

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)

April 2013

Community Driven Development sub-project grant to reverse Environment Degradation in Nyakach North District -Kenya



Benefits of a CDD sub-project in Kabodho North Community in Kenya (Dairy cattle and tree nursery). Photo: suswatch Kenya

For the Upper North Kabodho Women Group, their mandate of improving the living standards of group members and their community as a whole is being realised as they benefit from the *The Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project* (LVEMP II) Community Driven Development sub-project (CDD) grants. The group received the first grant of Kenya Shillings 3,350,58, while the community contribution is Kshs 846,210 making a total of Kshs 4,196,790. The group CDD sub-project on soil and water conservation and livestock rearing is one of the LVEMP II best practices in Nyakach district, Kisumu County.

It is among the 93 groups that have received funding. The Women's group is implementing control of soil erosion and have currently planted more than 2,000 indigenous seedlings which they plan to sell to the community around. The group envisages becoming a leading supplier of indigenous trees in the area. The group has also upgraded local cows in 20 homesteads and has established 100 roof catchment units for water harvesting.

Located on a hilly place, the community receives stormy water from the hills, which results in soil erosion from which surface runoff erodes fertile top soil, rendering the land infertile, thus yielding poor food harvests. This group which started operating in 2009 faces an environmental challenge which is the reason they presented a proposal to the National LVEMP II secretariat for support to address issues such as mass environmental degradation. As a way of reviving and regenerating the environment, Upper North Kabodho Women's Group is carrying out integrated activities to revive the livelihoods of people while they conserve the environment.

With regard to tree planting, from the funding received, beneficiaries have set up a tree nursery that has been fenced off, and they have established an office, while new seedlings have been acquired for planting. They plan to promote tree planting by community members on individual farms. Zero grazing units have been established with 12 cows and 2 bulls available. They have acquired two napier grass shredders for the cattle.

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The group also seeks to establish small scale roof catchment units for water harvesting in public schools. They want to implement this by first sensitizing the heads of the beneficiary institutions on the water harvesting project. They plan to purchase and supply 16 plastic water tanks to institutions that have already accomplished construction of the gutters.

Through this project, the group expects to reduce cases of water borne diseases and malnutrition as well as improve the quality of water in the area. Soil erosion in the area is also triggered by inappropriate land use that leads to an increase in the sediment load of the Nyando River that eventually flows to Lake Victoria.

LVEMP II will contribute to broad-based poverty alleviation and improvement of livelihoods of people, by supporting sustainable management of shared natural resources of the Lake Victoria Basin. This will be achieved by among others, supporting CDD subprojects investments in participatory watershed management. The upstream CDD investments in natural resources conservation, such as sustainable soil and water conservation will target both on-site and downstream benefits. The CDD investments will also target livelihoods improvement, through intensification of natural resources use in rain-fed agriculture, livestock production and agro-forestry.

Sub-Saharan Africa makes least progress in Achieving MDGs

The Global Monitoring Report 2013 has revealed that the two least urbanized regions of South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa have significantly higher rates of poverty and continue to lag behind on most Millennium Development Goals. The report titled Rural-Urban Dynamics and the Millennium Development Goals was launched on April 17th 2013.

The report compares the well-being in the countryside (rural) versus the city (urban) and concludes that "Urbanization has been a major force behind poverty reduction and progress towards other MDGs. In South Asia, 60 percent of urban dwellers have access to sanitation facilities, compared with 28 percent in rural areas.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, 42 percent of the urban population has access, compared with 23 percent of rural residents. Access to safe water in urban areas in developing countries was almost complete in 2010, with 96 percent coverage, compared with 81 percent of the rural population having access. According to projections, in 2015, Sub-Saharan Africa's rate for extreme poverty will be 42 percent, or 408 million of the world's 970 million people living in extreme poverty. As a region, Sub-Saharan Africa will miss all 9 MDGs by a significant margin .A corresponding target of 13% has access to basic sanitation and 80%is the distance to the goal achieved in Sub Saharan Africa.49% access to safe drinking water and less than 80% distance to the goal achieved be Sub-Saharan Africa.

