

Report on introduction Visit

Kitgum District

19 February 2010

final version

by:

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1. Introduction

With funding from the Austrian Development Agency, this district- and sub-county learning and action research project was started in October 2009. The main thrust of the initiative was to assist the local government and NGOs to increase their performance on rural sanitation and hygiene, therefore also the project name “*Performance Improvement through Learning on Sanitation*”, abbreviated PILS. Learning and action research were the two main modes of implementations. The Project Brief (v.2) is attached for more details.

In October 2009, a small team from NETWAS Uganda and IRC Int. Water and Sanitation Centre made an inception visit to Kitgum and the other two project districts Gulu and Pader. The learning initiative was discussed with many DLG staff, political leaders and representatives of NGOs. The overall conclusion of the visit was that Kitgum sector staff wanted more information on activities and outputs although the idea of learning and action research on rural sanitation and hygiene for household and schools for increased effectiveness and sustainability was found a good initiative. Particularly in view of the changing situation and the many challenges political leaders, local government, NGOs and rural institutions including households are confronted with. A summary of findings is attached as Annex 2.

This report covers the Introduction visit to Kitgum in February 2010, when also Gulu and Pader were visited. The main aim of the visit was to establish a comprehensive ownership of the project, its goals and approach within the District Water and Sanitation Coordinating Committee (DWSCC), the committee that coordinates all activities in WASH among all key district stakeholders (technocrats, politicians and NGOs).

2. Findings

After the introduction on the ADA-PILS project by CARITAS, IRC and NETWAS a discussion chaired by the DWO gave the following key remarks:

- The meeting indicated that the district coordinates its activities through the following platforms:
 1. The WASH Sector Coordination meetings, conducted jointly with health, water and education (technical nature; successor of WASH Cluster), meets monthly
 2. The DWSCC meetings that involves the District technocrats and political leaders; meets quarterly
 3. Sectoral meetings, more political in nature.
- The district has set up local structures through which it operates. These include SCWSSC, Village Health Teams (VHT) (directly involved at household level), Water Users Committees (WUC) at every water source point and the School Management Committees (SMC) in schools who handle WASH issues in schools.
- Knowledge on sanitation exists in the communities in the district but the challenge is that there is poor practice of sanitation and hygiene in villages
- Villagers, technocrats and other stakeholders have to take up their own responsibilities as less external will be available
- Planning is very important at all levels at the district. Community inputs in planning are limited and not effective; hence bottom up planning with the

involvement of community members (community based participatory planning) was needed, as well as monitoring

- Next to the district-based learning, the project will be implemented as a pilot in two sub counties. Although not in project document, learning at Parish level may be included, that is close to the community where the action research will take place. Action research will develop and test approaches, methods and technologies on acceptance, appropriateness, effectiveness and sustainability.
- The meeting agreed that changing community attitude is very slow and it needs and takes time hence a gradual process. Two years may not be sufficient.
- Measuring of software components is not easy and it may take a lot of patience and hard work.
- It was also found out that OXFAM; an international NGO has been operating in the district and has conducted CLTS training for two villages which have now been declared open defecation free villages in the district and this may call documentation.
- The operation and maintenance of water and sanitation facilities in communities is still a challenge and there is need to strengthen communities' capacities in issues of O&M.
- The district staff expected to get feed back on the findings from the inception visit that IRC and NETWAS U conducted in October 2009 that would inform the district of what the situation is as pertains information collected (see Annex 2).

