

Research Article



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Resource-based conflict on women entrepreneurs in open air markets of Kisii County, Kenya

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**Abstract**

Resource-based conflicts are prevalent in open air markets. These conflicts could be physical, natural, financial, environmental and social. This study however, sought to investigate the challenges women entrepreneurs experience due to lack of water and poor sanitation; to determine the kind of conflict that has emanated due to water crisis. The use of questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions were employed to solicit relevant information from the respondents. The sample frame was 300 women entrepreneurs from the four purposively picked open air markets, as per Krechie and Morgan table and explored four markets of Daraja Mbili, Nyakoe, Suneka and Riosir. Information collected was analyzed using excel in terms of tables, graphs and pie charts. The findings clearly indicated that there is a serious water shortage and supply coupled with poor sanitation in the county especially in open air markets. Based on the findings, the study recommended that the county should seek for partnerships to assist and harvest rainy water in all open-air markets.

Keywords: conflicts, open air markets, women entrepreneurs, water and sanitation

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Introduction

Resources commonly needed in open air markets include physical, social and natural. Water as a natural resource is becoming scarcer and more variable worldwide as reported by UNDP (2006). This has resulted from climate change leading to water scarcity and conflict. It is the responsibility of every government in the world in making sure that every citizen has access to water. Water insecurity and sanitation challenges is one of the largest threats to any economy and national security. “According to Aaron Wolf, a leading researcher on global water conflict and resolution, water exacerbates current tensions. He notes that “It is very hard to separate a water conflict from a land conflict or from an economic conflict, because water is tied to everything we do”. UN-Water report of 2007 warns that the existing fresh water resources are under heavy threat from exploitation, pollution and global warming.

Africa is one continent that is most vulnerable to increased drought frequency and intensity. To make matters worse, it is least equipped to adapt due to ongoing economic water scarcity. According to Agenda 2063 aspirations, goals and priority areas at national level, the goal “environmentally sustainable and climate resilient economies and communities” has placed water security as a priority area. This is an indicator that the continent is preparing to avoid conflict over natural resources especially over water. This then means that Kenya should be preparing to ensure water availability in all sectors.

Kenya is a water scarce country. To achieve vision 2030, Kenya will require more high-quality water supplies than the present. The vision is intended to ensure availability of water and improved sanitation to be accessed by all Kenyans. The renewable fresh water in Kenya per capita is at 647m³ against United Nations recommended minimum of 1000m³ (Sessional paper no 12). Water accessibility is very poor because her fresh water has been declining and is projected to reach 235m³ by 2025 unless effective measures are taken to address this shortfall (*ibid*). Many conflicts are experienced especially in the rural parts of Kenya and by extension open air markets.

Women entrepreneurs in open air markets are at risk due to escalating conflicts that render them vulnerable. Water springs are drying up affecting discharge in the main rivers. The situation is worse till those in charge are forced to ration available water to benefit all, to avoid frequent conflicts. Meeting the water and sanitation needs in open air markets require serious structural reforms facilitated by the county. According to WASH Technical Report No 85 note that major physical and technical constraints include: difficult sites and terrain, complicated site layouts and general service-delivery systems. Indeed, Kisii County is a county of hills and valleys where surface water run-offs become a big problem in open air markets.

Problem area

The Kenyan government has embraced women entrepreneurship making it a professional skill intended to reduce poverty among women. The bigger picture is to empower women in order to achieve sustainable livelihoods. The government and the private sector have been in the forefront in supporting women entrepreneurs in open air markets in order to establish their businesses, to support themselves and their families. Women are seen as change agents through their buying and selling products in open air markets, a venture that generates positive changes in their communities. Nonetheless, there is potential for a range of trade-related tensions related to broader structural issues that spill over and erupt into conflict because most open-air markets have not been provided with clean drinking water and proper sanitation. It is on this ground that this paper emerged.

Methodology

Using descriptive survey, the study purposively picked on four open air markets that serve most women entrepreneurs. These markets were Daraja Mbili, Nyakoe, Suneka and Riosiri and using the sample frame of 300 women entrepreneurs from the four purposively picked open air markets as per Krechie and Morgan table. This study employed use of questionnaires, interview schedules and focus group discussions to solicit information from the women. The data was then analyzed.

