



The Role of Effective Advocacy Approaches in Committing Government to Deliver Services to Citizens

**Turkana County Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)
Reference Group**

Background

Problems in access to water have been persistently experienced at Naduat and Kobuin Dispensaries in Turkana West Sub-County (Turkana North Constituency) of Turkana County. The two dispensaries were completed and operational in 2015 and 2016 but have been operating without safe and reliable water. The services offered by the two facilities include maternity, which has significantly been affected by the lack of water by, among others, putting the lives of the infants, the mothers and the community at risk of infections due to the unhygienic conditions in addition to the general negative impacts on access to quality health services to the local communities. Due to the lack of water, the health staff at Naduat and Kobuin opted not to reside at the facilities and commute daily from Kakuma town, implying that those in need of their services, including the deliveries, would be affected.

Given this context, the Kenya Devolution Programme (KDP) – Timiza Ugatuzi, through financial support from the UK Government, the Turkana Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) Reference Group implemented advocacy activities which targeted the Turkana County Government and sought to influence the provision of water to the two health facilities.

Through the application of practical advocacy approaches, the network successfully influenced the county government to take the following actions towards addressing water problems at the two facilities:



Allocation of funds (initially KES. 5,000,000 but later increased to KES. 10,000,000) for desalination and piping of water to Naduat Dispensary from the adjacent Naduat Market Borehole, which was drilled by a Chinese Construction Company that was constructing a local road. To implement this, a tender advert was published in April 2022, requesting qualified contractors to apply. Information from the Turkana government indicated that experienced contractors declined to apply for the work due to pending bills from previous jobs done for the county government. The department subsequently planned to re-advertise the tender in November 2022 after the new county administration settles in after the August 2022 General Elections.

The county government sought support for drilling a borehole at Kobuin Dispensary through a partnership with the Kenya Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project (KDRDIP), which allocated KES. 2,000,000 for that purpose. This money was ring-fenced under performance-based payment. A contractor was identified by the county government who has drilled three dry holes within and adjacent to the facility but has yet to succeed. The last two attempts, including May 2023, were guided by a hydrological survey that the county government did with support from the network. The funds are yet to be paid since they were locked under a performance-based contract.