3. Conclusions

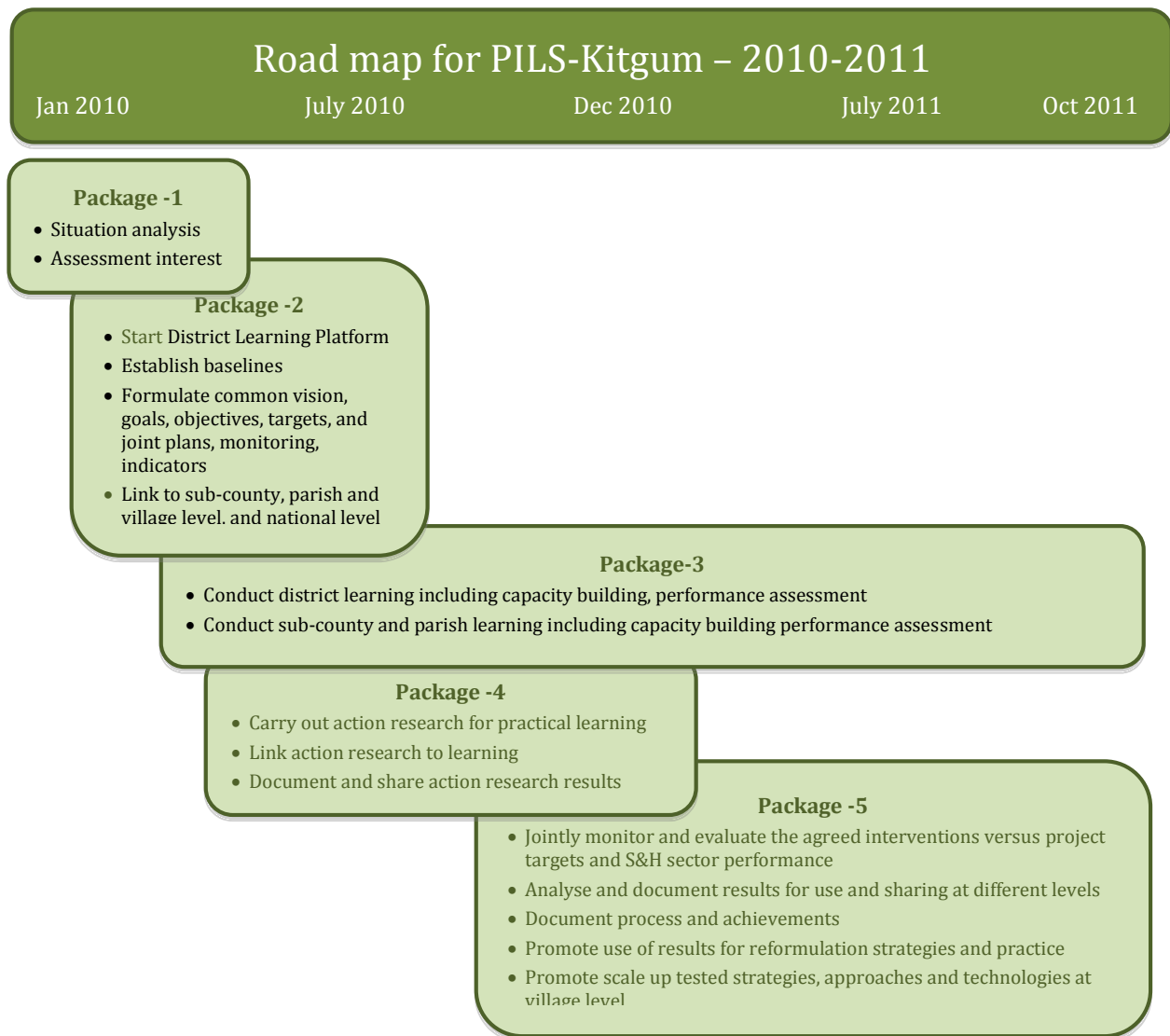
- The two pilot sub-counties should be selected in line with the sanitation situation; the DHI presented latrine and hand-washing facility coverage figures as Dec 31st 2009.
- It was also resolved that the planning process should be community-based so that issues are generated from the grass root communities to the district
- Knowledge on eco-san already existing within the communities (some eco-san facilities have already been installed within sub-counties, also at the district water office). There is need to sensitize communities on the reuse of the products from the eco-san latrines. This may call the involvement of the agriculture department at the district
- A Memorandum of Understanding needs to be developed and endorsed by the district and any other parties involved on the project
- CARITAS also communicated that implementation will be in line with communities' demands as pertains action research in form of the agreed upon sanitation technologies
- Action-research should be in villages or sub-counties that have moved a step in sustainable sanitation development; neighbouring sub-counties can also learn from these
- It was suggested to involve local people from villages/schools involved in the Action Research in Radio Talk shows
- The sub-counties selected for the project per unanimously agreement are **Omiya-Anyima** and **Akwang** (latrine coverage at 20.2% and 20% and hand washing facility coverage at 22.9% and 10% respectively as per 31st Dec 2009(source DHI Office)- The two areas were selected based on their accessibility for the project and

