BridgIT
Water Foundation

Completion Report

Rural Community Well Refurbishment Program

Safe Water for Rural Communities, Mukono Region, Uganda

Sponsored by: The Webber Family Foundation USA

Duration: 1st May 2022 to 20th June 2022

Managing Partner: **BridgIT Water Foundation, Australia**
Implementing Regional Partner: **Suubi Community Projects, Uganda**

Introduction

Organisation (Partner) Name:	**Suubi Community Projects Uganda (SPCU)**		
Partner Contact:	Steven Beingana	**Report Date:**	28th June 2022
Partner Contact Title:	Director		
Country:	Uganda		
Project / Program Name:	Rural Community Well Refurbishment Program		
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Donor:	The Webber Family Foundation USA	**Project Status:**	Completed

This project is now successfully completed. This report shows how project funds were spent and the impact project funds have made to the beneficiary communities.

Brief Implementing Partner Introduction & Approach:

Suubi Community Projects Uganda (SCPU) is a registered community based organisation in Uganda.

SPCU's mission is "**to help improve access to clean and safe water and the quality of health and education service delivery for the neediest communities in rural Uganda".**

For the past 9 years, SCPU has been working in the rural areas of Uganda on programs that are focused on: increasing access to safe water and sanitation, improving health service delivery, improving education service delivery and economic empowerment for rural community members.

SPCU's approach is based on the **self-help model** and community ownership of all the projects; believing this is a more sustainable approach to foster the development of rural communities.

SPCU has broad experience working with both local and international donors and volunteers in managing and implementing WASH projects. For the past 9 years the organization has implemented the construction and/or repair of 260+ boreholes which has helped 680,000 people in rural Uganda with safe water.

Background to Project

In May 2022, SCPU received a grant from BridgIT Water Foundation Australia (BWF) under the sponsorship of **The Webber Family Foundation** for the refurbishment of **7 community water wells in Mukono District.**

Project Rationale & Context

Out in the rural areas, there are few community pipelines or taps, so a borehole is priority for clean drinking water. A borehole is just a simple hand pump well that typically ranges anywhere from 30 to 250 ft deep. This mechanical pumping system is the most common method of water delivery in the rural communities of Uganda.

Unfortunately, with so many moving parts, these wells endure a lot of stress, especially in areas where they are pumped around the clock. While the need for regular maintenance is clear, it is often neglected, resulting in over 40% of wells in Sub-Saharan Africa being broken at any one point in time. In most cases, the repair simply requires an overhaul of the hand pump system, but this cost is way too high for the communities to fund if they have not been pooling together a maintenance fund for the past couple of years.

COVID-19 Impact

As the world recovers from the effects of COVID19, developing countries like Uganda are faced with the challenge to mitigate the rise of infections once again. With public places especially schools opening up, basic hygiene remains an effective requirement. The practice of frequently washing hands with clean water and soap is key to controlling the spread. However, when communities can't easily access water, it is difficult to wash hands.

Refurbishing broken wells, has been prioritized during and post COVID-19, because it is a quick and cheap way to restore access to safe water for communities so that proper hygiene can be practiced as a means of controlling the spreading of the virus.

Beneficiaries & Stakeholders

The project improved access to safe and clean water for 7 rural communities in the Mukono District. The project beneficiaries are estimated to be **5,550 residents of 928** households to benefit with a safe drinking water source.

No.	Community Name	Description	People Impacted
1.	**Bamusuta A**	This borehole in Nabaale sub-county was donated to the community and the school by well-wishers, more than 20 years ago. It hasn't been functioning for the past 4 years after it had been vandalized. People resorted to using dirty water collected from swamps. Having repaired this well, the community can once again access clean water, with less burden. (125 households)	**750**
2.	**Bamusuta B**	This borehole in Nabaale sub-county was installed by the government more than 20 years ago and has been broken down for 3 years. The refurbished borehole is located centrally in the village so that most households can access it less than 500mtrs away allowing people to wash their hands regularly as needed. A nearby school shall also be able to use the Well. (125 households)	**750**
3.	**Kyajja**	This borehole in Nagojje sub-county was donated to the community and the school by well-wishers more than 20 years ago. It hasn't been functioning for the past 3 years after it had been vandalized by unknown people who stole some parts. People resorted to using dirty water collected from swamps. Having repaired this well, the community and school can once again access clean water, with less burden. (165 households)	**1,000**
4.	**Nkulagirire**	This borehole in Nabaale sub-county was installed by the government more than 20 years ago and has been broken down for 4 years. The refurbished borehole is located centrally in the village so that most households can access it less than 500mtrs away allowing people to wash their hands regularly as needed. (155 households)	**930**

