to manage data and track progress	Water officer, Pius, Olive	District Planner
a	Have coordination meetings with all partners and create a platform for easy coordination (DWSC meeting)	All partners in WASH	Chief Administrative Officer
b	Update the inventory of partners in our district	Chief Administrative Officer	Chief Administrative Officer
5	Need to get a health inspector to be focal person to guide technical implementation of sanitation programmes supported by IRC in Kijura town council	Town Clerk Kijura town council	Chief Administrative Officer
a	Write proposals to corporate organisations e.g., Hima cement, banks, etc. to support sanitation	Pius	Chairman

	infrastructure in schools and health centres	District Education Officer District Inspector of schools	
b	Engage media houses	Radio stations, TV stations, newspapers	Olive
c	<p>Celebrate WASH related days and use them to mobilise stakeholders for implementation of the WASH master plan, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Menstrual Hygiene Day • My 1st day at school • Global Handwashing Day • Sanitation Week • Water Week • World Toilet Day <p>(all customised to our context guided by the master plan)</p>	<p>District Education Officer</p> <p>District Health Educator</p> <p>District Health Inspector</p> <p>Head teachers</p> <p>Health Inspectors/Assistants</p>	Chairman

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