strategic locations in facilitating replication of new ideas to neighbouring, non target sub counties.

4. The way forward

1. The role of project structures need to be communicated clearly to DWSCC
2. A KAP study will be done as a bench mark for the project from the different levels of the district i.e. district, sub-county, parish and village levels in the hanging context from humanitarian aid to development.
3. The road map for the project will be developed (CARITAS/IRC/NETWAS and DWO to take lead and inform the DWSCC, CAO and Council)
4. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between project and district to be developed and endorsed by the district and the relevant parties involved spelling out roles and responsibilities by each partner on the project.

Now the project has been centrally placed within the DWSCC, the district ownership is general and wide, and the two pilot Sub-Counties have been selected, the project can further plan, discuss and detail its envisaged activities and deliverables. The draft project roadmap is presented below. A detailed Gantt chart 2010 (v.2) has been attached as annex 5.



Annex

1. List participants introduction meeting
2. Summary sheet of October 2009 Inception visit
3. Project Brief v2
4. Project diagram on learning platforms at district, sub-county and parish level
5. Project Gantt chart –v2

Annex 1 List participants

Kitgum District Introduction meeting 19 Feb 2010

Venue DW office – 15:00-17:30h

	Name	Organisation	Title
1.	Mr. Ocola, Bosco	LCV	Vice Chairperson
2.	Mr. Picho, Willy	DLG	DWO
3.	Mrs. Akidi, Joan	DLG	D-CDO
4.	Mr. Omoo, John	DLG	DHI
5.	Mr. Okaka, Amo Okwe	DLG	DEO
6.		DLG	Ass Water Officer
7.	Mr. Odong, Patrick	AVSI	Prog Officer
8.	Mr. Okello, David	CARITAS Gulu	Ag Deputy Director
9.	Mr. Obol, Andrew	CARITAS Gulu	Branch Coord Kitgum
10.	Mr. Okello, Charles Owiny	CARITAS Gulu	Progr Manager Livelihoods & Development
11.	Mr. Mwesige, Daniel	NETWAS Ug	Programme Officer
12.	Mr. Smet, Jo	IRC Int W&S Centre	SPO

Annex 2

Summary Inception Visit-Kitgum – Oct 2009

The IRC-NETWAS team met with Ag CAO, DWO, DHI, DHO, DEO, DCDO, Secretary Health LC5, AVSI, COW, ODISAN, NICRAD, Christ the King Catholic Women Ass, NGO Forum

1. Stakeholders in sanitation and hygiene, and current situation

- Currently the latrine coverage in households and institutions is 35% and hand-washing facilities are present in 32% of homes and institutions.
- Hand washing practice is low and this leads to diseases like cholera and Hepatitis E.
- Software has been given less attention in the past, the emphasis was on hardware: water supply.
- 10% of district budget only for software, at sub county level it is not sufficient. DHI hopes that we can help save them.
- NGOs have provided digging tools and sanplats to communities. (Later, they said there were no local NGOs).
- DWSCC exists and is functional and is chaired by the CAO and vice chairperson is a member. But currently the sector working group is the active platform for planning and coordination

Schools

The District Education Office works with the District Health Office to target behaviour change at schools, so that pupils share good hand washing and sanitation behaviour. VHTs work with schools and WASH meetings are held with teachers and pupils. Targeting 65% sanitation coverage in schools by the end of the year. Maintenance of water taps is a problem. There is vandalism by the community. There is a need to educate communities around schools.

