

Building a Strong and Sustainable WASH System in Bomet County

Oct 2021 Update



Building a Strong and Sustainable Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) System in Bomet County, Kenya. Our aim is to transform the provision of clean water, sanitation and good hygiene in the county, ultimately improving health, education and livelihoods for Bomet's 1 million residents.

This document provides an overview of our strategy, gives a summary of what we have achieved to date and sets out what we aim to achieve in the coming years.

Thank you to everyone who is making this transformative work possible – including Dig Deep's Kenyan team, our partners in Bomet County Government and our supporters around the world.

Dig Deep's mission

At Dig Deep, we believe every resident in Kenya has a fundamental right to the provision of clean water, safe toilets and good hygiene.

Our purpose is to collaborate with the Kenyan government, local businesses and communities, to transform the provision of clean water, sanitation and good hygiene in Bomet County - one of the most challenging and least resourced areas in the country.

We take an integrated approach to all our work, using partnerships, education, training and advocacy to create sustainable change for Bomet's 1 million residents.

Partnerships

We facilitate the provision of clean water supplies and safe toilets for communities, schools and hospitals.

Education

We provide essential education to school children on hygiene and menstrual health.

Training

We provide training to local government, businesses, contractors and communities so they can embed the systemic improvements to water, sanitation and hygiene over the long term.

Advocacy

We work with the local community to advocate for change in planning, environmental and health policy to secure the long-term viability of safe water and hygiene provision.

We monitor our impact by regularly collecting data on the provision of clean water, sanitation and good hygiene. This integrated approach ultimately allows the 1 million residents of Bomet to improve their health, education and livelihoods.

The need and the opportunity

In Bomet County, Kenya, 8 out of every 10 people lack access to clean water, safe toilets and good hygiene (County Government of Bomet, 2018). Most residents live in rural communities and spend hours every day walking to collect dirty water or find a safe place to relieve themselves. Dirty water and poor hygiene spread disease, meaning even more time is lost to sickness - time that could have been spent on work or education.

From Dig Deep's 10 years of experience of successfully delivering impactful grassroots WASH programmes in Bomet, we know that the primary barrier to achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 in the county is the weakness of the county's Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) system.

Whilst we fully acknowledge that higher levels of funding are certainly required, it is clear that the weakness of the WASH system means:

- the resources already being invested by the county government are not having their intended impact
- the county government does not yet have the capacity to either attract or absorb additional funding for WASH infrastructure effectively
- The county is not able to coordinate and direct external agencies effectively, leading to duplication of work and missed opportunities for synergies



In Bomet 81% lack access to clean drinking water and sanitation



Diseases from dirty water kill more people worldwide each year than all wars or violence and children are the worst affected.



We know that every £1 invested in clean water, safe toilets and good hygiene, unlocks up to £8 in economic returns.

Our approach

We recognise that the county government is the responsible body with the mandate to lead efforts; we as an external agency must support and build their capacity to lead and succeed, so that the improvements we make together are sustained.

In order to achieve this, at the start of 2020, we initiated our programme: *Building a Strong and Sustainable WASH System in Bomet County*.

This approach has been adapted from the **Agenda for Change District Level Roadmap for Universal Access (A4C)**. We are following the five phases of the roadmap - Visioning, Institutional Strengthening, Assessment, Planning and Implementation - and are adjusting our activities to appropriate scales within the county according to both need and our organisational capabilities (see Figure 1 on page 5 showing the phases and see Figure 2 on page 10 showing how these phases are being adjusted to appropriate scales).

Through strengthening the WASH system, WASH service levels will be improved through:

- 1. The county government investing its existing WASH resources effectively**
- 2. The county government attracting and investing additional WASH resources effectively**
- 3. The county attracting, coordinating and directing external agencies effectively**

