



**MADARASA – A QURAN TEACHING SCHOOL IN
MENGO WARD, NANOZI ZONE BUILDS A SANITARY
FACILITY**



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Environmental Alert (EA) is implementing a Comic Relief funded project in partnership with Water Aid Uganda, titled **Kampala Slum Transformation Initiative (KASTI)** in Nakawa and Kampala Central divisions. EA works with community WASH advocacy groups/committees to raise awareness on good hygiene and sanitation and to advocate for improved WASH service delivery. Part of these committees are members of the village health teams (VHTs), who spearhead hygiene and sanitataion promotion among community members promoting practices such as use of clean sanitary facilities, proper garbage disposal, and hand washing with soap among others. EA documents stories of change to involving change in practice, general cleanliness, a reduction in sanitation-related disease to foster learning. This story reflects the efforts of VHTs of Mengo ward in Kampala Central division under the leadership of Ms. Kazaire Monica in sensitizing the owners and teachers of Madarasa, a Quran teaching school in Nanozi zone, who as a result of the sanitation knowledge acquired managed to construct a two stance sanitary facility for their students.

In Mengo ward, the site of corridors filled with fecal matter as a result of open defecation, dirty toilets and several households without a sanitary facility or sharing a single sanitary facility does not turn heads. This was true for Madarasa School in Nanozi zone. The school teaches the Qu’ran to an average of 23 young boys and girls each day but deplorably lacked a sanitary facility for the children to use while at school. Ironically, since majority of the students have their homes nearby, they were given permission to go back

UGX 400,000

The amount of money used
to construct the 2 stance
toilet facility

home and have their short/long calls and then return to school. The teachers on the other hand used a toilet poorly maintained toilet facility at HASS gas station just across the road. According to teacher Umaru, each student took on average 20 minutes to access and use their home restrooms. This led to wastage of useful school time and posed a management challenge to the teachers. Neighboring the school were 2 households, a shop, a road side food preparation area, and a restaurant. All the people in this neighborhood lacked a clean sanitary

facility in the vicinity and the corridor leading to the back of the premises was a common site for open defecation and urination. This certainly posed a public health concern to the people in this neighborhood, making them prone to diseases such as cholera, diarrhea and dysentery.

Ms. Monica together with her VHT colleagues learnt of this situation during one of their routine village inspections on Saturday, and Ms. Monica immediately engaged the school teachers, Umaru and Mwalimu to whom she preached the good sanitation and hygiene gospel of having clean toilets. After several weeks of sensitization and follow up by Village Health Team, the school still didn’t give any positive response. Monica chose to use her negotiation skills to engage the Public Health department at the division to serve the school with a nuisance notice lest the school would be closed.



Figure 1: A student of Madarasa School accesses the toilet facility

With a threat of closure of the school, the teachers contacted the landlord of the building, however, when they asked him to construct the toilet facility for the tenants of the building who also include Madarasa School, he refused and declined to answer any subsequent calls from the teachers. To ensure that the school stays in operation, the teachers, Umaru and Mwalimu were left with no other alternative other than mobilize funds and construct the toilet facility. As a first step, the two teachers donated UGX 300,000 for this initiative and then mobilized the neighboring households to raise funds

With an agreement that these households will have some stances for them to use. Majority of the neighboring households and businesses rejected the proposition, however, the 5 member household on the adjacent right of the school pledged UGX 50,000 and the shop on the adjacent left pledged UGX 50,000 too. With these funds, the teachers paid for construction of a 2 stance toilet facility right behind the school premises. One stance to be used by students and the other be shared by the 5 member household and the shop operators, who on are often 2 people but they host about on average 3 friends each day, thus this brings the total count of people sharing that toilet stance to about 10 each day. Construction of this facility took 1week.

Stance 1 = 23 students

Stance 2 = 10 people

Now, whenever a student wants to use the rest room, he/she accesses this facility just behind the school premises. Teacher Umaru in his own words said that

'the time for visiting the rest rooms has been reduced to only 2 minutes, thus the students spend more time doing useful school work.' Teacher Umaru and Mwalimu clean the toilet every morning and lock their stance with a padlock. A key is provided to student upon request. In addition, because the Village Health Team led by Monica regularly visit this neighborhood to inspect and sensitize the community, open defecation has

drastically stopped and the restaurant operators now make an effort to clean their surroundings.



Figure 2: Monica and teacher Umaru during one of the routine inspections. Photo by Environmental Alert.

Annex



Figure 3: Women from fetching water pass through the corridor that leads to the toilet facility. Photo by Environmental Alert.



Figure 4: Road side food vendors cook food in the open area next to the corridor. Photo by Environmental Alert.



Figure 5: Madarasa School in the extreme right corner neighbored by a household and a restaurant. Photo by Environmental Alert.

Box 1. About Environmental Alert

Environmental Alert (EA) was founded in **1988** and has developed and transitioned into a National Non-Governmental organization contributing to an enabling policy environment for sustainable agriculture and sound environment and natural resources management at community, local, national and international levels. EA is officially registered with the NGO Board as a Ugandan non-governmental organization (NGO), incorporated as a company limited by guarantee. EA is governed by an Independent Board that is responsible for providing strategic oversight of the organization including ensuring its integrity as a voluntary service organization.

EA is a **1st prize winner of the Energy globe award for environmental sustainability-2005 under the category, earth.**

EA is a member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and a Member of The IUCN National Committee for Uganda.

EA envisions, *'Resilient and dignified communities, managing their environment and natural resources sustainably.'*

EA's mission is to, 'Contribute to improved livelihoods of vulnerable communities by enhancing agricultural productivity and sustainable natural resources management'

Program and institutional Components:

1. Environment and Natural resources management;
2. Food security and Nutrition;
3. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene;
4. Finance and Administration;
5. Resource mobilization and Investment.

Scale of Implementation:

EA operates in selected districts for generation of evidence to inform policy engagements on agriculture, environment and natural resources at National and International levels. Currently EA's operations are in 20 districts across the country. EA undertakes area wide targeted awareness on selected issues in agriculture, environment and natural resources engagements

EA is a Secretariat for following networks:

- a) The Network for Civil Society Organizations in Environment & Natural Resources Sector (ENR-CSO Network);
- b) Uganda Forestry Working Group;
- c) The Standards Development Group; and
- d) Promoting Local Innovation in ecologically oriented agriculture and natural resources management (PROLINNOVA-Uganda Network).

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