How can we accelerate WASH through an integrated business approach?

Rwenzori Urban Sanitation & Waste Programme, in Uganda

In four towns in Rwenzori, Western Uganda, only 65% of the 116,000 people living in these towns have access to safe sanitation. It is estimated that a quarter of the population defecates in the open. In the cities sewerage systems are rare and most people in Rwenzori use latrines. As there is only one truck available to empty pits, most of the time pits are not emptied at all or sludge is being dumped illegally, resulting in major health risks. In the region re-use of faecal sludge has not yet been set up.

Changing mindsets
To address this challenge, we needed to drastically change our approach. Traditional solutions focused on building (subsidized) sanitation infrastructure are not sustainable and cannot meet the needs of the growing population. In Rwenzori we therefore focus on changing mindsets and developing the business sector and public sector towards sustainable and affordable WASH services that can accelerate. This is the only way to adapt to fast population growth and to achieve full coverage.

Achieving more with less
The Rwenzori Urban Sanitation & Waste programme aims to realise full coverage of access to safe public and household sanitation in the four cities of Fort Portal, Kamwenge, Kyegegwa and Kyenjojo by applying an integrated business approach to sanitation.

WASH Alliance partners HEWASA and USSIA facilitate the development of a system in which all stakeholders work effectively together on realising sustainable sanitation services: households, businesses, financial institutions and governments.

When these actors know their role and work together effectively, the system takes over. This will make external subsidies redundant over time and accelerates access to safe sanitation for a growing urban population.
In Rwenzori, we accelerate WASH through a multistakeholder approach. Local partners HEWESA and USSIA have a supporting role bringing the key stakeholders together. They train and coach entrepreneurs and staff of local governments.

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<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Roles and responsibilities</th>
<th>Drivers of acceleration</th>
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<tr>
<td>Households</td>
<td>Households understand the (health) advantages of sanitation for their own families and the community at large. They are willing to pay for (public) sanitation services or build a toilet at home.</td>
<td>• Affordable and good quality services are accessible for all. Peer pressure increases demand for sanitation facilities in the communities.</td>
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<td>Business</td>
<td>Businesses understand there is a business in sanitation. They are trained to develop viable business plans, construct toilets and latrines of good quality, marketing, running their business and getting access to loans. Also they receive technical trainings in pit emptying.</td>
<td>• Training and training material, appropriate technical designs, communication materials and campaigns can be replicated, paving the road for a low-cost expansion to other towns in Uganda.</td>
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<td>Financial institutions</td>
<td>Micro Finance Institutions (MFI) can develop credit products for sanitation for both entrepreneurs and households. To encourage them to provide loans and diminish their risks, we have put in place a guarantee fund. In Rwenzori, MFI Hofokam has developed credit products for both target groups.</td>
<td>• Hofokam has offices in more cities in the region, enabling easy expansion of the credit products to other towns.</td>
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<td>• Training for loan officers and advertisement of the credit products can be replicated, which encourages low cost expansion to other towns.</td>
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<td>Government</td>
<td>The responsibility of the four urban councils includes awareness raising, demand creation, needs assessment, quality control and by-laws and regulations. The government understands they are responsible for the availability of latrines, solid waste management and safe disposal of sludge can be considered responsibilities from the government.</td>
<td>• Lessons learned and campaigns used can be shared with other urban councils. Again, this paves the road for a low cost expansion to other towns.</td>
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The WASH Alliance International is a multi-national consortium of over 100 partners worldwide. We work together with local NGOs, governments and businesses to make sure everyone on this planet has sustainable access to and makes use of water and sanitation. The Alliance is operative in 8 countries in Africa and Asia.

www.wash-alliance.org

ACCELERATION INDICATORS
The programme is designed so that in 2020:

- **1400 jobs** have been created.
- The amount of faecal sludge collected & disposed has increased sevenfold to 3,600,000 kg.
- **7 TIMES**
- The number of household toilets built has increased with 73%, from 3,800 in year 3 to 14,000.
- **73 %**
- Costs per person for water and sanitation has decreased from €69.00 to €12.00.
- **12 €**
- The financial investment in sanitation by local banks has increased from €25,000 in year 3 to €470,000.
- **€470,000**

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