

## Inclusive WASH infrastructure design: Ensuring everyone everywhere has access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene

For the last three years, WaterAid Uganda has been working with a number of local NGO partners to improve access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene services for different categories of socially excluded people. Such groups include physically disabled people, chronically ill people, people with visio-impairments, pregnant women, adolescent girls and older people.

One such partner NGO is the Church of Uganda – Teso Diocese Development Office (TEDDO) - which is instrumental in scaling up low cost accessible water and sanitation technologies in the Amuria and Katakwi districts of north eastern Uganda. This document gives a voice to socially excluded people to show how they are able to independently use different accessible water and sanitation technologies.



### Olupot Martin makes a wooden seat pan to ensure easy access to his latrine

“My name is Olupot Martin. I am 50 years old, married to Rose Amado, 36, and we have six children. Since my childhood I have lived here in Abibico village, Ogolai sub- county, Amuria district, north eastern Uganda.

My mother told me that when I was about four years old I suffered from polio disease which left me with this physical disability. I never went to school because all schools were very far away.

It was good that my father was a carpenter; I used these skills to earn a living through making chairs, doors and any other things which people used to help him in his small workshop. That’s how I was able to learn carpentry. I use in my village may want.

Martin learnt carpentry skills from his father when he was young. Today, through training in inclusive infrastructure designs offered by TEDDO, (a local NGO) supported by WaterAid Uganda, Martin has acquired enough skills to adapt traditional pit latrines to be more accessible for people living with disabilities. Photo: WaterAid/James Kiyimba

## My experience in using ordinary water and sanitation facilities

Since childhood, I have always faced numerous challenges in using ordinary pit latrines because I cannot squat properly to target the latrine pit hole and on most occasions I would leave the latrine very dirty.

At times other users would also make the latrine dirty; kids would urinate on the floor, making it hard for me to sit on the pit hole. As a result I found defecating in the bush a better alternative. Although I am aware that open defecation is not good, it was the easiest way I could help myself.

I have never owned a wheelchair so collecting water has always been a big problem in my life. I never used to collect water. The nearby water source was a stream down the valley where village members would collect water, competing with livestock and frogs for the same water.

### How the change happened: Knowledge is power



Olupot Martin (right) being introduced to different accessible technology options by TEDDO project staff. Photo: WaterAid /James Kiyimba

In early 2014, the Church of Uganda Teso Diocese Development Office (TEDDO) and WaterAid Uganda started working in my village, Abibico. One day I was invited to attend a village



"I just put my latrine seat pan on top of the pit hole to defecate comfortably. After use I put the seat in the corner so that other people can use the latrine normally," said Olupot Martin. Photo: WaterAid /James Kiyimba

meeting where, together with other village members, learnt about the different design options for making our water and sanitation facilities accessible to all people in the community. I also attended many other meetings where I learnt to make adaptations to ordinary sanitation facilities to make them accessible for people like me living with disabilities.

At times the TEDDO project staff would come with drawings of different designs for us to choose from. For sure this was an eye opener for me. As a carpenter, I started thinking about the improvements I could make on my own latrine. I preferred a movable seat pan which I could put on top of the latrine pit hole so I bought a piece of timber and I used the knowledge acquired to make a wooden latrine seat.

## Martin's experience of using an inclusive water source

I am also very grateful to TEDDO and WaterAid Uganda because they have brought safe water close within our village. This is the first borehole ever constructed in Abibico village. The borehole is very unique because it was constructed in a way that people like me, living with disabilities, have somewhere to sit while pumping water and it's less of a struggle. Collecting water from this borehole is not difficult at all because the borehole is just near my home. At the moment I don't have a wheelchair, but I usually go to the borehole with my children. I help in pumping the water and then my older son uses a bicycle to carry the water home.

Now that I have water nearby and am also able to use a latrine, I feel my dignity in the community has been restored. I am always clean and my family members are very happy for the improvements in



People living with disabilities can easily use the borehole because it has a seat for use while pumping and a platform for resting a water container before putting it on a wheelchair. Photo: WaterAid/James Kiyimba

our latrine because I always leave it clean after use.”

## Joyce Ajimo: Village champion for inclusive sanitation facilities



Joyce is able to use a dish drying rack which is centrally located within her compound. Photo: WaterAid/James Kiyimba

“I am Ajimo Joyce, 52 years old and single mother of two grown up girls and a boy. I live in a village called Apeulai in Ogolai sub-county, Amuria district, north eastern Uganda and I am a farmer.

I was not born with a disability but my mother told me that at the age of six or seven years old she took me for polio immunisation and on return I became sick and I was left with one leg physically paralysed.

### The situation

When I was young, I did not know how to use a walking stick; I could only crawl on the ground like a baby. I found it very difficult to use ordinary pit latrines, bath shelters or even dish drying racks which were available within our home. At the age of 13 I was big and strong enough so my Dad introduced me to using a walking stick. This changed my life. I was able to visit many people within the village.

Even with a walking stick however, I still found it very difficult to use an ordinary pit latrine because I could not squat. It was also very difficult for me to use the traditional bath shelters which required bending. Inside a pit latrine, the best I could do was to bend a little in order to target a pit hole. In most cases I would miss the hole, thereby soiling the facility. It was time consuming for me to always clean the latrine each time I used it and as a result I preferred going to the nearby bush.

