

The LVEMP II Civil Society Watch E-bulletin

A Monthly from the **East African Sustainability Watch Network** comprising: Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development (UCSD), Tanzania Coalition for Sustainable Development (TCSD) and Sustainable Environmental Development Watch Network (SusWatch Kenya)

June 2016

UCSD Works With the Uganda Public Water Utility to Reduce Non-Revenue Water Loss in Jinja and Iganga



From left to Right: The General Manager NWSC Jinja area - Charles Okwonzi; Senior Commercial officer Titus Niwamanya, PMS Biodiversity /Water from USAID Kenya and East Africa Brian O.Otiende, M& E Specialist for the PREPARED Project - Praxides Nekesa at a meeting in Jinja NWSC board room 2. Eng. Paul Isagara the Team Leader of NWSC Iganga cluster explaining how the technology from ITRON detects water leakages 3. Davis Omusoga - the NBS Radio host of the Radio Campaign by NWSC (Photos by UCSD)

Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development is working with National Water and Sewerage Corporation (NWSC) Jinja and Iganga through a grant from Tetrattech / USAID East Africa to implement the Planning for Resilience in East Africa through Policy, Research and Economic Development (PREPARED) Project that contribute towards building NWSC service delivery improvement and development of an interactive and supportive customer outreach framework. In 2015, UCSD conducted a baseline through a Customer Satisfaction Survey in 4 branches of NWSC which are Jinja town branch, Njeru branch, Bugembe branch and Iganga branch. 497 household surveys were done and Focus Group Discussions were held focusing on connection to water and sewer services, regularity and continuity of water supply, water quality and cost of water.

The results indicating satisfaction levels with NWSC in resolving billing and account errors showed that 51% of customers were satisfied while 49% of customers were dissatisfied; inquiry of NWSC customers contacting NWSC branch offices indicated 68% of the customers had contacted NWSC while 32% had not contacted NWSC. These among other findings enabled UCSD to develop a Customer Engagement Framework and Strategy with the recommendation to institute regular forums to allow customers to interface with NWSC managers beyond reporting challenges and constraints.

This strategy has seen an improvement in the interaction between NWSC staff and their customers in Jinja and Iganga, providing hope for a future range of flexible opportunities for customers to be involved and influence and shape the water and sewerage services they receive from NWSC.

As part of this Strategy, NWSC staffs have visited places of worship, to interact with customers held a 15 weekly radio campaign on reducing Non-Revenue Water (water that has been produced and is "lost" before it reaches the customer).

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Losses can be real losses - through leaks, sometimes also referred to as physical losses or apparent losses - for example through theft or metering inaccuracies) The Project is now in the process of establishing Water Community Communication Clubs that seek to enhance stakeholder participation in provision of water and sewerage services through communication, planning and coordination. With a membership of 20, WACOCOs will comprise Local government leaders and councillors, NWSC representation and can co-opt National Area Legislators where necessary. According to NWSC Jinja, NRW has now reduced from 45% to the current 26% as a result of this intervention, NWSC Jinja own efforts and other factors.

As a result of the information on good practices, knowledge about water management, billing, processes of acquiring new connections and customer obligations highlighted by the radio campaign within the communities, there is notable attitude change.

Some customers spoke of the benefits of this radio campaign that broadcast between November 2015 and March 2016. Tsubira Suleiman a customer from Amber court in Jinja town centre branch acknowledges that information he obtained from the radio campaign has changed his perception of water." I had never known how to count units of water I consume but after listening to the radio talk shows, am now very confident that am paying the right water bills. I now appreciate that water is the cheapest commodity in Uganda, imagine a unit of water has about 50 twenty - litre jerry cans of water that cost less than 5000/=." Another customer has gained knowledge from the radio campaign and he notes "After listening to the radio programs, I have learnt how to calculate my water bills. I deduct the current reading from the previous reading then I add the VAT and service charges"

"NWSC has mobile applications that are mobile phone friendly and I have learnt how to pay my water bills through my mobile phone. I never knew this until I listened to the radio program. Now I pay through my telephone. This is the kind of information that makes us proud as NWSC because we are moving with global trends", observes a water user from Bugembe. From Iganga, Sarah Naikoba says that "I have learnt that the water bill has telephone contacts of the territorial manager and the toll free telephone line. I now take time to study my water bill in detail than in the past. I got to know this after listening to the radio program".

EAC Launches Five- year plan to boost Fisheries Management in Lake Victoria



The East African Community (EAC) on Tuesday launched the five-year Lake Victoria Fisheries Management Plan III (FMP III) that will be stressing on the sustainable utilization of fisheries resources in Africa's largest fresh water lake. The goal of the plan is: "Recovery of biomass of Nile perch with Sustainable utilization of fisheries resources of Lake Victoria basin with equitable opportunities and benefits."

The FMP III is expected to guide the sustainable management of the fisheries resources and thus contribute to poverty alleviation and improvement of livelihoods.

The Lake Victoria fisheries sector provides massive opportunities in terms of income, employment opportunities in both industrial and artisanal processing. Unfortunately is characterised by huge institutional capacity gaps especially at the local community levels (beaches), decline in fish catches across the region and general weakness in Monitoring, Control and Surveillance efforts. This not helped by the inadequate financial provisions at regional and national levels. For example, under the 2016/17 EAC expenditure, the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation budget has dropped by 31% which is not in consonance with the urgent huge fisheries needs including the urgency to roll-out FMPIII. **For more information about the five-year Lake Victoria Fisheries Management Plan III (FMP III), please contact the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation (LVFO), Jinja (Uganda) Email: lvfo-sec@lvfo.org**

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Alert: Lutembe Bay Wetland of International Importance Under Siege!

Lutembe Bay Wetland System is a Ramsar Site No.1637 and an Important Bird Area, situated at the mouth of Lake Victoria's Murchison Bay in Uganda. The site supports globally threatened species of birds, endangered Cichlid fish, and other animal species. The system plays an important hydrological role, with the swamps surrounding the Murchison Bay acting as natural filters for silt, sediments and excess nutrients in surface runoff, wastewaters from industries, and sewage from Kampala City.

EA SusWatch recently visited Lutembe Bay wetland and now urges ALL relevant Ugandan authorities to instantly implement the **National Environment (Wetlands, River Banks And Lake Shores Management) Regulations, No. 3/2000** (Under section 107 of the National Environmental Act Cap 153). Section 30 (**Protection zones for lake shores**) states: *'All shores of lakes specified in the Seventh Schedule to these Regulations shall have a protected zone of 200 metres measured from the low water mark'*. However, Lutembe Bay is being reclaimed and decimated for a range of human activities like commercial floriculture, commercial and industrial developments, urban wastewater, conversion to agricultural land and the fast growing demand for human settlements. Here below are some pictures of both pitfalls and opportunities offered by this Site:

Pitfalls



Sprawling housing estates threaten the bird sanctuary



Structure is 200 m measured from the low water mark?



Cage farming: regulations not yet clear

Opportunities



A Bird sanctuary



A Wetland with diverse plants & animals



Plant diversity extends offshore

Read the Nat. Env (Wetlands, River Banks & Lake Shores Mgmt. Regulations: <http://tinyurl.com/glqxwg4>