Challenges women entrepreneurs experience due to lack of water and poor sanitation

Access to water and sanitation is a basic human right as per the [constitution of Kenya \(2010\)](#). According to 2002 water Act a major legislation that focused on water and sewerage services introduced major reforms where departments such as Regional Water Services Boards (WSBs) and Water service Providers (WSPs) were established. Kenya' sanitation is a challenge and requires urgent attention as reported by [Pascaline Wanjiku Ndungu through the \(World Bank, Blogs\) on February 2018](#). She cited Kenya as one of countries that did not achieve the millennium development goal for increasing access to water and sanitation. Accessing clean water and improved sanitation is yet to be achieved because the country only increased 5% between 1990 and 2015 and therefore not meeting the Millennium Development Goal. [Naiga \(2017\)](#) noted that lack of enough water is one of the pressing global challenges.

Waste is an unavoidable byproduct of human activities. Disposal of county solid waste has become an increasing problem in developing countries, as population increases in open air markets. According to the [UN Habitat \(2000\)](#), lack of sanitation facilities such as latrines or toilets in open air markets cause a lot of conflicts among and between women entrepreneurs and the service providers. In all the ten open air markets in which the study focused, women entrepreneurs cited inadequate and poor state of sanitation facilities due to lack of water as a major problem. According to the UN-HABITAT governments in Africa have been unable to provide appropriate urban sewerage systems in line with the demands and human waste generations is required in many areas. The lack of clean water and poor sanitation has caused many diseases and the spread of diseases such as respiratory problems ([Kagwi, 2005](#)). [KIBS \(2018\)](#), recorded sanitation status in the county where 41.3 percent of households use improved sanitation facilities but the county government has not come out clear on open air markets. This paper therefore concurs with women entrepreneurs who revealed that lack of proper sanitation has a serious impact on their businesses.

According to Engineer Moguche the situation is worse now because Kisii County is receiving only 10 percent of the water. The demand in Kisii stands at 25 million litres of water per day yet the current production capacity is hardly 5 million litres per day. This is why water has to be rationed in towns and urban areas. Due to this shortage, there are conflicts amongst the water users in open air markets. Discharge at River Gucha, which is the main water source for GWASCO, has fallen from five cubic metres of water per second in April 2016 to three cubic metres of water per second currently. Other Rivers affected include Mogusii, Nyakomisaro, Nyanchwa and Omogonga. This means that all water sources in Kisii County are affected badly and this is the water to be channeled to open air markets.

The water and sanitation crisis

Access to water in sufficient quantity and quality always cause competition especially where interests are incompatible. According to [UN-Habitat \(2011\)](#), conflict of interest between different stakeholders and inappropriate technological innovations in solid waste management has led to the increase in amount

of waste in open markets in Kenya. In situations where individuals are affected by lack of water quality, quantity and access create loopholes for conflict and misunderstanding amongst the users (MDPI, 1996-2019). Many a time water related disputes arise in open air markets when the county government is unable to provide effective service delivery making women entrepreneurs lose confidence and trust in them. According to Kenyan Water Crisis (2018) drinking water and basic sanitation is a big problem to most Kenyans. Scarcity of water supply has been widely attributed to poor governance as attested by Global Water Partnership (2002). Naiga Resty, Marianne Penker and Karl Hognl (2017) in their study in rural Uganda reckoned that women have a crucial role in joining hands in the maintenance of drinking water infrastructure something that has not been thought of in Kenya. For them, there has been a shift from supply driven to demand driven approach a paradigm that has been adopted. UNDP (2016) recognizes SDG on safe drinking water as essential to the realization of human rights.

Kisii County Efforts on Addressing Water and Sanitation challenges

The county governments have a responsibility of providing clean water and proper sanitation using taxes levied on entrepreneurs. Market attendants collect the taxes and remit to the county head office for budgeting and allocation of resources to all departments. This problem is all over Kenya as reported by Mwithirwa (2011) citing Nairobi open air markets as being managed by the county government which is responsible for space allocation to entrepreneurs, maintenance of sanitation and hygiene in the market. Ruth Mbula reporting for business daily in 2018 that Kisii County experiences because most of their water sources are very much polluted as has been declared by public health department. [Infokisii.go.ke report on water and sanitation](http://infokisii.go.ke), stated that most water in the county is untreated except for Kisii Water Supply. The county has not been able to treat the water coming from springs, streams and roof catchments for it has only one pumping station at Kegati.

