

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)

October 2013

Applauds and frustrations as EA SusWatch Network launches Lake Victoria Climate Change Readiness Brief No. 2



Brick-making in the L. Vic basin is one cause of deforestation & degradation

The Lake Victoria Climate Change Brief No.2 developed from an assessment report commissioned by the East African Sustainability Watch Network was launched in October 2013. The assessment is part of the on-going EA SusWatch Network's LVEMP II Civil Society Watch Project that seeks to lobby and advocate for realization of results-based performance from LVEMP II and implementation of the East African Community Climate Change Policy (EACCCP). Speaking at the Launch and National dissemination of Lake Victoria Climate Change Brief on water and sanitation, Kisumu Governor Jack Ranguma said the people in the Lake Victoria Basin need to be educated on the East African Community

Climate Change policy. He noted that Civil Society Organizations play a vital role in sensitizing communities on regional issues.

At the launch of this Brief in Kampala, appreciation of the findings were found to be real, shocking and need to be addressed fast by the EAC Partner States. However, there was anguish among District Local Government Environment officers from the eight districts of River catchment of Katonga who complained of minimal budgets allocated to the environment and natural resources sector at the district levels, yet that is the front line of implementation. They noted that there are more challenges in regard to water and sanitation including degradation of wetlands through brick making and farming in wetlands. "The water hyacinth is profoundly affecting other lakes as well including Lake Kyoga. People who depend on the lakes are finding it hard to fish and travel. Compounded with overfishing, the challenges call for more funding, surveillance and reprimand", one noted.

Pollution of water has made water consumption risky because there are no adequate wetlands that filter water before getting to the Lake. Sand mining in Mabamba wetland (a Ramsar-listed wetland of international importance since 2006) in Wakiso district was noted as an aggressive activity that has left many gaping pits in wetlands. This is interrupting breeding of fish and causing accidents to residents around the Wet lands. "The central government has failed to acknowledge the importance of the environment and is a key priority sector. It is poorly funded. Out of the budgets of Ministry of Water and Environment the money allocated for environment is 3%, while the rest is meant for water, yet the catchment to protect the water is not well catered for. How can we expect to have continuous water supply yet the catchment including forest, wetlands and are not protected?"

The Principal Agricultural Production and Social Services Officer at the Ministry of East African Community Affairs, Mr. Moses Mwanika Mafabi commended EA SusWatch Network for positively showing governments gaps where they have not performed well.

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'It is good that these gaps have been highlighted. There is need to prioritize environment and natural resources issues in development planning at all levels'. He added that UCSD is giving informed research on natural resources such as water and urged them to periodically point out the gaps. Those should be targeted to create an impact. He added that water is polluted because the wetlands that used to filter the water have been taken over by settlements and factories.

The findings from the assessment on the progress and level of implementation of the EACCCP commitments in the Lake Victoria Basin reveal that water supply for domestic and industrial use is far below the demand levels, on the average only 40% of urban dwellers within the Lake Basin are served with clean water; most of the water supply and sewerage infrastructure is old consisting of very old and out-dated equipment; the conventional waste-water treatment systems have collapsed. For example in Kisumu City, discharge of raw sewage into the Lake Victoria through river Kisat and into Kisumu Bay due to the collapse of the sewerage system. From Rwanda, only 5% of the population is connected to piped water while the rest depend on unimproved water sources for domestic use. In Burundi, the northern and eastern provinces, which are the Lake Basin provinces, have the lowest water supply coverage in the country with Kirundo at 33.2%, Cankuzo at 36.5% and Ruyigi at 31.9%.

The Readiness Brief No.2 assessed effects of climate change on: water availability, water quality, water supply and sanitation services, water accessibility, and socio-economic activities. This brief code named 'Lake Victoria Readiness Brief No.2' proceeds from the first one 'Lake Victoria Readiness Brief No.1' published in September 2012 with a focus on rural energy supply. The Lake Victoria Readiness Brief No.3 to be prepared in 2014 will focus on Agriculture and food security.

