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HOW DISTRICT BASED MULTI-STAKEHOLDER LEARNING IN LEAPPS MADE A DIFFERENCE

At the start of LeaPPS in 2007, a situation analysis in the 4 districts¹ where LeaPPS was implemented revealed barriers to effectiveness and cost-efficiency in sanitation and hygiene. They included weak coordination at district and sub county levels between the individuals and organisations responsible for sanitation and hygiene, limited access to information and sector guidelines developed at national level, challenges to apply the guidelines and few incentives or opportunities to share and document local best operational practices. To address these constraints, LeaPPS brought together the key stakeholder groups with a role in hygiene and sanitation improvement, such as local government technical staff, district and sub county politicians, Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), media and Technical Support Units (TSUs).

Objectives of LeaPPs

The overall objective was to generate more cost-efficient and effective sanitation and hygiene programmes, sanitation facilities and behaviours.

Specific objectives:

- To raise the profile of sustainable sanitation and hygiene among politicians and technical staff
- To share lessons and innovations
- To agree on common approaches and process steps in sanitation and hygiene
- To enhance capacities and knowledge for more effective and sustainable WASH improvements
- To improve district and sub county harmonisation, coordination and collaboration in WASH by linking with the DWSCC and relevant programmes.

Principles that guided the learning process:

- Involve stakeholders from different levels (both district and sub-county)
- Build on existing structures (mainly DWSCC)
- Value diverse perspectives (users, politicians, government, civil society, private sector)
- Focus on *learning for change* (change for sustainability, cost-efficiency and effectiveness)
- Focus on learning through practice (interactive learning sessions and capacity building)
- Test approaches and technologies in participatory action research (link to evidence)
- Document good practices to help institutionalise learning.

¹ Kyenjojo, Kamwenge, Arua and Koboko districts



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RESULTS: Sanitation and hygiene prioritised:

Arua district increased budget allocations from the district water and sanitation conditional grant for hygiene and sanitation from 8% to 12%. District Water and Sanitation Coordination Committees (DWSCC) became more active in all the four districts and as a result more attention was paid to hygiene and sanitation and to points raised during LeaPPS sessions.

Increased information sharing and

coordination: During workshops, joint planning on hygiene and sanitation took place between local councillors, Health Assistants and sub county chiefs. In Koboko district, health and water departments pooled resources for their 2009 sanitation week. Sanitation and hygiene were included in the functional adult literacy (FAL) classes under the Department of Community Development.

Community Based structures were formed and revived in Arua district - these played an important role in the promotion of hygiene and sanitation in some communities like Aroi sub county.

Strengthened capacities and knowledge for effective sanitation and hygiene

improvements: Innovations such as Participatory Hygiene Transformation (PHAST), Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS), child friendly learning methods and community health clubs were supported. Innovations in technology included the testing of the low cost ecosan toilets such as the arbor loo and fossa alterna; however, some challenges regarding the acceptability and reuse of by-products of these technologies still remain.

LeaPPS helped to strengthen management structures like water user committees, village health teams, school management committees and parent teachers associations.

In Kyenjojo, executive meetings are held after LeaPPS sessions where sanitation issues are raised and solutions are derived. The district also developed a reporting format for hygiene and sanitation performance.

Improved hygiene and sanitation

transformation: Exemplary leadership led to improved hand washing plus sanitation and hygiene facilities. An example is in Koboko district where the DHI carried out a baseline survey on hygiene and sanitation in the whole district providing key data for planning and analysis.

Another positive example is Aroi sub county in Arua district, where latrine coverage increased from 70.2% to 75%, bath shelters from 50% to 90%, refuse pits from 60% to 81% and drying racks from 65% to 85%. In Kyenjojo, latrine coverage increased from 47% to 68%. In Koboko, UGX 980,000 was provided for an ecosan demonstration.

LESSONS: District based learning involves analysing performance and methodologies and using experience and knowledge to improve project or sector performance.

District-based learning workshops are not a stand-alone event, but are linked to existing district level structures, such as the DWSCC.



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Learning is not an end in itself. It should enable change. An initiative like LeaPPS can have many benefits.

It has the potential to: **(A)** Strengthen the linkages between planners, implementers, regulators and communities, **(B)** Facilitate the replication and scaling up of good practices and innovations, **(C)** Minimise the repetition of ineffective approaches and errors, **(D)** Enable more effective and efficient use of resources, and **(E)** Build capacities, or initiate links with local capacity builders.

Further reading and links:

Water and Sanitation Resource Centre, Uganda:

www.watsanuganda.watsan.net/page/602

IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre:

<http://www.irc.nl/page/38717>

SNV Netherlands Development Organization:

www.snvworld.org