Latrine coverage in schools is improving and the pupils/stance ratio stands at 1:50. SFG/PAF has allocated funds for VIP latrines in schools. But there is no budget for maintaining and emptying latrines when full. DWO proposes 'drainable' latrines or even ecosan. There is a challenge of management of the waste. Currently there are 26 schools

who do not have a water point within 0,5 km. Schools lack funds for borehole maintenance, so they need to mobilise parents/ the community. There are some places where groundwater is not available.

Households

They have set the condition that to receive NUSAF assistance a household must have a latrine. One sub-county, Angor, has a problem of collapsing soil. Due to this, the sub-county had requested the construction of an EcoSan at sub-county headquarters. However, there are problems with proper use of the facility.

Water point O&M is not adequate. User fees have been waived due to the emergency situation and return process. DWO recommends water source committees to have a management plan before a water source is commissioned.

Institutions (health centres)

Some Health centres do not have water or sanitation facilities and have been closed.

2. Transition, roles and attitudes? What challenges and opportunities are there and how might these be addressed/ supported?

80% of population has moved out of the camps and they are demanding services. PRDP priorities are water, education and health, but water gets the lowest budget. DWO is encouraging the use of local materials for latrine construction. Provision of sanplats should be a supplementary incentive after household makes an initial effort.

The district has prioritised hand washing. Last month the hand washing campaign was launched together with development partners. The LC5 chairperson has written letters to raise awareness of the importance of hand washing to all leaders, schools, CDOs and media.

Now that emergency situation has ended they are shifting from WASH cluster (coordinated by UNICEF) to sector working group. NGOs are phasing out. Most water related interventions are implemented

through the district. The implementation structure is in place (DWSCC, HI, HA and VHTs) and staff is trained and adequate, only transportation to visit the communities and monitor is lacking.

In the past there has been a difficulty of handouts (facilitation money) by NGOs. Initiatives should go through existing district structures and follow district guidelines.

3. Performance improvement and capacity needs

- Interest in rainwater harvesting for health centres due to deep ground water table
- Work closely with districts and sub-counties to help in uniform implementation, following guidelines
- Accountability and monitoring/ reporting results should be strengthened
- Water management committees are weak and follow up is needed at local level to ensure that they have plans

4. How could we support 'learning' in sanitation and hygiene

We should work through the district structures and not through NGOs. Transportation is a constraint to learning and improvement in communities as Districts cannot follow up.

5. Proposed way forward

District is eager to move ahead with ADA-PILS.

Priorities need to be set jointly with heads of departments (DWO, DHI, DEO) and shared with executive.

NETWAS/ IRC should contact them directly for follow up and notifying them of next steps.

6. And from meetings with NGOs present in Kitgum:

Some challenges:

- Difficulty accessing funds for implementation in communities
- Villagers are not willing to volunteer.
- Many coordinating bodies, but little result
- Not aware of DWSCC
- Unclear about guidelines and structures: bureaucracy in decision making, delays and conflicting messages
- Districts have so many meetings and workshops already; we do not need to be more burdened. Someone needs to oversee if results are being made.

Meeting NGOs active in Kitgum:

AVSI – school latrine construction

COW Foundation – through schools; school health clubs; hand washing; community hygiene dialogue sessions

Project Brief- February 2010 – version-2

Performance Improvement through Learning in Sanitation

District- and Sub-county-based learning and Action-Research for increased performance, innovation and change in rural household and school sanitation & hygiene

Post-Humanitarian development

North Uganda is going through a transition phase from strongly-externally supported humanitarian aid to development. Three to four out of five IDPs have left the camps and are now either in the transition camps or in the villages. At the same time many humanitarian NGOs and UN agencies have left Northern Uganda or have substantially reduced their programmes.