Sustainable access to safe drinking water is still a challenge to East Africans in Lake Victoria Basin

Many Communities around Lake Victoria have not yet attained Target 7.C of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 7 (to Halve, by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation). Analysis from the forthcoming *Annual LVEMP II Civil Society Watch Livelihood Case study No. 1* documenting livelihood interventions to establish changes in community livelihoods within catchments of Rivers Katonga and Nyando [Uganda-Rakai and Mubende districts, Kenya-Lower Nyando and Middle Nyando districts]; based on the baseline studies carried out by EA SusWatch Network in 2012. The findings show slow progress towards attaining the drive to halve, by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation, and in some cases a degeneration of efforts.

The UN MDG Report (2013) indicates that 2.1 billion people gained access to improved drinking water sources and that the proportion of the global population using improved sources reached 89% in 2010, up from 76% in 1990. However, from the *Annual LVEMP II Civil Society Watch Livelihood Case Study Case study No.1*, this target is not yet met for communities in Kabodho East, Awach, Koru and Nyando sub-location in Kenya and in Kigando, Myanzi, Bageza, Kyebe, Kagamba and Kifamba communities in

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Uganda respectively. In Kenya, within the middle Nyando, the main household water source during the wet season is rivers / streams at 39.6%, a slight improvement from the baseline scenario that was at 49.2%. Uptake of rain water harvesting has also improved slightly from a baseline of 20.3% in 2012 to 31.5% in 2013. In lower Nyando, the main water source for household remains to be rivers and springs at 58.7%, compared to 54.1% in 2012. The results also show a slight increase in percentage of household's number accessing piped water from 8.2% in 2012 to 16.1%. Sanitation coverage in lower and Middle Nyando is generally high, above the national averages. In lower Nyando, sanitation coverage is at 96.7%, as compared to the baseline which was at 87% , While in middle Nyando there is a decline from 89.4% during 2012 baseline to 89.0% showing an improvement in sanitation access in lower Nyando, and a slightly decline in sanitation coverage in middle Nyando. The study also shows that use of water from unprotected water sources remains high in the two project areas (lower Nyando: 58.7% wet season and 45.3% dry season, Middle Nyando: 39.6% wet season and 53% dry season). The use of rain water during dry season goes down due to inadequate storage facilities. Some of the residents indicated that the uptake of rainwater harvesting is faced by the challenge of storage due to the perceived high cost of rain water storage tanks in the region.

In Uganda, 70% of the respondents from Mubende said they have easy access to water supply points while only 44% from Rakai had easy access to water sources. Across the sub counties, Kagamba is worse off in terms of water accessibility – only 31% of the respondents said they have easy access to a water source. The 3 main sources of water as confirmed by both the key informants and the household data are first unprotected springs and rivers, followed by boreholes and thirdly the protected springs. On water safety, according to the data collected 21% of the respondents in Rakai said that their drinking water is safe, while for Mubende 32% of the respondents reported to be within easy access to safe sources of drinking water. Dirty water is the main water supply challenge in Mubende followed by the long distance to the water sources and the fact that the water springs are not protected. For Rakai district, 40% of the respondents, their biggest challenge in water supply is the distance to the source. In order to mitigate some of the expressed challenges 87% of the total respondents said that they do harvest water from the roof tops of their houses as an alternative source of water. In relation to water harvesting, Rakai district stands at 91%, while Mubende is at 83%. The case for Rakai may be partly explained by some substantial investments in this sector by a number of NGOs that provide supports for construction of both underground and surface water tanks.

Upcoming events

- **World Toilet Day 2013 on November 19, 2013:** Break the taboo around toilets and draw attention to the global sanitation challenge. More: <http://www.worldtoiletday.org/index.php>
- **World Fisheries Day on November 21, 2013:** World Fisher people are facing grave problems due to alleged violations of Water Borders between countries. More: <http://www.cssr.in/content/world-fisheries-day-message>