

# The Seventh Review of the Water and Sanitation Sector in Uganda, October 2007

## Brief Background

WaterAid Uganda is committed to support national coordination, networking and promotion of strategic partnerships for more effective delivery of water and sanitation services in the country. This is achieved partly through active engagement in key sector working groups, among them, the sector performance thematic team (SPTT) which monitors, prepares and reports on the performance of the water and sanitation sector annually.

The Joint Sector Review (JSR) is organized and coordinated by the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE). It is a forum for performance assessment, budget and policy guidance, and for influencing policy and priorities. It is held with representatives of central government, local governments, development partners and other stakeholders especially from civil society, academic institutions and the private sector. The event allows a broad spectrum of stakeholders to get an insight, discuss and influence sector developments. The review also sets undertakings for the sector for the next 12 months and is linked to the start of preparations for the medium term budget and expenditure frameworks for the following financial year, in this case, 2008/09.

## Objectives

From the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> October 2007, the MWE organized the seventh joint review of the water and sanitation sector during the financial year 2006/07 under the theme; "Decentralization and Cost Effectiveness" with three objectives; to assess progress and performance of the sector in the last one year; to review progress on the 6<sup>th</sup> JSR undertakings and to agree on key strategic policy issues and undertakings the next one year. The following is a summary of some of the key issues presented and discussed during this years joint sector review:

**Equity;** The review recognized the need to address inequalities prevalent in least served districts and ensure transparency in the distribution of funds at the national and local levels. Finalization of the consolidated sector investment plan was also prioritized.

**Internally displaced persons (IDPs)/ Pro Poor Strategy;** The sector was urged to implement and regularly report on the pro-poor strategy for the provision of safe water and sanitation services.

**Governance and Cost Efficiency** It was recommended that value for money and tracking studies should be conducted by the Auditor general. Thereafter an action plan should be developed and presented for approval by the water and sanitation sector working group.

**Sustainable sanitation;** The conditional grant for sanitation shall be implemented in 2008/2009 budget. The review noted the rapidly deteriorating status of school sanitation and called for quick action. The need for social marketing for attitude change and a move towards enforcement of laws and regulations as pertain to sanitation was also highlighted.

**Integrated Water resources management;** The JSR recommended the testing of the IWRM framework, it called for prioritization of IWRM through delegation of responsibility to lower local governments and increased funding for the directorate by government.

**Setting targets for golden indicators;** it was recommended that sector sets targets for golden indicators annually.

## Progress on Undertakings for FY 06/07

There were five undertakings adopted relating to equity, sustainable sanitation, sustainable water supply in small towns, climate change and cost efficiency. Those of most interest to WaterAid Uganda's work were:

1. Equity; Allocation of sector grants during FY 2008/09 is effected using a revised simple, objective, transparent allocation formula that takes into account the current coverage, population figures, and appropriateness of technology options, with special emphasis through targeted support to the underserved.
2. Sustainable sanitation; Identify and upscale modalities for promotion of sanitation and hygiene practices (in households and schools), and support mandated institutions to enforce by laws and regulations aimed at improving access in at least 50% of the districts and urban councils by at least 5% points, from the current status.
3. Cost Efficiency; Finalize and share the findings of the cost variation study, prepare an action plan and initiate implementation of the study's agreed recommendations towards minimizing the unit costs.

## WaterAid and JSR 2007

WaterAid Uganda participated in the review process both in the SPTT meetings, Water and sanitation Sector Working Group (WSSWG), National Sanitation Working Group, the WSS Development Partner Group and in the NGO task force that have important roles of preparation and coordination of the JSR. They carry out field work, review existing data, prepare draft reports, peer review sub sector reports and finally agree dates and venue of the JSR coordinated by MWE.

WaterAid, together with its urban partner CIDI, presented a paper, "*Bridging the Accountability Gap- Promoting accountability and policy monitoring in the Water and Sanitation Sector*". WaterAid contributed actively in all plenary and parallel sessions during the discussion and finalization of undertakings. We are delighted that undertaking number one and two were influenced successfully by our comments in session as well as our End Water Poverty campaign objective on enforcement of sanitation by laws and regulations.

## Conclusions/ Lessons

- JSR is a good channel for influencing policies, priorities and resource allocation in the sector.
- It is an opportunity to examine efficiency, effectiveness, share good practice and challenges, and to influence change.
- It gives an insight into the whole sector (and sub sector performance).
- It is an interactive means of seeking accountability from various actors for their actions or inaction and has a central role in dialogue between different sector stakeholders.