5.	**Ndiiba**	This borehole in Kasawo sub-county was installed by the Directorate of Water Development, more than 15years ago and hadn't been functioning for the last 5 years. Community members were collecting dirty water from streams approx. 3km away. The refurbished borehole is located centrally in the village so that most households can access it less than 500mtrs away allowing people to have water in their homes with less burden. A school in the village will also use this borehole as their main source of clean water. (98 households)	**560**
6.	**Nakifuma Ward**	This borehole in Nakifuma sub-county was installed by an Aid Agency more than 15 years ago and has been broken down for 4 years. The refurbished borehole is located centrally in the village so that most households can access it less than 500mtrs away allowing people to wash their hands regularly as needed. A nearby school shall also be able to use the Well. (150 households)	**900**
7.	**Kaganjo**	This borehole in Nabaale sub-county was installed by the Ugandan government more than 15 years ago and has not been working for 3 years. Community members were collecting dirty water from streams approx. 2km away. (110 households)	**660**
	Totals	**928 Households**	**5,550**

* Populations figures are based on the number of households per community, allowing for 6 people per household.

Description of Funded Activities - Action & Methodology

The scope of work involved the refurbishment of existing boreholes by re-construction of the Apron/Platform (where necessary), the replacement of all the hand pump parts, and the implementation of water sustainability strategies by training Water User Committees.

The Wells were successfully repaired by installing new hand pump parts including; Riser pipes, Connecting rods, cylinder pumps, water tanks, and complete head assembly (Indian MarkII) and any necessary masonry work on the platforms.

- Carry out preliminary site clearing and mobilization
- Assess platform and drainage channel and provide materials for masonry work as required
- Pull pump and assess repairs
- Replace MKII pump cylinder, rods, pipes and pump head
- Install signage name plaques on each wellhead
- Establish and train village water committee on the use of / repair and sustainability of the equipment

See work in progress pictures.

1. Bamusuta A Village Well

Installation of new hand pump parts and signage.

Bamasuta A village children use the completed refurbished pump.

2. Bamusuta B Village Well

Installation of new hand pump parts and signage.

Bamasuta B refurbished well complete and in use by residents.

3. Kyajja Village Well

Installation of new hand pump parts and signage.

Kyajja village refurbished well complete and in use.

4. Nkulagirile Village Well

Installation of new hand pump parts and signage.

Nkulagirire village refurbished well complete and in use.

5. Ndiiba Village Well

Installation of new hand pump parts and signage.

Video of Ndiiba refurbished village well in use.

6. Nakifuma Ward Well

Installation of new hand pump parts and signage.

Video of Nakifuma Ward completed refurbished well in use.

7. Kaganjo Village Well

Installation of new hand pump parts and signage.

Video of Kanganjo community well in use.

Train and Establish Water User Committees (WUC's)

WUC's are essential to ensure the sustainability of any community water system. BridgIT and its implementing partners have observed that it is important that the community feels responsible for, and develops the capacity to manage the maintenance and operation of its own water access points. The establishment and training of WUC's is an integral part of every water project we implement; in every community we work with.

A Water User Committee of 8 people were selected and trained for each of the 7 wells. The committee is made up of a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, 2 Caretakers and 2 members. At least 3 members must be women, and the post of Treasurer is specifically reserved for a woman. 2 young people must also be on the committee and at least 1 person with disability (PWD).

Project Impacts

Impact is expected in four areas:

(i) Access (ii) Health (iii) Education (iv) Labour force participation and hours worked

- Access to clean and safe water has been restored to 5,550 people including school children.
- School children, teachers and the villagers can wash their hands as a way to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- On average, people will walk 500mtrs to access the water, as opposed to the 2km before the well was repaired.
- Incidences of diarrhoea and typhoid, especially among children less than 12 years are expected to reduce.
- Incidences of back pain especially among women and older girls is expected to reduce. This is because they no longer move long distances while carrying the heavy containers filled with water.
- There is an average 2hours saved everyday especially by women who have the responsibility of fetching water. This time is now used for productive work on family farms or businesses.

Cross Cutting Themes - Gender Equality, People With Disabilities (PWD's) Inclusion & Environmental Management on BWF Programs

BridgIT Water Foundation and its partners are committed to avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating adverse environmental impacts as well as adopting a gender-sensitive and gender-equitable approach for all its projects.

