

WaMTech - "Water Management and Technologies" training program

Gulu, Uganda

Progress Report

July 2015

Executive Summary

Based on a 9-month water management and technologies pilot training program to a core group of refugee and host community residents in the Kakuma and Turkana communities in Kenya, IsraAID will initiate an intensive skills-leading-to-jobs approach program over the period of 18 months focusing on Northern Uganda relevant water solutions. The program, in partnership with Gulu University, and in collaboration with the Uganda Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) and other relevant actors, will offer war effected community capacity building, job opportunities, while responding to the existing WASH needs of regional communities.

The program was designed based on a needs assessment mission conducted by IsraAID in October 2014, and was developed with academic supervision by Prof. Eran Fridler of the Technion (Israel Institute of Technology) in Haifa, Israel.

The intention of IsraAID's intensive WASH and water technologies skills training is to draw on the rich cultural and behavioral knowledge of trainee students and, in a participatory manner, zero in on the most practical WASH skills that can solicit demand for WASH services by rural inhabitants – in their own communities. A community mobilization, hygiene promotion and sanitation component will also be part of the training to enable students to see and be inspired by the wide spectrum of WASH-related techniques and services that they might choose to focus on as a means to be gainfully employed in the sector.

Context and Problem Statement

The Northern region of Uganda suffered from prolonged conflict and insecurity for over two decades from 1986 to 2007. This led to population displacement, socio-economic stagnation, a breakdown in social infrastructure, weakened governance structures, degraded services and asset depletion (Peace, Recovery and Development Plan July 2012-June 2014)

Gulu District has an estimated population of 400,000 people divided into 294 villages (Gulu District website). The conflict in the area affected the entire population though a special group of concern are the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) returnees (who are often child soldiers). During the war young boys and girls were abducted by LRA soldiers, were forced to stay in captivity and underwent de-humanizing practices. There was a big influx of returnees who escaped captivity in 2002 and 2007. Some continue to surrender even today and some children were born in captivity. The child soldiers, who are now young men and women, returned to their communities with severe psycho-social problems (including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder-PTSD). Their education was interrupted by their abduction and left many with only a primary level of education. The reintegration of the returnees in their community and the reunification with their families poses many challenges due to the horrific actions the child soldiers were forced to perform in their villages by LRA commanders. Their violent problem solving practices obtained during the war and community perception of them make their ability to create a sustainable livelihood and positive everyday life challenging.

An area of concern for the war affected communities is WASH (water, hygiene promotion and sanitation). Surveys and reports indicate a 74% coverage of access to clean water within Gulu District communities, although it seems that this data includes boreholes drilled in the Internally Displace Persons (IDP) camps, many of which have become abandoned due to continued migration of IDPs.

One can state that now that the intensive conflict has receded from the headlines, WASH-related funding for new projects and in skills building has diminished in Gulu District and surrounding districts. There is no formal WASH training within Gulu University although elements of WASH are touched upon within its faculty of agriculture and within its Department of Biosystems Engineering. While the NGO World Vision and the US Peace Corps devoted resources and personnel to some water technology training, currently expertise must be outsourced from other areas of the country.

Ultimate Goal

Provide war affected people within rural communities with a significant learning process that will increase their well-being through WASH home-management skills and provide a recognized certificate increasing their livelihood opportunities.

Objectives

- ❖ Certify 25 male and female community members with an academically recognized WaMTech certification;
- ❖ Promote employment in practical WASH fields;
- ❖ Promote innovative solutions such as demand response and local funding for sources of water using the private sector;
- ❖ Deliver affordable potable water (or sanitation) solutions to rural populations in need in Gulu District (and surrounding districts);
- ❖ Raise awareness and provide solutions for water management, hygiene and sanitation at the household level; and
- ❖ Provide basic knowledge of how to improve water quality at household level.

Target Group

The program will target 25 English speaking male and female community members. Targeted population of adults (20 and above) who are secondary school graduates, 70% of which with no previous academic background. Preference will be given to those who have practical experience in WASH related fields or a business orientation. The program will target both genders.