### How change happened



Community training on inclusive WASH



**Top photo:** Joyce used the knowledge acquired from WaterAid to make her bath shelter inclusive. Inside she put a table where she has a basin and a movable chair and can sit comfortably to wash.

**Below:** After bathing Joyce removes the chair so that other family members can use the facility. Photo: WaterAid/James Kiyimba



I have always lived with the shame of defecating in the bush and of being dirty because I was never able to bath whenever I wanted.

In 2014, an organisation called the Church of Uganda – Teso Diocese Development Office (TEDDO) and WaterAid started working in our village and taught us how to make our latrines and bath shelters accessible by all people in the village.

TEDDO also organised a number of meetings in our village, teaching us how to use local materials to make our sanitation and hygiene facilities more accessible to people like me living with disabilities. In one of the meetings, TEDDO staff came with drawings of different inclusive technology designs for us to choose what may work for people with disabilities in the community.

In my case, I liked the idea of sitting instead of squatting while in the latrine. I also liked the idea of having a raised platform for a basin and a chair to sit while bathing. I did not have to buy a table or a chair to put in the bath shelter, I already had these things at home.

### Making the family latrine inclusive

Using the knowledge I acquired and with the support of my brother, a TEDDO trained hygiene promoter in the village, I constructed a new latrine with a permanent seat pan made out of bricks.

The seat pan has saved me the burden of squatting while defecating and the shame of defecating in the bush. These days I just sit comfortably while in the latrine. It is very easy to use this kind of improved latrine. In case I want to clean the latrine, I use ash which I collect from our kitchen to kill all diseases causing germs.



A traditional pit latrine with an adapted seat pan to enable people who cannot squat to use it. The seat is made of bricks. After use, Joyce covers the pit hole to keep diseases spreading flies from entering

Nowadays, I find it easy to use the latrine and I am happy that I have stopped open defecation. The latrine is good because it saves me the trouble of squatting. Everyone at home uses the latrine and whoever comes in my home uses this latrine with a seat. With the end of open defecation, my dignity has been restored. My dream is to have my latrine cemented; it makes it easy for me to clean.”



Ajimo Joyce, “I find it very easy to sit rather than squat while I am using a latrine. Being able to use this latrine means an end to open defecation.” Photo: WaterAid/ James Kiyimba



“After using the latrine I come here to wash my hands. I use my stronger leg to make the water container tilt for water to come. All these facilities are not expensive to install,” Ajimo Joyce. Photo: WaterAid/James Kiyimba

## Ariokot Janet takes the lead in making her family sanitation facilities inclusive



Two years ago, while pregnant, Ariokot Janet got training from WaterAid Uganda local partner TEDDO and then constructed her inclusive bath shelter to save herself the burden of bending. Photo: WaterAid/James Kiyimba

“My name is Ariokot Janet. I’m 48 years old and live in Amogo village, Ogangai parish, Morungauny sub-county, Amuria district, north eastern Uganda. I am married to Omodi Joseph and we have seven children.

Two years ago, when I was pregnant with my last born, Ariokot Lucy, Phillip Odongo, a staff member from TEDDO, called for a village meeting to train us on constructing sanitation facilities that could be used by people living with disabilities and pregnant women. As a pregnant

woman at that time, I used to face lots of problems in bending while bathing.

In the village meeting we were introduced to a number of bath shelter designs. On returning home after the meeting, I discussed the matter of constructing an inclusive bath shelter with my husband Omodi Joseph. From the onset he did not welcome it.

But for me I was very determined to push forward this idea because with each day that went on it was becoming very difficult for me to bend while bathing. I needed a bath shelter with a raised platform for the basin. I continued to explain to my husband that as a pregnant woman I needed



Although Janet's husband Omodi Joseph was not supportive in the construction of this inclusive bath shelter, after seeing how simple it makes bathing, he is very grateful to his wife and happy to use the facility. Photo: WaterAid/James Kiyimba

to bath from a comfortable place where I didn't have to bend so much. Still my husband did not take the matter seriously.

One day I decided to take the initiative of constructing an inclusive bath shelter by myself. I requested my older children to dig up a nearby anthill so that we could get good soil for brick making.

I moulded enough bricks from the soil and constructed this bath shelter with a platform. Then bathing became very easy and less stressful. Since the basin is on a raised platform, I only have to stand while bathing.



Ariokot Janet has also constructed a better latrine near the bath shelter.

Although my husband was not supportive during the construction, he enjoys using the bathroom since he also finds it more comfortable to stand and bath. I am happy that all my family members like using the bathroom.

Lucy is now two years old and I am not pregnant but I can't stop using this inclusive bath shelter. Having the basin on a raised platform while washing means that dirty water can't splash back in the basin, it just drains away and bathing is made easy.

I am grateful to TEDDO and WaterAid for the sanitation and hygiene knowledge given to me.

Compiled by : James Kiyimba

**For more information contact:**

WaterAid Uganda, Plot 7, Kulubya Close, Bugolobi,  
P.O. Box 11759, Kampala, Uganda. Tel: +256- 414 -505795/7,  
Email: [wauuganda@wateraid.org](mailto:wauuganda@wateraid.org); Website: [www.wateraid.org/uganda](http://www.wateraid.org/uganda)