



SUCCESS STORY

Small but Firm Steps to Urban Water Supply Sufficiency

Supporting water utilities to meet the supply needs of Kenyans



Eric Onyiego/KIWASH

Stephen Mutiso, Managing Director of Mbooni Water Company shows off the new functional meters which have improved water access and revenue generation.

“Customers are getting sufficient water and paying their bills. Our revenue has increased by 100 percent”

- Stephen Mutiso, Managing Director

Water system coverage in Kenya is concentrated in urban areas, but water supply and service delivery is not always consistent. This is because water utilities that serve these urban areas lose as much as 67 percent of their water to leaks in transmission, poor billing systems, theft and weak metering policies. Also called non-revenue water (NRW), these losses are the difference between the quantity of water that a utility produces and the water that is paid for.

Working together since January 2016, five water utilities in eastern Kenya and USAID’s Kenya Integrated Water Sanitation and Hygiene Project (KIWASH) developed action plans to reduce non-revenue water losses that deny them income for expanding and improving water services.

Through a series of trainings and strategic planning workshops, the utility staff learned cost effective techniques that they could implement leading to notable improvements within a period of six to 12 months.

The project’s engineers helped the utilities implement simple techniques including, establishing a unit of staff dedicated to periodic monitoring and reporting on indicators for non-revenue water, installing functional production meters, replacing all meters older than eight years, and updating the utilities’ metering policies.

These efforts are resulting in more efficient distribution of water and increased access for more residents. “People have started demanding our services because they see their neighbor’s taps with water more frequently” states Stephen Mutiso, Managing Director of Mbooni Water Company. “After repairing all leakages within the pipeline and installing new and efficient meters, customers are getting sufficient water and paying their bills. Our revenue has increased by 100 percent”, he adds.

With new awareness on non-revenue water challenges, staff training and establishment of a non-revenue water unit, the utilities are well poised to make affordable changes and infrastructure investments such as those in Mbooni Water Company to increase revenue and provide quality services to their customers, extend their water networks, and to move towards greater financial sustainability.

KIWASH is working with 11 utilities in Kenya to improve governance, operations and financial performance with the ultimate goal of improving their ability to qualify for, and take on, debt or equity financing from commercial banks for expansion of WASH services.