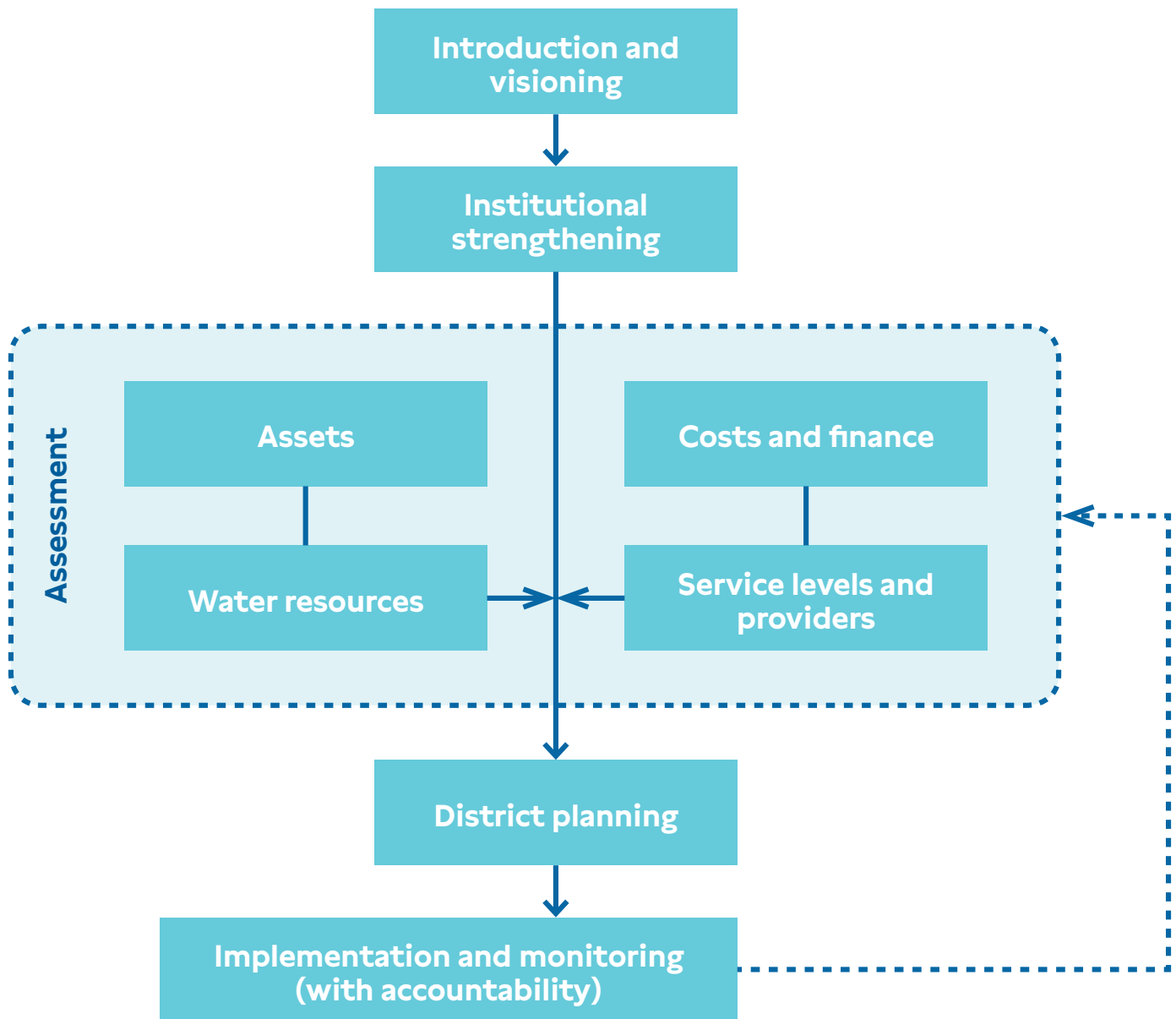


Figure 1 - phase of District level Roadmap for Universal Access to Sustainable WASH services produced by the WASH agenda for change coalition (Agenda for Change, 2017)

What we have achieved so far with Bomet County

We know we can drive this long term solution because of the success of our programmes in Bomet County to date and the strength of the relationships our team has formed with the county and national governments.

Our Kenyan HQ is in the heart of the communities we serve in Bomet, and our Kenyan team are all from the surrounding area.

So far our achievements in Bomet are as follows:

1 WASH in Schools (WinS) and Constituency Development Fund Partnership - 2011 - 2019

From when we were founded in 2007, and up until 2020, our focus was primarily on WASH in Schools projects working across four counties - 40 of these schools are located in Bomet.

The value the local community placed on these projects was illustrated when in mid-2017 the local MP Dominic Koskei told us that he intended to use national government funding to scale up our work.

He explained that he had been watching us for the last five years, that he had never seen an NGO engage so effectively with the local community and that his constituents valued our work so highly he wanted to grow our impact.

"We are much appreciative of our partnership with Dig Deep since 2017. Their construction and project supervision is the best and they also train teachers, pupils and community members on menstrual hygiene management which is a big problem in Kenya. Together, we are working hand in hand to enable our community to have access to clean water, safe sanitation and good hygiene."