Plan of Action

IsraAID and relevant actors will collaborate in order to implement a holistic vocational training program in the field of water sanitation and hygiene. The program will provide the participants with a significant contextual “know-how” and hands on experience to enable graduates significant work opportunities.

Based on IsraAID’s approach to working cooperatively with local actors and facilitating skills acquisition to benefit community health in the long run, IsraAID intends to train community and stakeholder designated Gulu District personnel in clean and potable water technologies by bolstering specialized skills that trainees can use to earn money in the fields of clean water and sanitation, and that will benefit the community.

The program aims to prepare 25-30 community designated adults (male and female) in WASH-related skills so they can provide entrepreneurial, public or NGO-based WASH community services in Gulu District. The learning center based in Gulu University's Biosystems Engineering Department will provide a venue for the aforementioned activities and will provide directed services with a special emphasis on women, youth and children.

Program Staff

The program is managed by IsraAID both in Uganda and in Israel. It is developed, implemented and monitored by the professional team consisting of a program manager with years of WASH-related project management experience, program writers, an academic supervisor and an IsraAID program manager.

WaMTech training program includes the following team:

- ❖ Naama Gorodischer – program manager based in Israel;
- ❖ Ben Gido – WASH manager based in Israel;
- ❖ Michael Gottlieb – WaMTech trainer in Uganda;
- ❖ Ugandan engineer with social development skills - WaMTech trainer in Uganda, and
- ❖ Field consultants in different thematic areas (hand pump mechanics, welders, manual drillers, bio-sand filters constructors, community mobilizers and hygiene promoters).

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- ❖ Recruitment of trainer and mobilisation of trainer to the field;
- ❖ MoU with Gulu University in the process of being checked by the legal department of GU;
- ❖ Modification and development of WaMTech materials responding to local context in collaboration with local needs;
- ❖ Strategy on recruiting participants identified and recruiting will begin the moment the MoU is approved;
- ❖ Agreement for project offices and laboratory services at Gulu University's Dept. of Biosystems Engineering;
- ❖ Quotations on lab equipment being solicited by two Ugandan suppliers;
- ❖ Delivery of lab equipment in pipeline;

- ❖ Construction of the laboratory will begin following the MoU with the GU. The lab construction is completed and only needs the water quality testing equipment to start training students;
- ❖ Collaboration with relevant actors mentioned above are ongoing:
 - Local Water and Sanitation Directorate of the district;
 - Local WASH actors;
 - Local artisans that fabricate WASH-related items, and
 - Local excavators.



Preparation of the Gulu WaMTech Classroom within Gulu University facility



Field visit to water sources in Gulu district



Community discussion regarding water practices and acceptable solutions

Plan for next Quarter (July-September 2015)

- ❖ Recruitment of students via radio, advertisements, local government, local NGOs, the university and word-of-mouth;
- ❖ Distribute the schedule of classroom, laboratory and field activities including ongoing reporting from students on successes and challenges in rural community assignments;
- ❖ Begin training of “Intro to WaMTech”
- ❖ For Chapter 2+3 (Technical chapters) establishment of a core trainers team (among the core course) who will be assigned to mobilize, sensitize and promote WASH objectives within their own communities.
- ❖ Establish a monitoring team for the WASH trainers by other cores participants leading instructors for improvement techniques in accomplishing goals;
- ❖ Hire an international water expert as a leading facilitator/program manager of the technical chapters;
- ❖ Establishing relationships with further water actors, private and public sectors
- ❖ Establishment of job/internship opportunities for the course graduates
- ❖ Establishment of the operational lab;
- ❖ Perform water quality tests for relevant actors in the district, particularly the local Water and Sanitation Directorate of the Ministry of Water and Environment;
- ❖ Assigning three members of Gulu University's Dept. of Biosystems Engineering to be aiding in the classroom teaching, laboratory assignments and field work of the course, and
- ❖ Invite local officials and high university leaders to observe the course and students at work as they give presentations on their accomplishments.