

# Water is Life: *Amazzi Bulamu*

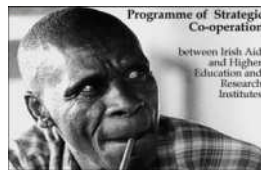
## 2<sup>nd</sup> Project Workshop

Royal Irish Academy, Dublin  
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**HEA**

Higher Education Authority  
An tÚdarás um Ard-Oideachas



Water is Life



NUI MAYNOOTH  
Ollscoil na hÉireann Má Nuad



RCSI



UWASNET

# Water is Life



- Funded by Irish Aid/HEA Programme for Strategic Co-operation
- Goal of this programme:
  - to build research capacity in Ireland and Africa in relation to safe and sustainable water provision in Africa
- 5 year programme - 2009 to 2014
- Large numbers of partners - both Southern and Northern

# Key activities



*Develop appropriate activities in the area of water resource sustainability & monitor its effects on community health, gender & poverty through a combination of **8 PhD research projects & community engagement***

- Support research with a “water-centred” focus;
- Examine water sourcing, distribution & sanitation;
- Assess impact on community & health & gender;
- Engage community interest & support;
- Generation and provision of an appropriate GIS database; and,
- Ultimately inform a jointly developed taught Masters degree programme (Ireland/Uganda).



# Key features



- Inter / Intra institutional
- Multi- / Trans-disciplinary
- Research “in the field”
- Multiple levels of engagement:
  - academic, state, community and policy influencers
- Top-down and bottom-up approach
- Focus on policy implementation - from practice to policy

# Water is Life approach

What should we do? How to do what we want to do?

What we want to do

What we are capable of doing

What exists

**Water is Life embodies coordination across all levels of disciplines**

adapted from MaxNeef (2005)

# WIL - tangible outcomes



- Doctoral training (collaborative approach)
  - 8 African researchers
- Production of joint N-S Masters
  - Cert. in Sustainable Water Management
- Publications
  - Journal articles (10-20 minimum)
  - Project book
- Spatial database
- Policy briefs
- International /national colloquia / conference presentations
- Ongoing public engagement / community training

# Learning to date

Challenge	WIL response
Ensuring partner and stakeholder 'buy-in' (including supervisory arrangements)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set the agenda <b>together</b> including defined roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• Determine most <b>appropriate channels/methods of communication</b> for each stakeholder group at an early stage</li> <li>• Monitor commitment (accountability)</li> <li>• Agree on an <b>MOU</b> and a <b>strategic plan</b></li> </ul>
Ensure mutual learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge <b>cultural</b> backgrounds of all partners involved</li> <li>• <b>Shared</b> ownership of all outcomes</li> <li>• Promote platforms for <b>exchange</b> of outcomes - appropriate to stakeholder groups</li> <li>• Direct exposure of North and South participants to broad range of <b>partner expertise</b></li> </ul>
PhD completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North and South supervisory arrangements (<b>joint supervision</b>)</li> <li>• Frequent supervisory <b>visits</b></li> <li>• <b>Realistic</b> stipends and travel allowances (rate per country)</li> <li>• 4 year completion <b>targets</b></li> </ul>

# Learning to date

Challenge	WIL response
<b>Effective implementation of research results</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure <b>societal relevance</b> (initial goal)</li><li>• <b>Ongoing dialogue</b> - academic, community, policy level, etc.</li><li>• <b>Speak the language</b> of the 'end-user'</li></ul>
<b>Sustainability and legacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prevention of '<b>brain-drain</b>'</li><li>• Enhanced visibility of Southern academic partners through impact <b>peer-reviewed publications</b></li><li>• <b>Creation and expansion</b> of networks within the network</li><li>• Plan a <b>future</b> sequence of projects from these alliances</li><li>• Provision of robust research findings that can <b>inform decision-making</b> for the future benefit of the end-users (rural Ugandan communities)</li></ul>



# Questions.....



- What do we actually mean by collaborative partnership?
- How does higher education feed into socio-economic development and poverty reduction in practice?
- Is the Water is Life model of higher education relevant/replicable in Sub Saharan Africa?
- Where do we go from here, i.e. our routes to progress?



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