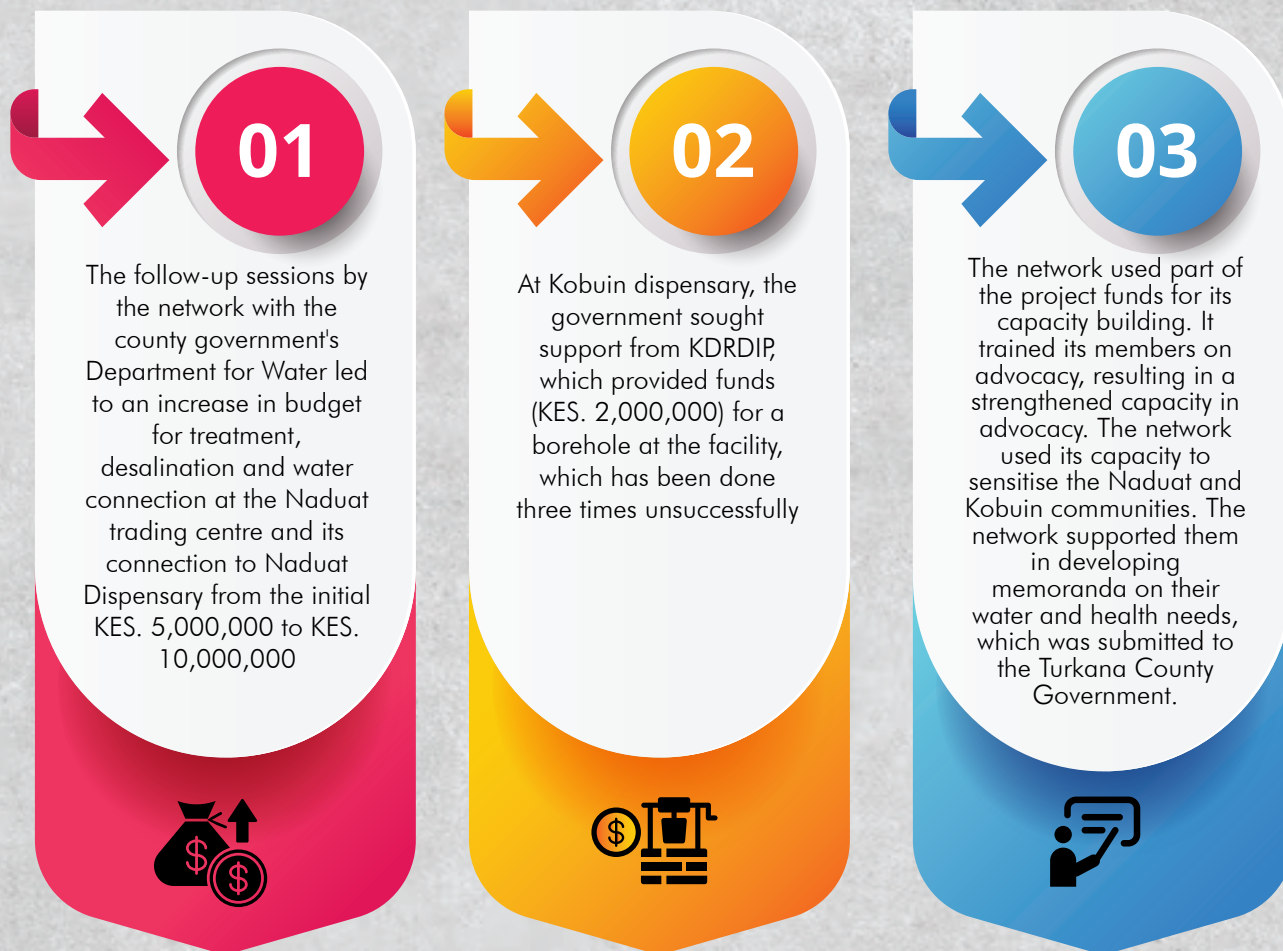


Implementation of Advocacy Interventions

To contribute to addressing the water problems in Naduat and Kobuin dispensaries, the Turkana County CSOs Reference Group nominated five of its members who visited Kobuin and Naduat health facilities for fact-finding and documentation of the issues. They held an introductory meeting with the management of the two facilities and community leaders and developed an assessment report. Based on this report, the network held round table meeting(s) with the county government's departments for Water and Health, which discussed the findings and charted the way forward. The county government committed to solving the problems by providing resources for the provision of water to the two facilities. These commitments formed the basis of subsequent advocacy follow-ups by the network during the partnership with KDP – Timiza Ugatuzi and the post-implementation period.

At the commencement of this project in March 2022, the county government had already allocated a budget of KES. 5,000,000 for desalination of the water at Naduat, and the tender was advertised during the project's inception period. This tender failed because qualified contractors did not apply. The budget was later revised to KES. 10,000,000 in June 2022 and advertisement scheduled for November 2022 to allow for completion of the 2022 General Elections and settling of the new administration. For the Kobuin dispensary, the county government, jointly with the network, approached the Kenya Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project (KDRDIP) - a World Bank-funded project committed to supporting and allocating KES. 2,000,000 for drilling of a borehole at the facility. A contractor was subsequently identified for the work and drilled thrice unsuccessfully, including the last trial in May 2023. The contractor was not paid because the contracting process was based on the actual delivery of the services. As part of its contribution to identifying potential water points, the network supported the County Department of Water to facilitate government hydrologists who mapped out the area and identified a possible site. This site was 800 metres from the facility; however, its drilling, which was the second, also failed.

Results of the Intervention



Lessons Learned and Recommendations

1. The most important lesson learnt is that deliberate effort is critical in advocating for the communities' rights in access to essential devolved services. This was enhanced by the network's continuous support in sensitising communities on their role as right holders and the government as duty bearers.
2. The county government is only proactive as a duty bearer once follow-ups are made. Therefore, the CSO network in the county must be well-capacitated to understand its role in educating the community members on their civic rights to access timely quality services.
3. The involvement of development actors like KDRDIP was vital since their intervention resulted in allocating funds and drilling a borehole in line with their budget.
4. The aspects of the experience that seemed unique were the initiation and development of a fact-finding report, which provided the basis for the intervention and further ensured that the intervention was undertaken and was demand-driven for ownership by the community. The report is also essential since it can be used as a resource mobilisation tool to secure partner funding.
5. Although at the end of the project, four dry holes were drilled that did not produce water, payments was not done to the supplier since the it was tied to a performance-based contract.





Site visit by the KDP Output 3 Technical at Kobuin, where the borehole was drilled



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DEVOLUTION
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2021 - 2025

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