Hon Dominic Koskei
MP Sotik Constituency, Bomet County

Dig Deep Head of Programmes Justus Tanui chairing
community meeting



2 Dig Deep's partnership with the Constituency Development Fund

This resulted in a formal long-term partnership between Dig Deep and the Kenyan Government's Constituency Development Fund (CDF). This agreement is historic; CDF has never partnered with any other international NGO in this way. This in turn led to our local team gaining national recognition, sharing best practice at the Kenyan parliament and with delegations from numerous other counties visiting our projects on fact-finding missions.

Financially, this agreement involved joint funding for the construction of girls' latrines at partner schools. The fact this happened organically demonstrated the grassroots demand for our work. It has already improved the long term sustainability of the WinS programme as the government is bought into each school. Perhaps most importantly, the reputation this has earned us in Kenya has given our local team the ability to influence government policy.



Rt Hon MP Dominic Koskei and Dig Deep Chief Exec. Ben Skelton opening the first completed joint Dig Deep-CDF WASH in Schools project in 2019



Initiating System Strengthening - Jan 2020-Oct 2021

As noted above, we are supporting the County Government to create and deliver a district wide plan.

This roadmap has five phases that have been initiated sequentially (Figure 1, p.5) - however, as system strengthening processes are rarely linear, many of these phases are taking place in parallel with each other.

The impact of COVID-19 in Kenya has also necessitated the revision of plans in order to free up resources for the public health response we have been undertaking with the county government. Nevertheless, our progress with the county on each phase has been far quicker than we had anticipated:

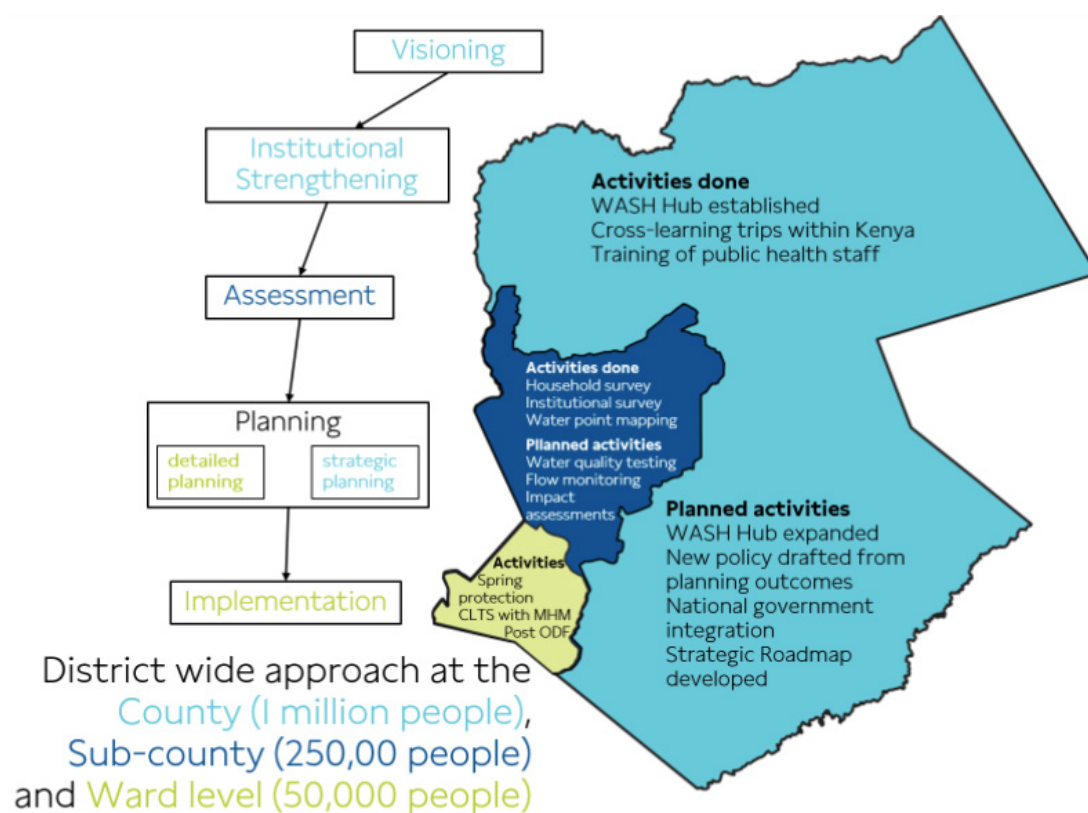


Figure 2 showing the implementation scale of completed and planned activities as of October 2021

1 Introduction and Visioning Phase

The aim of this phase is to introduce and build understanding and commitment to the principles and concepts of systems strengthening and achieving universal and sustainable access to WASH services within a ward (Agenda for Change, 2017). We are conducting this phase at the scale of the entire county.

