



SUSTAINABLE WATER AND WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT

A Partners' Meet on Country-specific Achievements

Date: **March 10-11, 2026** | Venue: **Four Points, Sheraton, Nairobi, Kenya**

PARTICIPATION
BY INVITATION
ONLY



"Sustainable Water and Wastewater Management"

A Partners Meet on Country-Specific Achievement

March 10-11, 2026, Nairobi, Kenya

**CENTRE FOR SCIENCE AND
ENVIRONMENT, NEW
DELHI**

Sustainable Water and Wastewater Management

A partners meet on country-specific achievement

Dates: March 10-11, 2026

Venue: Four Point, Sheraton, Nairobi, Kenya

Background and Purpose of the Workshop

The Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), in collaboration with the Kenya Water and Sanitation Civil Society Network (KEWASNET), organised a two-day meeting in Nairobi. The meeting was conceived as part of ongoing efforts to strengthen regional cooperation and promote sustainable approaches to water resource management in the face of growing water stress and increasing wastewater generation.

The meeting aimed to bring together senior officials from relevant government departments, researchers, development partners, and civil society organisations from CSE's partner countries, Uganda, Tanzania, and Nigeria. It served as an important platform for dialogue, enabling participants to exchange experiences, share policy insights, and discuss practical approaches adopted in their respective countries. The discussions focused on understanding the diverse challenges related to water scarcity, inadequate wastewater treatment, and the need for transitioning towards circular water management systems that emphasise reuse, recycling, and resource recovery.

The meeting provided an opportunity to review and reflect on the progress made by participating countries in developing and implementing national roadmaps for water wastewater circularity. Participants examined various technological, institutional, and governance-related solutions, and explored how these could be adapted or scaled up in different contexts. The forum also encouraged cross-learning by highlighting successful case studies, innovative practices, and lessons learned from on-ground implementation.

CSE has been actively working with these partner countries to support sustainable water and wastewater management through a combination of technical assistance, capacity building, and knowledge exchange. The Nairobi meeting represents a significant step in this direction, reinforcing partnerships and paving the way for more integrated and sustainable water management practices across participating countries.

1. Welcome Address - Ashah Shaaban, Board Chair, The Kenya Water and Sanitation CSOs Network (KEWASNET)

The welcome address was delivered by Ashah Shaaban, Board Chair, Kenya Water and Sanitation Civil Society Organisations Network (KEWASNET). She welcomed all participants to the meeting and highlighted the importance of regional collaboration in addressing pressing challenges related to water scarcity and wastewater management. She emphasised the need for strengthening partnerships between governments, civil society, and development partners to promote sustainable and inclusive water management practices.

She also acknowledged the efforts of the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) in facilitating knowledge exchange and capacity-building initiatives across partner countries. In her remarks, she underscored the significance of water–wastewater circularity as a key approach for improving resource efficiency, enhancing resilience, and ensuring long-term water security in the region.

2. Overview of Key Challenges in Managing Water and Wastewater in Rural Areas of the Global South, and Exploring Climate-Resilient Solutions -Susmita Sengupta, Senior Programme Manager, Centre for Science and Environment

Susmita Sengupta highlighted that managing water and wastewater in rural areas of the Global South remains a major challenge due to limited access to safe and reliable water sources, declining groundwater levels, poor water quality, and inadequate infrastructure. She emphasised that climate variability further intensifies these challenges by affecting rainfall patterns, reducing recharge, and increasing water scarcity during dry periods. Rural areas, being highly dependent on natural sources like springs, ponds, and groundwater, are particularly vulnerable.

The presentation also focused on practical and scalable solutions demonstrated through case studies across different ecological regions. Key interventions included spring rejuvenation, revival of traditional water bodies such as ponds for groundwater recharge, rainwater harvesting, and tapping of surface water sources like rivers and reservoirs. Under programmes such as the Jal Jeevan Mission, there has been a significant increase in functional household tap connections, improving access to safe drinking water

She also highlighted the importance of regular water quality monitoring through field testing kits and laboratory support, along with awareness on water conservation, greywater management, and safe sanitation practices. These decentralised, community-driven, and nature-based approaches contribute to building climate-resilient and sustainable water management systems in rural areas.

3. Keynote Address: State of Water and Wastewater Management in Kenya -Eng. Martin Ngaa, Director of Water Storage and Flood Control, Ministry of Water, Sanitation and Irrigation, Kenya

Eng. Martin Ngaa presented an overview of the state of water and wastewater management in Kenya, highlighting key challenges and ongoing efforts. He noted that Kenya faces increasing water stress due to climate variability, erratic rainfall, and rising demand from a growing population. Many regions continue to experience water scarcity, particularly during prolonged dry periods, affecting livelihoods and economic activities.

He emphasised that while access to water supply has improved in recent years, disparities still exist, especially in rural and informal urban areas. Wastewater management remains a major concern, with limited treatment capacity and low levels of reuse, leading to environmental pollution and health risks.

Eng. Ngaa highlighted government initiatives focused on expanding water storage infrastructure, promoting rainwater harvesting, and improving flood control systems to enhance resilience. He also stressed the importance of integrated and sustainable approaches, including water reuse and resource recovery. He called for stronger collaboration, increased investment, and capacity building to achieve long-term water security.

