

UCSD News Bulletin September 2009

Monthly News Bulletin from the Secretariat of Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development (UCSD)
Bio and beyond.....

Are We Planning Our Urban Future? : SusWatch View on the World Habitat Day 2009

In December 1985, the United Nations General Assembly declared the **first Monday of October to be “World Habitat Day” in recognition of the state of human settlements and the basic need for adequate shelter for all (UN Habitat)**. Its purpose is to call attention to the current global state of the human habitat and push towards adequate housing for all.

Also the international community has long recognized housing as a basic human right. **The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (1976) includes housing as part of an adequate standard of living.**

More specifically, the United Nations Declaration on Social Progress and Development (1969) calls for the **provision of adequate housing and community services to large families and individuals with low incomes and urges governments to adopt low-cost housing programs in rural and urban areas**. In spite of the extensive international recognition of housing rights, **much work remains to ensure decent, simple housing for all.**

The Lake Victoria Basin supports an estimated population of 30 million people with large concentrations along the lake edge and within the Kagera River Basin, which is shared by Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. Although there are a few large cities such as Kampala, Kisumu and Mwanza, most of the population lives in rural villages and fast growing secondary towns like **Busia, Homa bay and Musoma**. Hence, the region has experienced a process of rapid urbanization over the recent past with the towns, many of which are concentrated along the lake edge, growing at rates far in excess of the regional average of 3% per year. The urbanization process has been accelerating under the impact of several factors, including rural poverty, land pressures and lack of job opportunities in the rural areas.

In view of this year’s World Habitat Day theme, the East African SusWatch Network commissioned a rapid assessment study in August 2009 in **Busia, Homa bay and Musoma**. This study which was carried out **to highlight the status of the housing situation in the fast growing / secondary towns in the Lake Victoria basin, is aimed at reawakening political and other stakeholders’ interest to take actions to address the housing gap as an obligation (more so from a human rights perspective).**

Look out for SusWatch Network’s summary of the study findings in *The East African Newspaper* (October 5 - 11, 2009) and in *The Mwananchi Newspaper* of Tanzania (Kiswahili version) **on Monday October 5, 2009**; as well as on UCSD website: www.ugandacoalition.or.ug.

TCSD holds meeting with Lake Victoria Basin Commission in Mwanza

Tanzania Coalition for Sustainable Development (TCSD) organized a one day Lake Victoria Basin Commission Meeting that was convened at Kisomo, Mwanza on 8th September 2009 attended by over 30 participants from within the Lake Victoria region in Tanzania including LVBC focal point (Ministry of Water and Irrigation), CBOs, CSOs, government departments, government agencies, Lectures, and other stakeholders.

This meeting was a follow up of the LVBC / CSOs meeting held on May 30, 2008, which identified the need to initiate a process in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania and regional levels to develop and build a CSO - LVBC partnerships that will enable CSO participation in implementation of projects and programmes under LVBC.

The Ministry of water and irrigation presented the investment opportunities in agriculture and agro-based industry, mining, tourism, manufacturing, natural resources, banking and insurance, transport among others. The key issues and challenges noted relate to lack of information flow to CBOs, CSOs and other stakeholders and actors in the lake Basin about key activities and responsibilities of the LVBC; lack of clear and initiatives to develop linkages that will mobilize all stakeholders working towards sustainable development in the basin; contradicting / unenforceable laws and rules; poor solid waste management; while Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Reports are not shared with the communities where projects are undertaken. Similar CSO / LVBC meetings have already been held in Uganda and Kenya.

2nd Annual Lake Victoria Basin Stakeholder's Forum, October 27 – 28, 2009 in Kisumu

Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC) in collaboration with the Lead Partners Interagency network Forum, of which the East African SusWatch Network is part, has organised the **Second Annual Lake Victoria Basin (LVB) stakeholder's Forum**. This is part of celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the East African Community. The main objective of the Forum is to provide a platform for key stakeholders in the Lake Victoria basin to share and exchange experiences and challenges faced in contributing towards the shared development vision.

From across the Lake basin, 250 participants including members of local government, UN agencies, CSOs, media and community groups will come together for this Annual forum from October 27 – 28, 2009 at the Tom Mboya College in Kisumu (Kenya). The theme of the Forum **"Strengthening synergies and cooperation in sustainable development in Lake Victoria Basin** is probably timely in responding to the immense challenges facing one of the regions in Africa with the fastest population growth (in both rural and urban areas).

The East African SusWatch Network would like to reiterate its hope (see UCSD Ebulletin – May 2009) that the Forum will enable **open and fair discussions with 'what is and how-to-address' approaches, given the myriad challenges facing Lake Victoria** in water (impact of the drop in water levels), transport, fisheries, agriculture, education, health and sanitation, and energy sectors. SusWatch also proposes that this Forum should also address the *invisible aspects*: **Innovations to wider participation** of the different stakeholders, **poverty (status of housing, water and sanitation)**, how to build **long-term synergies amongst development actors, lessons from corporate social responsibility to date, Innovating financing** for sustainable development in light of the global financial meltdown and **conflict sensitive development approaches** at all levels. **For more information, please contact Mr. Saidi Matano (LVBC - Projects Development Officer, email: matano@lvbcsec.org)**

Resources and upcoming Events

WASHIRIKA: toolbox on local governance for improved WASH services delivery

This web site is part of a toolbox with information products and materials compiled by IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre and its partners. Most of the materials have been compiled through action research or other collaborative initiatives on strengthening local governance for improved water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services over the past decade. Themes include: advocacy and communication, financing and cost recovery, strategic water governance and support to community institutions. The web site also gives access to the full text of the title 'The EMPOWERS approach to water governance: guidelines, methods and tools'. The site is available both in the name of the site 'WASHIRIKA' means 'partners' in Kiswahili. More: <http://www.washirika.net>

Raindrops for Education: How to Improve Water Access in Schools? (IPC- CG, 2009)

In many countries, efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of universal primary education have led to a rise in the number of schools built. The fact that more children may have the opportunity to attend school is a necessary but not sufficient condition to guarantee proper primary education. Complementary inputs such as focusing on the adequate provision of water are one of the key determinants for pupils to acquire a proper education that meets international standards. A promising complementary infrastructure to school construction is Rainwater Harvesting (RWH) - a low-cost technology to catch and store runoff rainwater. Sufficient rooftop area in schools allows a large amount of water to be collected during monsoon seasons, diverted from gutters into a closed storage tanks (also called cisterns). [Read the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth \(IPC- CG\) One pager on how RWH can contribute to the attainment of universal primary education](#)

UCSD AGM 2009: Update your membership or join us!

UCSD Secretariat still invites organizations to join it as part of the process of updating and recruiting more members before AGM that is planned in November 2009. Invitation will as a priority go to registered and paid up members. Regular membership is open to Ugandan CSOs and NGOs, where membership and subscription fees total to Ugshs 45,000. UCSD would like to thank those that have so far paid up. If you wish to pay up, please download the application form from the website: www.ugandacoalition.or.ug which when duly filled will need to be delivered at UCSD Secretariat. For more information/ questions regarding membership update, please contact Rebecca or Geoffrey on Tel: +256- 414-269461 or rkwagala@ugandacoalition.or.ug.