Visioning Meeting

In Feb 2020 our team successfully convened a meeting of high level decision makers to introduce and gain feedback on our programme to Build a Strong and Sustainable WASH System in Bomet County. This meeting was attended by the directors of all relevant Government Departments (Water, Education, Public Health etc.) as well as senior representatives from Siya County who have successfully rolled out a similar programme with UNICEF in order to share best practice. This was a success with all present endorsing the plan and making verbal commitments of investment of departmental resources.

Integration with Bomet Integrated Development Plan

The Constitution of Kenya 2010 created a two-tier level of government, national and county. The county governments are required to prepare five-year County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs) and this is the second such plan; the first was implemented in the period 2013 to 2017 and the second is now running from 2018-2022. The County has recently begun the process of creating the 2023-2027 plan and in August 2021 the Integrated Development Plan committee and has formally requested that our team and the newly established WASH Hub (see below) integrate this vision and wider programme into this critical document.



2 Institutional Strengthening Phase

The aim of this phase is to ensure that local county government representatives have the minimum capacity for subsequent steps (Agenda for Change, 2017). As with the previous phase, we are conducting this phase at the scale of the entire county.

WASH Hub

We are proud to have worked with the county government to set up Bomet County's first WASH Hub with joint funding from the county government (the inauguration took place on 30th June 2021). This Hub will initially be staffed by two permanent employees, and has the vital role of managing WASH data from all over the county in order to:

1. Formalise integration between Bomet County Government, Dig Deep and other external agencies
2. Integrate data analysis and strategic decision making across the entire WASH system
3. Act as a conduit between practitioners and national and international monitoring frameworks

Department for public health: Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) and Post Open Defecation Free (ODF)

We have trained County Public Health Officers, and Community Health Volunteers in the organisation and implementation of CLTS in the community during our projects this year. As a result, county staff we have worked with have a high level of autonomy to perform CLTS meetings and follow-ups independently, and Bomet County Government has committed an independent budget to initiate CLTS in other parts of the county.

3 Assessment Phase (including integration of menstrual health)

The aim of this phase is to establish a rigorous evidence base for planning and a baseline against which implementation of the plan will be tracked (Agenda for Change, 2017). We are conducting this phase at the scale of the sub-county. Our longer term aim is that the tools and process developed for this act as a blueprint for assessing the remaining sub-counties.

- Between April-August 2021 our team worked with Bomet County Government and the Kenyan National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) to undertake a comprehensive assessment of WASH service levels in Sotik Constituency. Sotik is one of five constituencies in the county with a total population of over 250,000 residents.
- Our team surveyed a representative sample of all households in the Sotik Constituency. In total 13,031 households were surveyed in total. Individual sub-wards (n=43) were sampled separately with a 95% confidence level, and conservatively assuming P=0.5.
- A survey of water points was also undertaken, with 200 water points identified within the sub-county.
- Surveys of the 36 clinics and 198 schools within the sub-county were also conducted.
- In the survey we integrated questions from the JMP and asked selected questions from the Menstrual Practice Needs Scale (MPNS) to a subset of respondents. We understand that this may be the largest single data sample ever collected using the MPNS.
- This data will be held and evaluated by the WASH Hub (noted above). This is the most accurate and highest resolution data on WASH service levels that has ever been generated in Bomet at this scale.



Taken during our recent household survey this photo shows a Dig Deep enumerator and survey participant in conversation



4 Planning Phase

The aim of this phase is, based on the analysis of collected information, to develop a strategic and financial plan for achieving and sustaining universal access to WASH services and improving hygiene behaviours (Agenda for Change, 2017). We are conducting this at both the scale of the County (creating a strategic plan) and the ward level (creating a detailed/fully costed plan). Our longer-term aim is that the tools and process developed for this act as a blueprint for planning of the remaining sub-counties and wards.

