

WASH Integration Strategy for the South Western Refugee Settlements

UNHCR Vision 2016 - 2020

There are four settlements in southwestern Uganda that were officially gazetted by the government of Uganda as refugee settlements, namely Nakivale and Oruchinga settlements in Isingiro district, Rwamanja in Kamwenge district and Kyaka II settlement in Kyegegwa district. Of this, Nakivale settlement is the largest with a surface area of 71 square miles (185 sq. km) and over 76 scattered villages. The above settlements also host Ugandan nationals who co-exist and share available resources & basic services with the refugees, including land, water, health and education.

WASH service delivery in the settlement is currently fully funded by UNHCR and partners, with very minimal engagement of government. However in line with UNHCR 2016 - 2020 vision, one of the strategic objectives is to fully integrate social service delivery in the national/local government systems, with an aim of ensuring refugee issues are well captured in district and national development plans. In that respect, UNHCR and partners will work closely with the District Local Governments and other government institutions towards a systematic roll-out of all national WASH sustainability approaches and guidelines under the National Water Act, as well as the District Water and Sanitation Conditional Grant (DWSCG) in the refugee settlements.

The WASH integration will happen in a gradual and phased approach, starting with the handover of the robust piped water supply systems of Nakivale in 2016/2017, then followed by the other settlements which are majorly dependent on groundwater point sources with a few motorizations and gravity pipeline distributions. The WASH integration strategy will involve two major interventions:

Intensified engagement with the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) Water Authorities at various levels, that is, **Directorate of Water Development** – particularly the SW regional Water and Sanitation Development Facility (WSDF) and the SW regional Umbrella Organizations for Water and Sanitation; and **National Water and Sewerage Corporation**. This will involve a transitional measure of full engagement of a national NGO to oversee the WASH sector activities in the settlement and collaborate directly with the Water Authorities, in consultation with UNHCR, OPM and the District Local Government.

Intended Outcomes:

- ✓ Ministerial Gazette of refugee settlements under a National Water Authority
- ✓ Formulation of requisite Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs).
- ✓ Handover of management of Water Supply Services to a National Authority

Strengthening Resource mobilization, entailing heightened advocacy and collaboration between UNHCR/OPM and other UN agencies as well as various development partners under the ReHOPE framework, so as to advocate for resources to progressively improve WASH service delivery for attainment of National WASH standards in the refugee hosting districts, for the benefit of both the refugees and the host communities.

Intended Outcome:

- ✓ Progressive improvement in WASH service delivery in the refugee hosting districts in tandem with the overall National and District Development plans, targeting >20 l/p/d by 2018, 90% latrine coverage by 2018 and 100% 2019.

During the implementation of these two key integration steps, there will be need to move along with the following interventions;

- Intensified awareness raising campaigns for the targeted communities on the national guidelines for community participation in maintenance and repair of water sources and subsequent roll-out of a cost sharing arrangement, taking into account existing vulnerabilities;
- Comprehensive review of current water supply service delivery, updating of water coverage maps for ease of geographical identification of areas with gaps in service delivery, and
- Identification of rehabilitation needs and upgrade of the existing water systems to improve their efficiency; including interventions for reduction in water production costs, such as connection of all water pumping stations to the power grid or solar power, with generator back-up.

Overall, there will be need to strengthen the planning, implementation and monitoring of WASH programmes in both refugee and host populations, to increase equitable and sustainable access and use of safe water, while promoting good sanitation and hygiene practices at household and community level.