



## Uganda WC Project Report

### Initiation

The idea for this project began in a small meeting between **SIDshare** – a social run social enterprise that operates as an NGO at the University of Sheffield – and some engineers at the University in April 2016. We discussed different options that the engineers could offer us, including a compost toilet and a rain water harvester. As a programmes officer for SIDshare at the time, I was partnered with **Kids Club Kampala (KCK)** and immediately recognised the value of building a compost toilet in a community where Kids Club work. The sanitation situation in Uganda is dire, and after a call to Olivia, one of the U.K. directors at KCK, to confirm that this was a project they would be interested in, I proposed this to the group and got the go-ahead.

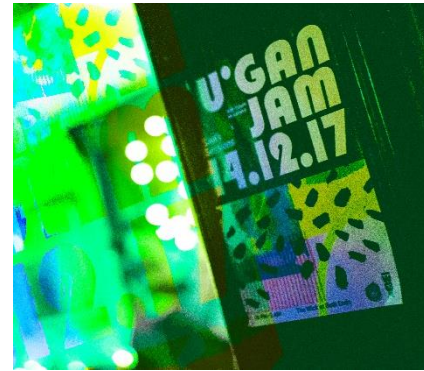
### Feasibility

Myself and Liam, the lead engineer on this project, conducted feasibility studies about the suitability of the toilet in the chosen location with Olivia's help. We decided to implement this project in Namavundu in Northern Kampala, one of the communities where KCK work. We had to consider cultural differences in usage to ensure the new project would be accepted and valued in the community. We were ready to accept that there may be a host of social, economic or environmental reasons why the community would be uncomfortable adopting the compost toilet. Nonetheless, the community fully embraced the project, from learning safe hygiene practices to being completely involved in construction. They welcomed all the new practices to using and maintaining the toilet

### Fundraising

The 'Uganda WC Project' was born in September 2017, with the help of my fantastic and creative new fundraising team – Emily Seth, Charlotte Dickinson, Noah Harris, Shafik Shaq Wakala and Jordan Williams. Our fundraising began with crowdfunding but we soon came up with 'U'GAN JAM' – a club night at a local pub. A £60 donation from The Wick, door bucket collections, taking £1 from every themed cocktail, selling little bracelets and charging for face glitter all helped us raise money at these events.

We had incredible graphic designer **Jess Keene** create our logo and produce a new poster for each of the three U'GAN JAM nights out. We raised over £1,300 through these three nights, with a huge thank you to the fantastic pub **'The Wick at Both Ends'** on West Street for hosting us, letting us decorate your pub, making some flaming cocktails and your incredible generosity. A huge thank you to **James Reilly** for your fantastic photographs and to our DJs **Future Movement** and especially to **Saul's Sessions**, who helped make these events so successful. These nights perfectly captured the inclusive, community atmosphere that we hoped for.



We also raised over £550 with two hugely successful Poker Nights with the University's poker society. Thank you so much to 'Big Shaq' for organising those. To the **University of Sheffield Alumni Fund**, thank you so much for the generous £500 you donated towards our project! This money helped us meet the final construction costs for the compost toilet materials. To **SIDshare** – for providing the platform to initiate this project, supporting us and for the £400 towards the project – we are so grateful. We ran a final crowdfunder after the project was built, which received many generous donations.

## Preparation

I spent 6 weeks in Kampala on a self-funded placement for my Masters Dissertation with Kids Club Kampala. I worked with the Ugandan director, Sam, and the community development officer, Annette, to ensure everything was ready for the arrival of our two engineers in late July. I met with 9 women from the local women's initiative who are now responsible for the cleaning and maintenance of the new toilet. They were taught the design so that they may eventually be able to lead replica projects in other communities. These women had some really important questions regarding the compost toilets, including how long the compost would take to be ready, what plants it would work best with, and how to dispose of the items that could not go into the latrine pit. This meeting was also really important for finding out information that the engineers needed to know for making final amendments to the toilet design. I also ran a small WASH and hygiene workshop with the women's initiative to help improve the sanitation situation further.



## **Construction**

Our project was tailored with the ABCD (Asset Based Community Development) philosophy. This focuses on empowering communities, harnessing what's strong, rather than what's wrong. The project would only be a true success if the community could confidently plan, build and maintain their own compost toilets. Thanks to the community's enthusiasm and commitment to the project, their participation was faultless. Community members got stuck into every aspect of the building, from foundation to brick laying and finishing the painting.

To help construct the toilet the community members were taking time out from their usual paid day. It would be unfair to get help from the community voluntarily. However, we feared this may diminish the community spirit of the project – empowering the community to help themselves – as involving money may change the motivation towards individual gain. Fortunately, the community remained motivated throughout the project, despite delays to construction and wages.

Applying the ABCD philosophy requires all the necessary knowledge and skills surrounding the project to be passed on to the community. The construction experience of the community members was unknown prior, so considerable training may have been required. However, the majority had previous experience and so were fully equipped with construction skills relevant to the project.

## **Organisation of funds**

We sent all the funding to KCK, who were responsible for recording all the allocated funds for materials and labour. Unfortunately, our best recording practices were

different to theirs and this resulted in spending confusion. This required a discussion between the engineers and KCK to ensure accountability. This was a lesson learned and in the future, we will ensure excellent financial organisation to prevent any problems.

## Timeline

Following the planned construction timeline proved testing but doable. Unforeseen happenings, including an unfortunate mistake which caused us to adjust the construction timeline, slowed progress. However, the excellent skills of the community members more than made up for any lost time.



## Reflections

The fundraising efforts were highly successful and enjoyable for both the team and those who attended our events. The team learnt a lot about donor relations, project proposals and event organisation which will be useful for future fundraising efforts.

We have constructed a structurally sound toilet unit providing a safe sanitation space for the community members of Namavundu which, as well as preventing the spread of preventable diseases, is evidence that cohesive communities can bring about impactful change to benefit generations.

Educating the Women's initiative on safe hygiene practices and committing them to facilitating community awareness and maintenance of the toilet has ensured a sustainable impact. It has also empowered them.

Continuing our partnership with the wonderful KCK keeps the project alive so that future fundraising can go towards the implementation of more compost toilets. We are also looking to run an evaluation of the project after 6 months. This will help us consider any changes to future construction,

## The Future

If the project is found to be successful following the 6-month period, we would like to continue our fundraising efforts in the UK to support the community to continue building toilets in Namavundu and nearby communities, in partnership with Kids Club Kampala.