- To date we have conducted initial planning based on data already available to the county, leading to a programme of activities related to household sanitation and hygiene (as detailed in the following phase).
- We have also developed a detailed 'plan for the planning phase' setting out the co-creation process required between the County Government, our team and other external agencies to create a full WASH District Wide Strategic Plan for Bomet County, and a detailed/fully costed plan for Ndanai-Abosi ward, population 56k+ residents).
- We have developed a set of dashboards for the WASH Hub to aid communication and analysis of the WASH service level data gathered in assessment phase, and are in the process of integrating menstrual health data into these.

5 Implementation and Monitoring Phase

The aim of this phase is to roll out the plans made in the previous phase and monitor their implementation (Agenda for Change, 2017). We are conducting this phase at the ward level.

- As a result of the phases above, we have already been able to initiate activities related to household sanitation and hygiene
- Our focus is on Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) and Post Open Defecation Free (ODF) market-based approach (Sanitation Marketing, Artisan Training, Microfinance)
- Between Oct 2019 and May 2020 Dig Deep supported Bomet County Government in undertaking a pilot Community-Led Total Sanitation programme with 6 villages. The programme was a success with all villages being certified as Open Defecation Free (ODF) benefitting the 7,000+ residents
- This was a first, historic step for the county as these were the first of the 2,191 villages in Bomet to be declared ODF



Example of Implementation and Monitoring Phase - Rapid scaleup of CLTS in 2021

As a result of the institutional strengthening activities noted above that support many families like Joseph's (see below), our team has been able to facilitate the county in successfully rolling out CLTS across 100 villages. There are three steps of verification that a village must pass in order to be declared ODF:

Step 1

Public Health Officer (PHOs) verification - following the ODF claim an informal verification of the ODF status of the villages is carried out by local PHOs

Step 2

3rd party verification - a team of trained master ODF certifiers from Kisumu county assessed the village

Step 3

An expert from the National WASH / CLTS Hub again verifies the ODF status of the villages.

At the time of writing (Oct 2021), 100 villages have passed all three of these verification stages. These verified results are in the process of being uploaded to the national WASH Hub which can be viewed here.

This is historic progress for the county, which has been attempting to successfully roll out CLTS since 2011 but was not able to achieve ODF at a single village before our intervention. We believe that this is a strong early indication of the wider potential of this system strengthening approach.

Both ourselves and the county are mindful that achieving ODF is the first step up the sanitation and hygiene ladders and that backsliding is a key risk. This is why we are now in the process of developing several Post-ODF interventions which will be piloted in these villages before the end of 2021.

Case Study

Joseph Barimen, Kapsiongo Village

Kapsiongo is a beautiful village in Bomet County. It is surrounded by fields and dusty footpaths and is just a short distance away from the hustle and bustle of the local town, Ndanai.

The village is one of the largest in the region with a population of 1,453 many of whom work as farmers. It is also home to the Barimen family.

Joseph (pictured right) works as a mechanic serving the local community, he has 6 children some of whom attend the local primary school situated in the village.

Just a few years ago Kapsiongo village was a very different place to live. Joseph and his family, like many people in Kapsiongo and the surrounding villages, did not have access to a safe and private toilet at home. This meant that every day he and his family had no option but to defecate in the open. This practice was not only uncomfortable but also had serious health repercussions for both Joseph and the people of Kapsiongo village as it caused sickness that kept the children from going to school and their parents from going to work.

Joseph is one of many who knew his community deserved better, so in 2019 he became a Community Health Champion, working alongside others from Bomet County and Dig Deep staff to implement a WASH in Schools programme, bringing clean water, safe toilets and good hygiene to the local school.



Joseph and the other Community Health Champions, supported by Dig Deep, didn't stop there. Following the success of the WASH in Schools programme the team worked together to roll out CLTS training in Kapsiongo village to bridge the gap in water, sanitation and hygiene in the community. This resulted in the village being declared open defecation free in 2020 and all families in the community having access to their own household latrine and handwashing station.

Following this intervention and the life changing impact it had on his family, Joseph has continued to work with Dig Deep to deliver this life saving training to other villages across the region. Joseph is now an important member of the Dig Deep Kenya team who is working with the Bomet County Government to encourage the wider community to build their own toilet and handwashing station at home so that families are able to protect themselves against Covid-19. With clean water and hygiene in place, children and adults are now better protected from infection, diseases and injury; and are able to live healthy lives.