Gender equality approaches were employed: Due to cultural gender roles in most developing countries, it is the job of women and children to collect water, therefore, the very nature of water projects is based on promoting gender equality. When wells are installed, a huge burden is lifted from the shoulders of women and girls. Women and girls will save up to 3 hours per day previously spent on water collection and use this time for more productive activities including the pursuit of income generating work and greater school attendance for girl children. So that women's voices are heard, BridgIT requires that WUC's have at least 3 women and preferably a majority with the post of the Treasurer being reserved for a woman.

PWD Inclusion approaches were employed: The composition of the Water User Committee reserves a special slot for the representation of a PWD. PWD's were equally consulted during site location, and they are empowered to equally participate in the maintenance and operation of the water source. Where they are heads of families and have active income, they as well contribute by paying user fees.

Environmentally friendly practices were employed: The refurbishment project did not have any adverse environmental impacts for the communities. The beneficiaries were trained to observe environmentally friendly approaches while they access and use the Wells.

Testimonials & Stakeholder Feedback

Jesca , 32 years old and a resident of Bamusuta A village said:

"I am a single mother living with these 2 children. Many times I had to painfully send them to walk alone 2km to the swamp to collect water. Of course I was always worried that something bad can happen to them along the way, but I had no alternative. Whenever they delayed coming back, my worries would rise further since there many incidences of child kidnapping for rituals in this village.

This well is a few meters from our house. I can watch them walk to and from the well. I don't have to worry about their safety any more. I thank all who have supported the repair of this well"

Hassan, 73 years and a resident of Bamusuta B said:

"I am the area local leader. More than 4 years ago, this Well broke down. We brought a technician to repair it, but he told us a huge amount of money that we could not raise to buy new parts. The villagers had not been trained before about collecting user fees. We lacked organisation

We are now very glad to again use our well and also work together to maintain it into the future through our water user committee and other information that we received from the training."

Maria Gorretti, 43 years and a resident of Kyajja Village said

"I am a village health volunteer in this village. I am supposed to sensitize people to practice good hygiene including drinking clean water, washing hands regularly etc. My work has been difficult since everyone had an excuse since our only source of clean water was nonfunctional for 5 years! My family too was struggling with the same challenge.

We thank SUUBI and all their partners for helping us to repair the well. With easier access to clean water, people will have no excuses….proper hygiene will be practiced.

Training

The first training was offered to all members of the beneficiary communities at the pre-construction meetings. During this first encounter with the beneficiaries, we educate them about their responsibility during the project implementation and as well as the long-term commitment to acquiring the water source.

This meeting also entails good water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) practice guidance. WUC's were trained in basic maintenance and management of each of the water sources, and how they can help to maximise impact by enforcing other good sanitation practices like use of clean containers, boiling all drinking water, latrines for homes, and use of tippy taps.

Sustainability & Community Ownership

It is crucial that community ownership is established for the sustainability of the refurbished wells.
The sustainability of the wells largely depends on the beneficiary community. All 7 communities have been trained and empowered to take complete ownership of the Wells and plan for their future maintenance and repairs.

To ensure sustainability of project benefits, it is important that, after construction, physical conditions of infrastructure, water yield, and the status of operation, water quality, sanitary hazards, and financial viability are regularly monitored; initially by the implementing agency jointly with concerned Water User Committees, so that timely corrective measures can be taken without disruptions to the Well's functionability.

All this has been considered and put in place for the sustainability of these repaired wells.

Project Challenges

Scarcity of Hand pumps: Our city faced a shortage of hand pumps for a couple of weeks. This could have been caused by rising costs of importation due to exorbitant fuel prices (the hand pumps are majorly imported from India). This shortage caused us some delays to start implementing the project.

COVID-19. The project has been implemented at a time when the country has just got out of lockdown and restrictions. The economy has fully opened up and restrictions lifted, but some operating procedures still have to be observed. These standard operating procedures affect travel and movement, training and interaction with the community. The number of people invited for trainings has to be limited, and our workers have to be cautious and observe minimal contact with the locals during the execution of their work. However, these are very important precautions for the safety of our team and the people we serve and we are glad that they are regularly observed.

Lessons Learned

A healthy engagement with partners, the local government and the project beneficiaries has been helpful in finding the solutions for some of the challenges encountered.

We have also learned to always prepare ahead by stocking enough of the materials and supplies that we need to successfully execute our work.

Acknowledgements

Our gratitude goes to **The Webber Family Foundation** for the continued support and generosity towards this program.
We thank BridgIT Water Foundation for managing and coordinating the project.
Locally, we appreciate the members of the WUC's, program implementation teams, local leadership and the beneficiary population for their cooperation during the implementation of the project. The project succeeded with the efforts of all of you, thank you so much.

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