

Katosi / KWDT intervention on COVID

During the last community activities that was conducted on the 18th March 2020 KWDT followed the current government guidelines that included keeping a safe distance, hand washing and was completed within a time limit of 2 hours.

The training was conducted under a tree, keeping a safe distance between each of the participants and we had put a hand washing facility for participants to wash hands before the training.

This was followed by restriction in the number of people who can come together at any one time to 10 people.

All community gatherings were eventually suspended including public transport and the country has been under lock down.

KWDT concrete questions:

Did you make a translation for local use of guidance and info on the virus and how to tackle it? (if so, please send it to us).

In collaboration with one of our partners; arche noVa KWDT translated a guide shared by arche noVa to disseminate information against the spread of COVID-19.

We were able to disseminate this information face to face in only two landing sites before the lock down. Information was printed and sent to the rest of the landing sites, with regular follow up with WASH committees on telephone.

- Did you find alternative ways to get this information out to the grassroots?

Information is disseminated through KWDT established structures, particularly the WASH committees. These are situated in the communities and thus do not require movement particularly contact with outsider (nonresidents) in the community. The existence of various committees in the communities including the water user committees, toilet committees, waste management committees and women groups have all been channels through which KWDT disseminates the information on COVID-19.

Whenever any of KWDT staff is talking to any of the committee members they have to refer to the guidelines. While addressing other issues such as monitoring economic empowerment activities, COVID-19 messages are equally disseminated and the committee members are as well encouraged to observe the COVID-19 guidelines as provided by the Ministry of Health while disseminating the information. This has reduced the stress on communities where they would feel that all communication is on COVID as other developmental activities are equally discussed on phone.

KWDT is also using the community radios where they exist in each of the 11 landing sites to disseminate the information on COVID through the Wash committees' members who are members of the groups organized under KWDT.

Can you give us further tips and how to go about it?

It is important to use existing community structures to disseminate information as establishing new structures requires additional mobilization and may be sensitization, which might require physical presence.

Additionally, the existing committees have already gained community trust as local leaders, their source of information is trusted as well.

• Did you find other channels to disseminate the information besides the “web” but by keeping social distance?

The pandemic happened at a time when KWDT was discussing WASH communication messages to influence behavior change by developing key messages.

Other than the above channels, KWDT considered printing such messages for display in the community but was restricted with funding due to the emergency of the situation.

Additionally, in communities where majority are illiterate some of the messages need to be disseminated by use of visual expressions. This too requires funding to be able to develop visual communication messages.



Concerning hygiene:

• Are women in your communities making soap? Are they scaling up? Do they need support for that? Can you help neighboring communities?

KWDT had 11 planned soap production training to 11 new WASH committees from 11 fisher communities. With 2 out of the for 11 trainings completed, KWDT had decided to continue with training the 7 WASH committee members as it was within the new guidelines of less than 10 persons for each community. Unfortunately, this was overruled by new restrictions and suspension of all communal activities. More so fisher communities put up stringent measures restricting non-resident in fisher communities to enter their communities. We had to suspend any further trainings.

8 old groups, and 2 newly trained groups, Nangoma and Bugula have continued with the production of soap, which is on high demand at the time to fight against spread of COVID-19. Supplies are obtained from Kampala and delivered by KWDT field office on motorcycle, the only mode of travel that is not suspended (but for carrying supplies and not passengers).

The soap making project needs support for investment in the production of soap as the projects are ongoing.

• Did you start additional training on hygiene? In what way?

In 2018/2019, KWDT conducted 96 community sensitizations on WASH for adults and 6 for children reaching over 5152 people with 473 children.

KWDT has 11 planned community WASH sensitizations (4 completed) in each of the 11 landing sites that will be complemented by wash promotion campaigns including community drives through disseminating wash messages, use of drama, use of sports activities to ensure that we engage and reach the youth in fisher communities. The activities will begin as soon as the ban on community activities is lifted.

• Is the government helping you to get more handwashing stations, clean water, materials for prevention, etc. and if so how?

KWDT established hand washing stations in 8 landing sites for use after use of toilet and promoted construction of hand washing facilities at household in 8 communities. In Mugangu the local council leadership mobilized resources and established hand washing facilities at all local or community restaurants to ensure that all people wash hands.

There is no government intervention in any of the needy communities to provide additional handwashing facilities, clean material or materials for preventions. The communities have locally mobilized themselves and put up hand washing facilities at the entry points in the landing sites. The exercise is manned by the local leaders who mobilize resources from the community members for buying powdered soap which is mixed with water in a jerry can, for use by anybody coming in the community.

PLEASE CALL AND FIND OUT

• Did you find and introduce an alternative for washing, if soap is not available? Is it working?

Communities have maintained the use of either bar, powdered or liquid soap, whichever is affordable in the respective community. There hasn't been any form of soap alternatives adopted so far.

KWDT has continued to monitor to ensure that the Toilet committees keep the toilets clean as well as regular disinfect of handles.

KWDT has encouraged all the Water user committees to ensure that all community members can access clean water at all the times regardless of whether they have paid or not paid the monthly user fees per household at UGX 1000. KWDT has however emphasized to the committees to ensure that the water sources remain functional at this critical time.

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