The county experiences drainage issues resulting into improper waste management reason being there is no designated sites for wastes, households' latrines are not connected to sewer lines and has no recycling plant. (2013-2019, infokisii.go.ac) reveals that the county is mandated to develop and review water and sanitation services, coordinate water supply and sewerage activities in both urban and rural areas and monitor the performance of all water services boards. Access to proper sanitation is a constitutional right in Kenya but when it comes to Kisii County, it ranked number 19 out of 47. The county has unimproved sanitation and open defecation. Water and sanitation problems have resulted into stunted growth in children linked to low height for age scores, high mortality rate due to infections such as diarrhea, pneumonia and measles, poor cognitive and educational outcomes.

The county has embarked on environmental sanitation by trying to create and maintaining environment conducive to human health reducing people's exposure to diseases. It is building and maintaining infrastructure and services required for the safe management to human excreta, ensuring proper disposal of human and animal excreta, refuse and waste water, solid waste management, water and waste water treatment, drainage of service sullage. Also, provision of washing facilities for personal and domestic hygiene, food safety, housing and work place sanitation, control of disease vectors and air pollution control.

Theoretical framework

Conflicts are inevitable in open air markets. Conflicts exist in a situation where there are two or parties who are interdependent, holding incompatible outcomes. Members' actions can be perceived to be

problematic. In most cases where many people interact, it is natural that conflicts must arise and when they emerge it is also good if they can be handled. The history of conflict is as old as human history and its causes vary from one place to the other. As reported by ([conflict%29resolution%20NK.pdf](#)) needs and beliefs can escalate conflicts because a need is a primary influencer of human behavior and one can take action. The action can be as a result of tension which need to be reduced to satisfy the need. Conflict theory has an orientation that incorporates three central assumptions that support this study. First people have a number of basic interests in the things they want and attempt to acquire. This implies that women entrepreneurs must venture into open air markets where their interests are and try to acquire their livelihood. Secondly, conflict theory puts an emphasis on power as the core of social relationships whereby unequally divided power is a source of conflict. Every individual yearns for power, the more reason why women engage in entrepreneurial activities to be empowered. Finally, values and ideas are seen as weapons used by different groups to advance their own ends rather than as defining a whole society's identity and goals ([Excerpts from Wallace and Wolf](#)). Open air markets are places for interaction and competition over physical, financial, social and environmental resources

Findings

Challenges women entrepreneurs experience due to water shortage and poor sanitation

The quantity and quality of water available greatly affects the entrepreneurial activities carried out by women in the open-air markets in different ways. To start with, water shortage poses a big challenge to effective operations by women entrepreneurs in the horticultural domain by; limiting the access to clean and adequate water for washing the horticultural products before selling to their customers, a lot of time is spent on searching for water thus affecting the actual time one spends in running her premise which in turn leads to reduced sales consequently affecting their profit margins for their businesses. Additionally, due to water shortage the cost of buying water from the water vendors increases, this compel women entrepreneurs to spend their little profit leaving them with no gain from their businesses. When it comes to sanitary facilities, they are few and due to lack of water, they are very dirty. On water shortage and poor sanitation, the study recorded the following findings;

Figure 1: Challenges facing Women Entrepreneurs due to water shortage and poor sanitation

From the above figure, majority of the respondents (43.4%) considered rise in expenditures in buying water from the vendors as a challenge which they attributed to water shortage and poor sanitation, (33.3%) of the respondents reported time wastage as a challenge they faced in their entrepreneurial activities and (23.3%) of the respondents reported rise in conflicts as a challenge. Majority of the women entrepreneurs considered rise in expenditures as the major challenge in their business due to water shortage and poor sanitation. These sentiments concurs with UNEP report that “the cost of buying water particularly in urban areas among the business community, often have no option but to spend money they can hardly afford buying water from expensive water vendors who can get their water from unaccountable sources” ([UNEP, 2004](#)). Conflicts; linked to the quantity of water is also a problem globally. Among women entrepreneurs in open air markets conflicts emerge as a result of inadequate access to clean and safe water for use which in most cases lead to scramble for the limited available water from the few vendors who are able to access quality water. Competition among women entrepreneurs

themselves and other business sectors like the hotel industry, open market food vendors among others usually generate conflicts (Janakarajan, 2002).

Water and Sanitation Crisis

Kisii County experiences water problem as reported by Ruth Mbula (2018) in *business daily* reason being pollution its water sources. As per infokisii.go.ke information on water and sanitation, springs, streams and roof catchments are unclean water. Kisii County has only one pumping station, the only water supply in the county. Water shortage is a serious form of deprivation because water is central to humanity's social and economic existence. Once the commodity is scarce all economic activities undertaken are affected as water and business in open air markets are intertwined. In article 43, the constitution of Kenya recognizes access to water and improved sanitation services as a right to every citizen and the national government is committed enhance accessibility to safe water proper sanitation.