"In 2019, I decided to further support my community by becoming a Community Health Champion and working alongside Dig Deep to promote health at Kapsiongo Primary School which translated to good performance and a sense of dignity for the students. The interventions at the school also benefited my community as it reduced hygiene related infections everywhere since the school children were empowered with disease prevention strategies that they could also use at home. I am very grateful to this programme as it has had a great impact on my community"

Joseph Barimen of Kapsiongo Village



MATHS

h	min	sec	h	min	sec
1	20	30	1	20	30
2	40	45	2	40	45
3	50	30	3	50	30
4	30	30	4	30	30

h min sec

7	3	40	45
1	30	30	

What we are aiming to achieve in 2022-2024

We are now working to ensure that the gains we have made are both sustained and built upon. We are focusing on driving the Visioning, Institutional Strengthening, Assessment, Planning, Implementation and Monitoring Phases through the following activities:

Visioning Phase

We will take senior and mid-level officials from the county departments of water and public health to learn from best practices from other WASH professionals in Kenya, to see first-hand case studies of successful programs of systems strengthening elsewhere in the country.

We will bring in experts from across Kenya to consult on technical aspects of WASH provision.

Institutional strengthening Phase

We will expand the WASH Hub to have an extra permanent member of staff with expertise in system strengthening, increasing its capacity to perform its vital monitoring, evaluation and coordination activities.

We will focus on strengthening all areas of WASH, identifying training needs across the county government, and measure progress using the 9 building blocks identified by the IRC Agenda for Change framework.



Inauguration of The WASH hub, 30th June 2021

Assessment Phase

We will increase our assessment activities to better monitor the water resources in Sotik sub-county, by conducting water quality and flow monitoring tests at water points, and to appraise the standard of existing assets.

We will also engage in impact assessment by gathering data on the levels of waterborne disease present in the sub-county, to see where our initiatives are most successful, replicate our successes and learn from challenges.

Planning Phase

We will lead a planning phase to develop a strategic roadmap for WASH across the county, and a detailed plan for implementation in Ndanai-Abosi ward.

This will include drafting policy changes to WASH that will be incorporated into Bomet County's Integrated Development Plan, to ensure more equitable access to WASH infrastructure and services.

This plan will be informed by engaging in an extensive public consultation process to improve the democratic accountability of WASH service authorities.

Implementation and Monitoring Phase

At the level of Ndanai-Abosi ward implementation will be funded by Dig Deep's existing income streams, the county government, the Constituency Development Fund and new Headline Partners. Our Implementation projects are as follows:

- We will implement a series of spring protection and rainwater harvesting schemes in the ward, informed by our assessment activities
- We will continue to integrate an MHM component into our CLTS. We are also beginning post-ODF activities in the ward, including establishing market-based latrine improvements, training artisan to construct latrines and continuing behaviour change.
- We will continue to support WASH in Schools based on the needs identified in our assessment and planning phases.

This focus on Ndanai-Abosi ward will both rapidly reach the residents of this marginalised ward with sustainable WASH services and strengthen the building blocks of the county's entire WASH System.

The successes and inevitable challenges of creating and delivering a district wide plan at the scale of a ward will demonstrate what it takes to reach everyone, forever, in the local context of Bomet. In practice this will include determining the true lifecycle cost of reaching everyone in a ward, discovering which infrastructure options are viable in this context and demonstrating which management systems are really sustainable at this scale. These successes - and lessons learned - will then provide a template for scaling up sustained, universal access across the entire county.



Our long term impact

Based on the successes of this programme to date we are confident that these future activities will mean:

- The county government is investing its existing WASH resources much more effectively across the entire county due to having a clear vision, increased institutional capacity, and robust assessment and planning processes.
- The county government is better able to attract additional WASH resources as it will have a robust strategic District Wide Plan for resource mobilization.
- All of the above will increase the county's ability to coordinate and direct external agencies effectively, further increasing the effectiveness of implementation.

Through transforming the provision of clean water, sanitation and good hygiene in the county, this programme will ultimately improving health, education and livelihoods for Bomet's 1 million residents.

If you would like to learn more about Dig Deep's programme to Build a Strong and Sustainable WASH System in Bomet County, or are interested in partnering with us, please contact info@digdeep.org.uk.

Bibliography

Agenda for Change, 2017. A District Level Roadmap for Universal Access to Sustainable WASH Services. s.l.:Agenda for Change.

County Government of Bomet, 2018. County Integrated Development Plan 2018-2022. s.l.:County Government of Bomet.