

MPs, researchers call for increased funding of WASH sector



The Ministry of Water and Environment Principal Economist Collins Amanya (in blue tie) during the event at Golf Course Hotel on 8th October, 2019. @CSBAG

said Ramadhan Goobi, a renowned economist and researcher.

He said this during Policy engagement on draft CSO assessment of Government Adherence to Financing WASH Commitments in NPD II at Golf Course Hotel, Kampala on October 8th, 2019. The event was attended by wide range of stakeholders such as Government MDAs like, Ministry of Finance, Ministries of Water, health and Education, Civil Society Organisations, Members of Parliament and development partners.

"A country brief prepared by the sector players, development partners, bilateral agencies, and civil society organisations put the figure at \$206m. They put the financing gap in the sub-sector at \$80m for water supply and \$26m for sanitation and hygiene per year, implying a total of \$106m of annual funding deficit for the period under review," said Goobi.



Renowned researcher Goobi making presentation to participants on 8th October 2019. @CSBAG

According to the assessment, the poorest 20% of the population is 13.5 times more likely to defecate in the open than the wealthiest 20%. Projections indicate, if the target of 90% access to safe drinking water was achieved by 2020, 8.3 million Ugandans, including children, would be protected from water-borne diseases such as diarrhea.

"The same projections indicate that if the (global) target to reduce the rate of open defecation to 5% is met by 2020, 200,000 people would stop practicing one of the most unhealthy hygiene habits. If the (global) target of 50% of households with hand washing facilities was to be reached by 2020, 6.6 million people would be able to better practice hand washing with soap," reads part of the document.

Bwamba County MP and member of Parliamentary WASH committee Richard Gafabusa said although it is the role of Government to provide better

WASH facilities to the population, the unplanned settlements in urban areas make it difficult to extend these services. He said people build the way they want, making passage of water pipes there difficult.

He also cited at the need for the Government to recognise the role of CSOs in facilitating better WASH in communities.

"National and Local Government structures have in most cases not captured intervention of CSOs towards betterment of WASH sector. I think there's need to have a collective budgeting between CSOs and Government on WASH sector to have a more meaningful impact to communities," said Gafabusa.

Joel Sebikari, also an MP said VHTs; sub county and district health inspectors should increase their efforts in sanitation awareness.

Collins Amanya, the Principal Economist in the Ministry of Water and Environment urged CSOs to critic and provide alternative ways on doing things especially in WASH sector. According to him, this will not only help the people's lives but also reduce on the money spent by Government in treating hygiene related diseases.

Rama Omonya who represented the Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG) Executive Director Julius Mukunda said some a number of diseases can be prevented through washing hands after visiting toilets. He called for more sensitisation and engagement of local leaders at various levels in a bid to make population embrace proper hand washing and other WASH practices.