The Constitution (2010) introduces fundamental changes to the water and sanitation sector. The thrust of the constitutional provisions is to place county governments at the center of delivery of water and sanitation services with national government largely retaining policy formulation and regulation of the water and sanitation sector (Sectoral Analysis, 2015). Referring to WASH report (2019) prepared both by the World Health Organization and UNICEF found out that Kenyans accessing basic water services are 59% and only 29% access sanitary services. The government achievement of drinking water and sanitation by 2030 will be challenging given poor investment in area, population increase and climate change. According to water.org source, only 9 out of 55 public water service providers enjoy continuous water supply implying that people have to find their own ways of accessing water. Another report from Global Humanitarian Assistance Programme notes that improved water and sanitation services availability ensures better health and well-being.

The Focused group discussion extract below shows the poor state of sanitation in Kisii open air markets:

Sanitation is a big problem, we lack toilets to go because the ones that are there are very dirty. Raw sewage flows across the road whenever it rains," "The entire market gets flooded almost every afternoon during the rainy season and the women no longer continue their entrepreneurial activities afterwards. We scoop water from our selling points then spread out our items to sell. In fact at times it becomes difficult for us to get someone to carry for us our items after it has rained because those who carry ask double the money because of the mud which makes our items dirty" (Daraja Mbili market)



Plate 1: Poor drainage system at Riosiri market. The situation is worsened during the rainy season because water floods all over the market place where agricultural produce is sold.

Most open-air markets have limited number of pit latrines, let alone flushable ones. Whenever the women want to respond to the call of nature, they need to go to either nearby or distant houses where they can use toilets. The public toilets available are not enough and also they are paid for but still very dirty, one of the respondents stated. When they go for urinating or have toilet, their business stops for a while. They ask the nearby vendors to take care of their goods but still there is risk to leave the vegetables as the nearby vendor is also busy in vending. They said to have adopted the habit of consuming less fluids especially water as a way of managing the problem. However, this practice was reported to be causing them urinary infections as captured in the following interview segment.

“... we experience at times health problems by the use of these toilet facilities since they are used by so many people other who are even sick”. There are some of our colleagues who after complaining of irritations they went to hospital and were found to be sick and they were told to ensure they use clean toilets”. We think it is these dirty places we go to help ourselves that have caused us the problem”.

From the in-depth interview, the market supervisors agreed that the situation of sanitation is wanting in all open-air markets in the county. For instance, they noted that a market like Daraja Mbili receives between 12000 to 15000 people per market day and has only two units of toilets that cannot sustain the number. Instead, entrepreneurs seek assistance from those who own private toilets. Other markets like Masimba and Keumbu have new toilets which are not in use because of lack of water. Nyakoe and Riosiri equally receive overwhelming numbers during market days but the number of toilets is not worth mentioning. For instance, Riosiri is divided into two; upper (the new market) and the lower which is in an open field but has two toilets that are in a pathetic situation. The two toilets are not enough and are of very poor state and the new ones serve as a store for fruit vendor because of lack of water.

Plate 2 depicting the situation of water and sanitation at Riosiri market



Plate 10 and 11: The two plates show the pathetic situation at Riosiri open air market.

The upper market supposedly referred to as new, indeed has new toilets but not in use because of lack of water. One of the traders has taken advantage and sells his fruits from there. According to the UN-

HABITAT, governments in Africa have been unable to provide appropriate urban sewerage systems in line with the demands and human waste generations is required in many areas. The lack of clean water and poor sanitation has caused many diseases and the spread of diseases such as respiratory problems (Kagwi, 2005). KIBS (2018), recorded sanitation status in the county where 41.3 percent of households use improved sanitation facilities but the county government has not come out clear on open air markets.). Lack of sanitation facilities such as latrines or toilets in open air markets causes a lot of conflicts among and between women entrepreneurs and the service providers (UN-Habitat, 2000). In all the four open air markets in which the study focused, women entrepreneurs cited inadequate and poor states of sanitation facilities as a major problem

Figure 2

From the above figure sewerage blockages amounts to 33.3% followed by contaminated water (29.2%), inadequate toilet comes next with 25% and surface run-offs is ranked at 12.5%. This is a clear indication that sewerage blockages is a serious problem in open air markets. At times women entrepreneurs lack selling places because raw sewage passes through the market open area. Water is so much contaminated because raw sewerage empties itself to the rivers meant to provide clean water for use. In open air markets toilets are inadequate. The population keeps on increasing making the available toilets inadequate and very dirty. Kisii County is blessed with hills and valleys which at times makes the terrain favourable for surface water run-offs. Kisii County has a very poor drainage system resulting to very poor waste management. This situation is worsened by the county not having designed sites for wastes. This is coupled with households' latrines around the market that are not connected to sewer lines.

