

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)

November 2013

UN calls for robust sensitization and action on the first World Toilet Day - October 19, 2013



Images of toilet facilities in East Africa in deplorable conditions. Photos: UCSD and EA SusWatch Partners

The talk about a World Toilet Day may sound amusing and a case of laughter by many who have the comfort and luxury of their own clean toilet, complete with flush water, dry clean surface, mirrors and perhaps air refreshing fumes! This would all be worthwhile if people's attention was drawn to the fact that 2.5 billion people lacked proper sanitation and 1.1 billion were forced to defecate in the open.

The United Nations Deputy Secretary-General - Jan Eliasson has said the purpose of recognizing 19th November as the World Toilet Day is to raise awareness about the lack of sanitation so as to encourage the policies that increase sanitation access especially among the poor. The annual observance is aimed at raising awareness about the need for all human beings to have access to sanitation. "Almost two thousand children die every day from preventable diarrhoeal diseases. Poor sanitation and water supply result in economic loss estimated at USD 260 billion annually in developing countries", he noted. Adding that sanitation for all is one of the 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adopted by the United Nations and a blueprint of global aims have been agreed to by all member nations. "Despite progress toward the Millennium Development Goals, one in three people do not have a basic toilet".

Globally open defecation accounts for 35% of diarrhoeal diseases in the world, which results in more than 750,000 deaths of children under the age of five. MDG 7 aims at reducing by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation, combined with hygiene, education of mortality caused by diarrhoeal diseases by 65% and morbidity by 26%. Similarly MDG 4 targets to reduce child mortality by two thirds the under-five mortality rate by 2015. However, lack of safe and adequate sanitation is one sure way of preventing and reducing child morbidity and mortality.

Notwithstanding, there are many options in the region that address issues of toilet availability, maintenance and re-use of human waste to generate energy. Sanitation is not a technical challenge. Engineers all over the world know how to build hygienic toilets and sewer networks; and most basic sanitation technologies are not expensive.

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The problem is that those facing the problems of inadequate sanitation are not aware of either the origin of their sickness, or the true costs of their deficit. As a result, those without sanitation are hard to convince of the need to invest scarce resources in sanitation facilities, or of the critical importance of changing long-held habits and unhygienic behaviours. Consequently, the people's representatives who are the governments and elected political leaders rarely give sanitation or hygiene improvements the priority that is needed.

The economic impacts of poor sanitation are to a tune of billions of shillings annually, which funds can be utilized for other social services. According to the Water and Sanitation Program, poor sanitation costs Uganda 389 Billion Shillings equivalent of USD 177 million. This is equivalent to USD 5.5 per Ugandan for a year which is 1.1% of the Gross Domestic Product. 3.2 million Ugandans have no latrine and defecate in the open. In Tanzania, poor sanitary related costs take up 301 Billion Tanzanian Shillings equal to USD 206 million. The poorest group in Tanzania are 41 times more likely to practice open defecation than people in the rich group. In Kenya, open defecation costs USD 88 million yet 1.2 million latrines could be built using the same amount of funds. 21 million Kenyans use unsanitary or shared latrines while 5.6 million have no latrine and defecate in the open.

Sanitation is fundamental to human development and security. Approximately 2,000 children die every day from diarrhoeal diseases. Of these deaths, 88% are due to poor drinking water, lack of sanitation and poor hygiene. Every year, the failure to tackle these deficits results in severe welfare losses like wasted time, reduced productivity, ill health, impaired learning, environmental degradation and lost opportunities for millions more. What East Africans need between 2013 and 2015 is an enabling environment that requires political responsibility and a will to create a legal framework that furthers sanitation initiatives.

The State of East Africa 2013 report reveals a declining Agricultural Sector



A well grown cassava garden



A truck carrying cabbages for sale

Agriculture's contribution to the overall economy of the East African Community has been declining for the last decade. It has been the slowest sub-sector of the regional economy since 2005.

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This is revealed by the State of East Africa 2013 report produced by Society for International Development and launched in Nairobi recently. The report shows that the majority of East Africans are living off a shrinking Agricultural sector.

Agriculture share of Tanzania's economy fell to 24% between 2005 and 2012, while both Kenya and Uganda's agricultural sector remained relatively stagnant at 24% in the last 8 years. Rwanda's agricultural share of the economy dropped from 38% to 33% and absorbing 73% and 80% of the country's labour force. Agricultural labour force in Burundi dropped from 48% in 2006 to 36% in 2011 and although this could ideal if Industrialization takes up a higher percentage of the economy, the speed at which the change is happening exceeds the capacity of the industrial and services sectors to provide jobs and livelihoods needed. Agriculture has traditionally been the source of the bulk exports for the EAC is being replaced by mining. In Tanzania and Burundi, gold is a big export earner, while Tin ore is Rwanda's export earner. Kenya and Uganda have maintained tea and coffee as the large expert earners respectively. 66% of Ugandans are employed in agriculture, Tanzania 70%, Kenya 40%.

The report that was launched on 22nd November in Nairobi shows that 42% of East Africa region's 10 million children under the age of 5 are stunted. Malnutrition is severely affecting north eastern Burundi, Dodoma in Tanzania and Karamoja in Uganda are the worst places for children to live in East Africa. The report also highlights inclusiveness and equity, the people of East Africa, The quality of East Africa's institutions, economic drivers of inequality, social drivers of inequality, the people's destiny, and the future of inequality in East Africa and the agenda for active policy engagement. Download *The State of East Africa Report (2013)* from: <http://inequalities.sidint.net/soear/>

Upcoming events

International Mountain Day on December 11, 2013

International Mountain Day (IMD) is meant raise awareness about the importance of mountains, to highlight the opportunities and constraints in mountain development and to build partnerships that will bring positive change to the world's mountains and highlands. The theme for the event in 2013 is 'Mountains - Key to a Sustainable Future'. More: <http://tinyurl.com/q4762hq>

Obituary



Henry Lidegere (RIP)

We regret to announce the death of Mr. Henry Lidedere Henry held the position of accounts assistant with Sustainable Environmental Development Watch (SusWatch Kenya) under the LVEMP II Civil Society watch Project. Henry started feeling unwell from the last half of October 2013. He was admitted at Agha Khan Hospital Kisumu for a week and discharged. He travelled to Nairobi on duty and fell ill again on 28th October 2013 and was admitted at Nairobi Hospital with fever and difficulty in breathing.

He remained at Nairobi hospital where he underwent surgery on 5th November 2013 that led to complications. He passed away on Sunday 10th November 2013 at 3.45 am. Fair thee well friend and colleague till we meet again. Henry is survived by two sons, Nigel Mugali and Trevor Lidedere.