In the East African Community, none of the 5 countries has met the sanitation target, while only Uganda has met the water and poverty targets. Rwanda has met the gender parity target, while Burundi and Uganda have recorded sufficient progress before 2015 and Tanzania has recorded insufficient progress for 2015-2020, although acceleration can help attain the target. Rwanda and Uganda have recorded sufficient progress before 2015 in reduction of Infant Mortality respectively. The Global Monitoring Report (GMR) 2013, which is also an annual report card on MDG attainment, finds that progress continues to lag on reducing maternal and child mortality and providing sanitation facilities, targets which will not be met by the MDGs 2015 deadline.

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However, notable progress has been made on reducing extreme poverty, providing access to safe drinking water and eliminating gender disparity in primary education ahead of the MDGs deadline.

According to Kaushik Basu, the World Bank's Chief Economist and Senior Vice President for Development Economics, "The rural-urban divide is quite evident. Megacities and large cities are the richest and have far better access to basic public services; smaller towns, secondary cities, and areas on the perimeter of urban centers are less rich; and rural areas are the poorest," He adds that "But this does not mean unfettered urbanization is a cure-all – the urban poor in many places urgently need better services as well as infrastructure that will keep them connected to schools, jobs and decent health care."

In 2010, 49 percent of rural compared to 83 percent of urban residents had access to safe water. Only 23 percent of rural and 42 percent of urban residents have access to sanitation services. Several factors exacerbate the challenge of narrowing rural-urban disparities in poverty and access to basic services. The rural poor migrate to cities in search of better paying jobs and basic amenities. Migrants with basic education and good health usually find better paying jobs. In rural Kagera in Tanzania, consumption increased more than 120 percent for migrants but only 40 percent for non-migrants.

The report recommends that since Sub-Saharan Africa's majority poor are in rural areas and cannot migrate at once to urban areas, the challenge of delivering MDG-related services is to bridge rural-urban differentials. Any strategy to attain the MDGs should include increasing rural productivity by use of new farm technologies and investment in the human capital development of rural residents; removal of land market distortions; improved connectivity with urban markets; and a fostering of nonfarm activity and rural-urban migration.

The first best policy solution in attaining the MDGs is to equalize services across rural and urban areas so as to boost urbanization through better service delivery in large cities would make them more attractive. Delivering services (water and sanitation) in densely populated areas is more cost effective. According to a global study, on average, the cost of a cubic meter of piped water is \$0.70—0.80 in dense populated areas compared with \$2 in sparsely populated areas. To find better paying urban jobs, rural migrants would need to have basic education and be healthy. Public investment in primary education and health care should be directed to the poor in urban and rural areas. This seems relevant for sparsely populated countries with low urbanization rates as in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Jos Verbeek, Lead Economist at the World Bank and lead author of the GMR says that "Urbanization does matter. However, in order to harness the economic and social benefits of urbanization, policy-makers must plan for efficient land-use, match population densities with the required needs for transport, housing and other infrastructure, and arrange the financing needed for such urban development programs,"

Resources and up-coming events

New staff @ Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development: EA SusWatch Network's *LVEMP II CS Watch Project* has on board a new Finance and Administration Assistant - Mr. Charles Komakech Okecha who has worked with Lake Victoria Regional Local Authorities Cooperation, among others. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration.

Upcoming Event: Twitter Chat on **COP18 Gender Decision on May 14, 2013**. Key objectives and Entry Points: Why is a gender-sensitive approach part of the climate solution? What are the opportunities to contribute? **When:** Tuesday, May 14th at 10:00am EDT (05:00 PM East Africa Time), **Where:** #shesparks & @GGCA_Gender on Twitter. More: <http://tinyurl.com/cnz6vot>