In the realization of the Big 4 Agenda water remains to be the key enabler and there for market users to thrive their businesses well, whether accessing agricultural produce and cleaning them for sell clean water is a must. Kenya Bureau of Statistics (Kebs) alerted the country that 157 water bottling companies in operation were illegal and without adhering to set standards (standard digital, 2018). It then means Kenyans are susceptible to water-borne diseases like typhoid, amoeba and cholera. Most women in open air markets attested to be using bottled water for drinking believing it is clean and safe.

Sanitation Status in the County

According to the 2013-2019 strategic plan of Kisii County as reported by info.kisii.go.ke, the county has a mandate to develop and review water and sanitation services, coordinate water supply and sewerage activities in both urban and rural areas. Open air markets are both in urban and rural areas and there need to the provision of these services. The same plan acknowledges that universal access to water and improved sanitation yields to maximum health, social and economic benefits. Most developing countries have not given hygiene and sanitation the attention that it deserves despite knowing the health implications ([http://tilz.tearfund.org/Research/water and sanitation](http://tilz.tearfund.org/Research/water%20and%20sanitation)). Sanitation means safe collection, treatment and disposal of human excreta/ feaces and urine. It also means proper waste management with recycling of the same. Hygiene on the other hand calls for safe water storage, safe hand washing practices and safe treatment of food stuffs. Water management implies drainage and disposal and recycling of grey water, drainage of storm water and recycling of sewage effluents (ibid). A case study from the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2007 found out barriers to improving sanitation

Figure 3: Sanitation Status in Kisii County

Sanitation status in the county as shown by the figure above is that 34.6% caters for improved sanitation while unimproved is 35.2%. Sanitation that is shared is 29.4% while open defecation 0.8%. Unimproved sanitation and open defecation have been a menace in open air markets. Improved sanitation means safe disposal and management of waste to prevent exposure to environmental hazards. According to WHO and UNICEF, it includes connection to public sewer, septic system, pour flush latrines, simple pit latrines or ventilated pit latrines (info.kisii.go.ke). Most open air markets of Kisii County have not attained the required standards and even those facilities that are available are inadequate. A market like Daraja Mbili always experiences sewerage blockages and then overflowing to areas women entrepreneurs conduct their businesses causing poor performance and low profits because customers keep off such an environment. Kisii County was ranked no 19 out of 47 but despite this ranking, waste management is not well managed due to no designated sites for wastes, households have built latrines not connected to sewer lines contaminating the available water and of course there is no waste recycling plant. Most women exclaimed that if one cannot carry drinking water from home, it means suffering without quenching their thirst. Others resort to drinking soda instead of water because they do not know the safety of the water sold in the market

Table 4: Provision of Sanitation facilities

Provision of sanitation infrastructure		Frequency	Percent
	Strongly Disagree	68	22.7
	Disagree	116	38.7
	Neutral	83	27.6
	Agree	26	8.7
	Strongly Agree	7	2.3
Total f		300	100.0

The analyzed data above shows that 38.7% disagreed that provisional of sanitation facilities will help in resolving environmental conflict, 27.6% remained neutral, 22.7% strongly disagreed, 8.7% agreed with 2.3% strongly agreeing. These statistics indicates that it is not just the absence of sanitation facilities that cause environmental conflict. It is also possible that due to the inappropriate collection equipment or inability to maintain sufficient collection fleet women entrepreneurs failed to recognize how provision of sanitation facilities can address conflict amongst them in open air markets. Most women entrepreneurs rely on water they carry from home for drinking or buy bottled water sold by hawkers or other water vendors like at Kisii town and Daraja mbili market. Sanitation amenities within the market make the environment attractive to customers because they contribute to a friendly environment (Knack 2008).



Plate 3

The plate above shows water vendors taking water to Daraja Mbili market. This is a clear indication that there is a water crisis.