4. Overview of Gaps and Challenges in Rural Kenya on Water and Sanitation Management, and Way Forward for East Africa -Sareen Malik, Executive Secretary, African Civil Society Network on Water and Sanitation (ANEW)

Sareen Malik highlighted the key gaps and challenges in managing water and sanitation in rural Kenya, noting persistent issues such as inadequate infrastructure, limited access to safe drinking water, poor sanitation coverage, and weak wastewater management systems. She emphasised that these challenges are further aggravated by climate variability, population pressures, and institutional constraints, particularly at the local level.

She placed the discussion within the broader continental framework of the Africa Water Vision 2063 and Policy, which envisions “a water-secure and resilient Africa with safe sanitation for all.” She stressed the need for aligning national and regional efforts with this long-term vision to ensure sustainable and inclusive water management.

Sareen Malik urged participants to adopt an economy-wide, systems-based approach that recognises water not just as a WASH service, but as a critical driver of economic growth, livelihoods, and social development. She also underscored the importance of gender inclusion, community participation, and strengthened governance systems to ensure equitable and climate-resilient outcomes across East Africa.

5. How Uganda is planning to integrate rainwater harvesting/groundwater recharge and decentralized wastewater treatment systems in its upcoming policies on rural and institutional areas- *Robert Kirya Mutibwa, Principal Water Officer, Ministry of Water and Environment, Uganda*

Robert Kirya Mutibwa, Principal Water Officer, Ministry of Water and Environment, presented Uganda's approach to integrating rainwater harvesting, groundwater recharge, and decentralised wastewater treatment systems into policy frameworks for rural and institutional areas. The presentation highlighted that Uganda already has enabling provisions within existing laws such as the Water Act and the Building Control Act (2013), with multiple institutions mandated to support implementation, including the Ministry of Water and Environment, local governments, and regulatory bodies. However, the key challenge lies in operationalizing these provisions through appropriate designs, enforcement mechanisms, and improved technical capacity.

Uganda receives an average annual rainfall of about 1200 mm, yet groundwater usage remains low at approximately 3%, indicating untapped potential for recharge and storage. The focus is therefore on adapting existing frameworks to promote stormwater management and climate resilience rather than creating entirely new policies. The presentation emphasised practical steps such as developing standardized designs, strengthening awareness through campaigns and manuals, and implementing demonstration structures in high-density public institutions like schools. It also highlighted the need to localize interventions and promote circular water management, including reuse and recycling of wastewater. Overall, the approach reflects a shift toward sustainable, institution-led and climate-adaptive water management practices.

6. Tanzania's initiative of launching the programme "Mtu ni Afya" – and how this is changing the scenario of rural sanitation in the country- *Evance Dabrick Simkoko, Principal Health Officer, Ministry of Health, Tanzania*

Evance Dabrick Simkoko, Principal Health Officer, Ministry of Health, Tanzania, spoke about the "Mtu ni Afya" campaign and its importance in improving rural sanitation in the country. First introduced between 1973 and 1978, the campaign focused on raising awareness about hygiene, disease prevention, and healthy living practices. During this period, sanitation coverage increased significantly from about 20% to 80%, along with a reduction in infectious diseases.

Building on this progress, the government launched the National Sanitation Campaign in 2012 to further expand access to improved toilets and handwashing facilities. By 2023, access to toilets had reached nearly universal levels, with a substantial increase in improved sanitation and hygiene facilities. To address remaining gaps in underserved and vulnerable communities, especially in remote and high-risk areas, "Mtu ni Afya Phase II" was launched in 2024. The campaign promotes key practices such as toilet use, handwashing, waste management, water safety, and cleanliness.

It uses community engagement methods such as direct outreach events, media campaigns, demonstrations, and incentives to encourage behaviour change and improve sanitation practices at the grassroots level.

7. Nigeria's journey on developing the rural WASH policy in the country. Country's plan for developing the road map for implementation of this policy -Aghogho Bekederemo .O Gbetsere, Assistant Director (Env. Health Officer), Federal Ministry of Environment, Nigeria

Aghogho Bekederemo O. Gbetsere presented Nigeria's progress in developing its rural WASH policy and the roadmap for implementation. He explained that the process started in 2023 with the formation of a technical committee to bring together different WASH-related policies and improve coordination between federal and state institutions.

He highlighted the key challenges in the sector, including high levels of open defecation, limited access to safe drinking water, and poor sanitation services. Many health facilities also lack basic WASH services. Other issues include weak coordination, low focus on safe sanitation, and poor faecal sludge management. To address these challenges, the policy is being developed through consultations with different stakeholders and by reviewing existing systems. It is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 6. The roadmap focuses on improving sanitation, promoting faecal sludge management, building institutional capacity, raising hygiene awareness, and supporting research, innovation, and climate-resilient solutions.

Conclusion and chalking out the future path

In the concluding session, Susmita Sengupta summarised the main discussions from the workshop. She said that many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa face similar problems in rural areas, such as water scarcity, poor sanitation, weak infrastructure, and climate-related challenges. At the same time, she noted that useful and practical solutions are being developed through country experiences and partnerships.

She highlighted the importance of simple and local solutions like rainwater harvesting, groundwater recharge, wastewater reuse, and faecal sludge management. She also stressed that strong local institutions, such as Village Water and Sanitation Committees and local governments, are important for long-term success.

She also highlighted there is a need to improve policies, strengthen coordination, and increase investment in the water and sanitation sector. She also emphasised the importance of training, knowledge sharing, and working together across countries.

She concluded by encouraging all countries to collaborate and scale up successful solutions for sustainable water management.