The returnees and their living environment

These returnees are faced with many challenges to develop their livelihoods and get to grips with the routines of life. Actually most have to start from scratch, building up shelters, cultivating the bare land, and perhaps facing even insecurity. Education and health may be priorities after a shelter has been built and food secured. But having been in camps for more than a generation, and having been fully dependent on food, housing, health and education assistance from outside, may not have made them well equipped with life-skills. Helping them to take up their own responsibility in their family development and become less dependent on external aid needs a structured approach. The returnees' perception and attitude may still be geared towards the dependency situation of the camp life. Changing this is a great challenge. In this rural living environment good hygiene and sanitation are key factors for staying healthy in order to be able to have a high productivity, good learning condition and to keep doctors' and medicine bills low. On sanitation and hygiene, potential appropriate approaches and solutions exist that rural households and primary schools can afford and sustain. But these need to be tested in the real village situation. Tested approaches need to be shared with households and schools, and the private sector.



The Local Government, local NGOs and private sector

The District and lower Local Governments face also many challenges in this changed context of new settlements and need/demand for government support on all aspects of life and society. New GoU and Development Partners' funding mechanisms have been established. These funds will definitely be insufficient to address all development demands adequately. Local NGOs face funding gaps as many humanitarian funders left the region. Private sector is hardly present in the rural areas because of low demand and profitability.



On the other hand the new situation creates opportunities to look at the tasks differently from the perspective of governance, planning, implementation and roles & responsibilities. The situation in Northern Uganda is unique; it marks a new era and is therefore an excellent learning ground. Implementation modalities, approaches and technologies with high cost-effectiveness and sustainability potential may be entirely different than elsewhere in Uganda where the situation has been stable for long. This may require district and sub-county stakeholders analysing the present planning, financing and implementation modalities and searching together for good practices that fit the contextual factors best. The overall aim of this project is to create good governance on sanitation and hygiene. Support towards increased efficiency and effectiveness in delivering a sustainable sanitation and hygiene service forms the core of this project. With local government, NGOs, private sector, schools and households as main players, this can only be achieved with optimal coordination, harmonisation and collaboration between them. This is primarily the task of the District Water and Sanitation Coordinating Committee (DWSCC), the institution where this initiative is anchored.

Learning for better performance

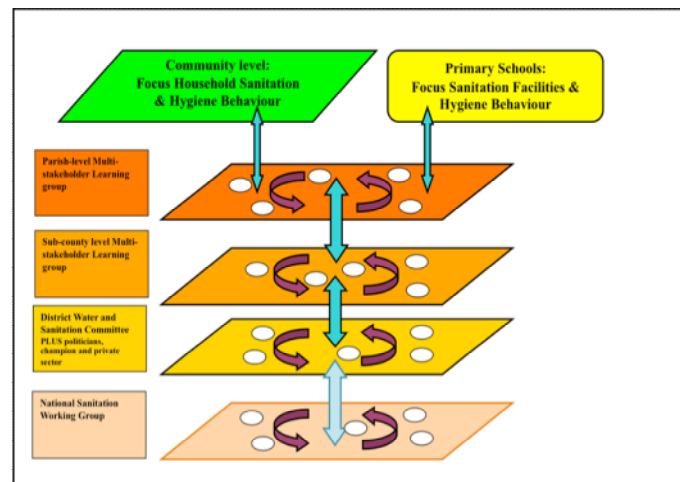
Changes in our work procedures do not come automatically. The government and organisations may demand us to follow certain procedures and guidelines, or we just continue as we have no better alternative. This project's starting point is that in order to change for any improvement we have to learn. Learn on how we do it, how successful we are, and how we can improve. The operational mode of this project is two-fold and at three levels: *learning platforms* and *Action-Research*.

The learning component operates at district, sub-county and parish level involving all key sanitation & hygiene stakeholders. The Action Research is at household and school level.

Where the actual decision-making on coordination and harmonisation will take place within the DWSCC (S/C-WSCC), they will commission the reflection, analysis and learning to the learning platforms. The ownership of learning is among the DWSCC members.