Kisii County Efforts on Addressing Water and Sanitation challenges

The counties jointly share with the national government the responsibility of ensuring that water and sanitation services are availed to people. It is the duty of the county government to meet the needs of water and sanitation to their people. Kenya's ambition of vision 2030 has a target of ensuring water availability and improved sanitation (KESHP, 2016-2030) aiming 100% achievement. However according to UN-Habitat (2011), conflict of interest between different stakeholders and inappropriate technological innovations in solid waste management has led to the increase in amount of waste in open markets in Kenya. The county governments have a responsibility of providing clean water and proper sanitation using taxes levied on entrepreneurs but they are yet to reach recommended standards.

Figure 5: County efforts in addressing water and sanitation challenges

The results provided by the women entrepreneurs indicated that 41.7% reported a serious problem of litter bins not placed in strategic places in the market. Those accounting 33.3% cited the county contracting certified water suppliers to needy areas but have not prioritized open air markets nor has the market committee tried them to supply them with water. It is a good effort on the side of the county government if only the open markets were considered. Other women entrepreneurs amounting to 16.7% reported routine supervision by public health officers but sometimes the officers said are overwhelmed with work. There are a few 8.3% who said appointment of market committee has improved service delivery in open air markets. The county government of Kisii is very much aware that provision of clean water and sanitation in the county is wanting and there in their trade and market bill of 2015, it sought to restore order in the operations and management of markets. The county assembly passed a budget of 56million for improvement of open-air markets to provide the necessary infrastructure and services. However most open-air markets' issues have not been addressed. They also suggested that trade should be conducted on designated areas only set aside as public markets.



Plate 4:

A section of newly constructed Daraja Mbili market. A woman cooking food for other entrepreneurs in an environment that is highly unfit for cooking and consumption because clean water is an issue. The county has also formed Water Resource Users Association (WRUA) to enhance protection of water resources and proper sanitation practices. The Kisii county governor James Ongwae signed a bill endorsing all eucalyptus trees near river sources and springs be cut and be replaced by indigenous trees or bamboos. The county also passed a resolution that each open air market should have a market committee that should provide assistance in market management, supervise sanitation work, ensure maintenance and other functions assigned to it. The market committee has also appointed chairmen/ladies to oversee the welfare of entrepreneurs in different zones or sections of the market. The county has also sought partnership to improve water and sanitation in Kisii region. It has succeeded getting assistance, 1.6 billion from the German Bank for Development. Currently construction is on and is three quarters complete. Once complete water would plenty and cab be channeled to open air markets.

Conclusion

This study found out the provision of sanitation facilities is pathetic in all the four sampled open-air markets. Starting with Daraja mbili, the largest market serving many counties and hosting 12000 to 15000 people each market day on Mondays and Thursdays, has only two sets of toilets that do not accommodate this numbers. Others sought use of private toilets and even with these the market supervisors agreed that they are not enough. At Nyakoe, the situation is pathetic with only two toilets, same case with Riosiri. Riosiri is an open market as it is situated at a swampy area and dirty water is always on the ground and the situation is worsened during the rains. Suneka is no better because the problem of waste management is what women entrepreneurs keep crying through the local radio, 'Egesa' FM. Lack of water complicates the whole situation. For instance, the newly built toilets in Riosiri have no water and being used as storage premises for fruit vendors. Occasionally there is sewerage blockages and bursts displacing women entrepreneurs from their selling points. The market officers agreed that they face serious conflicts and even abuses being branded names having collected taxes (echogo) and

eaten without improving facilities. Poor landscaping of the market for proper surface water run-offs when it rains was another issue they cried saying “*when it rains our items are carried away by the rain water (surface water run-offs) and some of us have lost items*”. Another challenge facing these women entrepreneurs is that sewerage lines are opened when raining, making the situation worse by making their commodities unworthy for selling again. Despite these challenges, the county government has tried to address them by passing bills allocating budgets to improve water and sanitation and other operations in open air markets. It is the intention of the county to restore order and management of markets. The county has also given the market users to choose a committee of their own from their members which will assist in proper management of the market, supervision of sanitation matters and ensure all that pertains to market performance. Partnership is the way to go. The county recognizes the importance of joining hands with other stakeholders to enhance development.

Recommendations

This study recommends that stakeholders have the mandate of removing barriers of accessing clean water and sanitation. The county government to allocate money for continual improvement and provision of water and sanitation. Above all the county has a duty to capacity build their human resource especially on technical areas especially new technology on water preservation and recycling of grey water. Market users more so women entrepreneurs should arrange themselves to occasionally clean and maintain their open air markets. The county can also send strong messages to the public on proper use and maintenance of public facilities in open air markets. The plates below also display the crisis of water shortage in the county.

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