Envisaged deliverables

- *District-based multi-stakeholder learning platforms* are functional and contribute to changes in perceptions and attitudes, increased effectiveness on coordination and harmonisation, more capacities, decision-making for improved performance;
- *DWSCCs are having realistic performance targets*, innovative strategies and monitoring and accountability systems;
- *Stakeholders in selected sub-counties and villages take on their responsibilities*, use improved monitoring methods and tools, carry out Action-Research, construct several S&H facilities at households, schools and S/C offices, have increased



capacities on approaches and technologies including sanitation marketing, contribute to better S&H conditions in rural households and schools;

- *National stakeholders value district-based learning*, promote it and share experiences and products to other partners and regions, contribute to the discussion on reformulation of strategies, approaches and guidelines, and share findings globally.

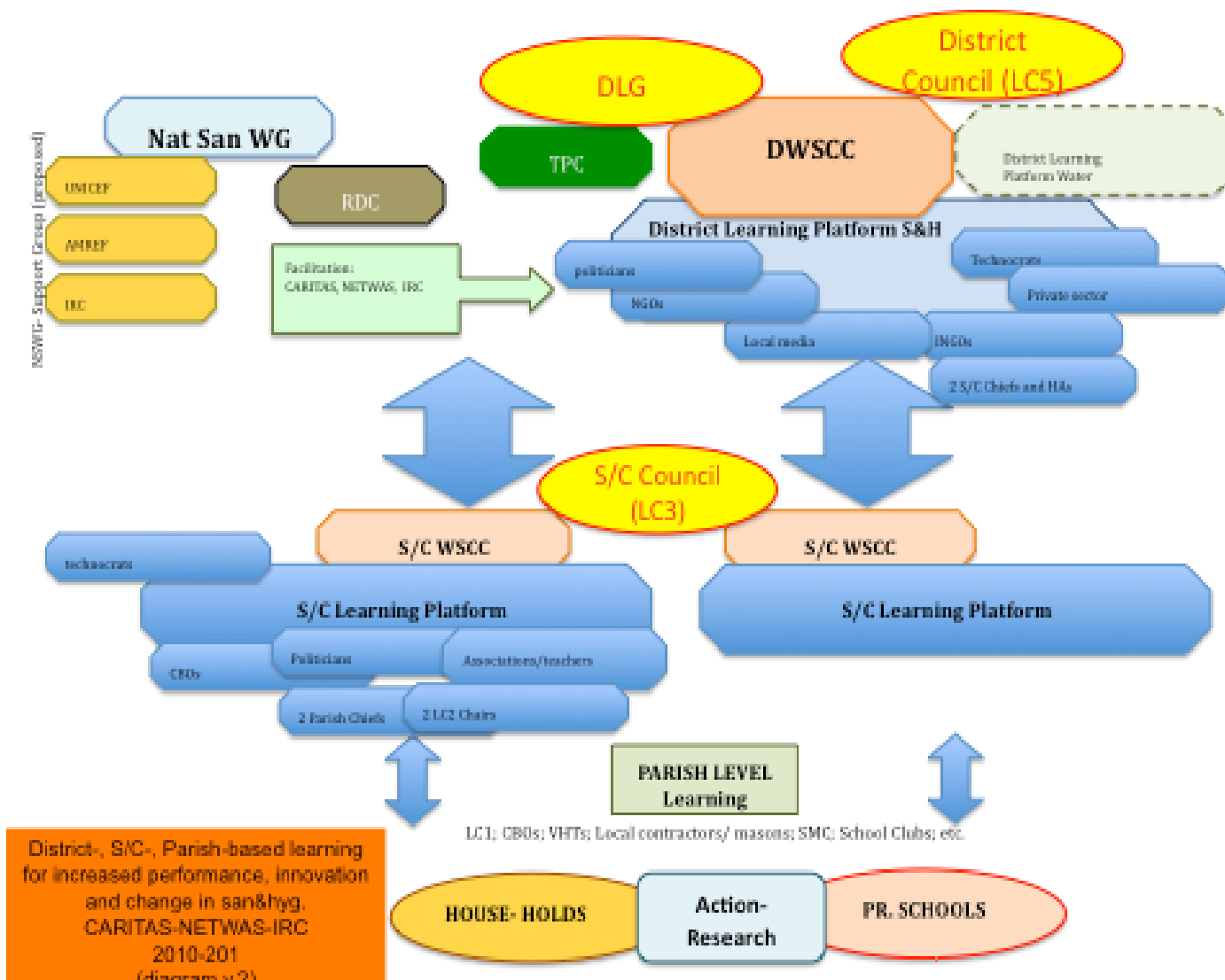
Project details

The project districts are Gulu, Kitgum and Pader. The implementers are Caritas Gulu (contact Charles Owiny OKELLO owinyix@yahoo.co.uk), NETWAS Uganda (contact Daniel MWESIGE netwasuganda@gmail.com) and IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre (budget-holder) (contact Jo SMET smet@irc.nl). The project runs from October 2009 to September 2011. Project budget is € 388k.

Performance Improvement through Learning on Sanitation - PILS

A district and sub-county-based learning and action-research project in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader – 2010-2011

Annex 4
Learning diagram v.2

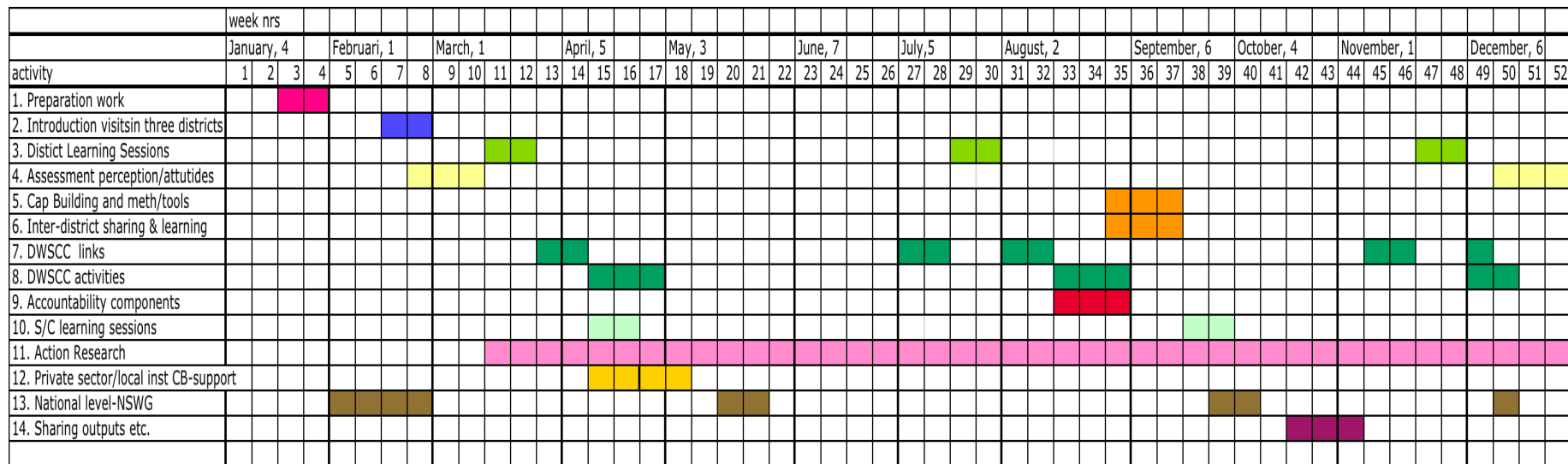


A project funded by Austrian Development Agency

Performance Improvement through Learning on Sanitation - PILS

A district and sub-county-based learning and action-research project in Gulu, Kitgum and Pader – 2010-2011

Annex 5



Planning - Gantt Chart 2010 - v.2



NETWAS Uganda



A project funded by  Austrian Development Agency