



21st WEDC Conference

Kampala, Uganda, 1995

SUSTAINABILITY OF WATER AND SANITATION SYSTEMS

## Transition from provider to facilitator

*Theron Scott Robson, Tanzania*

THE WORK OF WaterAid is based upon an 'Ethos', summarised by the following four components:

- i) working with poorest communities
- ii) long term sustainable development
- iii) support to water, sanitation and hygiene education sectors,
- iv) work where support from other donors is not available.

WaterAid sees itself as a 'facilitator' between the supporters and donors in the UK wishing to address the demand for water supply, sanitation and hygiene improvements and communities in developing countries.

To support this work WaterAid seeks partners in each country, which are usually local non-government organisations. After initially working with the Diocese of Central Tanyanika, WaterAid has since 1991 been working the Government of Tanzania (GOT).

This partnership is in the process of being formalised in a written agreement between WaterAid and the GOT, in which the roles and responsibilities of the two parties are defined.

### Background

In the past the GOT has undertaken to provide, operate and maintain basic infrastructure services. As in many countries this has proved to be beyond the financial capacity of the GOT.

Many existing water supply schemes are in a poor or non-operating condition. This is attributed to among other things inadequate financial resources, age, theft, vandalism, lack of responsibility by the consumers, drying-up or failure of some water sources.

The WAMMA programme aims to assist the development of community capabilities to improve and transfer the management, operation and maintenance of water and sanitation facilities to the villagers.

### Role of regional WAMMA team:

Dodoma Region comprises of four districts, namely; Dodoma Municipality, Dodoma Rural, Mpwapwa, and Kondoa. In total there are more than six hundred registered villages.

At a regional level the participation in regular meetings of departmental heads such as the Regional Development Director, Regional Planning Officer, Regional Water Engineer, Regional Health Officer, Regional Community Development Officer, the WaterAid Country Representative and the Regional WAMMA Group, en-

sures that policy development is discussed at a high level and agreed by the appropriate authority.

The Regional WAMMA Group supports the four district based programmes with identification and fulfilment of training needs, dissemination between districts, and advice on programme development.

### Kondoa district WAMMA programme

In Kondoa there are 164 villages, and the WAMMA Programme is active in more than 80.

Each WAMMA 'Team' consists of a member of staff from each of the three participating departments. In the case of Kondoa three teams are operating.

The members of these teams have been trained in participatory evaluation and extension techniques, as trainers of trainers and other communication skills.

The teams respond to requests for support from villages. This support takes a number of forms, but usually starts with the Water Policy being explained and discussed at a full village meeting. The roles and responsibilities of the villagers is explained, and the support available from the WAMMA Programme is detailed.

Capacity building takes the form of Water and Health Committee (WC and VHC) and Village Government Seminars.

Participatory Rural Appraisal techniques such as village mapping, seasonal calendars and three pile sorting are used.

These tools are used to involve and empower the whole community, and provide a mechanism for analysis of problems by the villagers. Provisional identification of needs, potential problems and possible solutions can be made at an early stage, and this baseline information is then used to assist project planning, technology choice by the community and appropriate design.

A further use of the PRA information is for research and extension in the form of development of appropriate hygiene education materials.

The major aim of the WAMMA programme is the building of operation, maintenance and management capability in the villages. This includes practical training in technical, managerial, planning, and accounting methods (see paper 'Pump and Engine Maintenance Scheme' by Mtonga and Robson also in these proceedings).

During implementation the primary facilitator is the government craftsman (fundu). In the past a team of fundis were expected to go to a village and complete construction work, with the villagers providing the la-

bour. Now after attending PRA training, a training of trainers course and introduction to teaching and communication skills, the fundis go to a village, to discuss, plan and schedule the work. Then the fundi will demonstrate a skill, train elected village pump attendants, pipeline attendants, plumbers and masons, stand back, supervise and advise on the construction.

On completion of a project, the hands-on experience of villagers mean that their capacity to cope with all simple operation and maintenance tasks is ensured, and the responsibility to do it is instilled.

After completion of construction work follow-up support is provided by the WAMMA team and PEMS fundis. As the villagers' capabilities are further developed the follow-up support required is expected to be progressively reduced.

## **Lessons/experiences**

### **1)Villagers**

One of the greatest hurdles has been to overcome the village perception that infrastructure and services provision is the role of the GOT.

The programme endeavours to instill the confidence for villagers to take control of their own development, and to change their role from passive to active player.

This can be a slow process, distorted by the often 'empty' promises of politicians, but supported by the poor performance of GOT in the past.

One practical method used to promote this message is study tours/exchange visits for WC members to learn from the experience of other villagers.

### **2)Government Staff**

The changing role of government staff has also been a slow process. After years of top-down development there is a transition to being community responsive. Improving communication, particularly listening skills has been a key to the success.

In the case of the government fundis, training workshops, involvement in PRA exercises, and other facilitating activities is succeeding in slowly changing their roles.

The retrenchment in July 1994 of 70% of the Water Department staff caused some concern as to the capacity of the Department to operate. The result has however been to give fresh impetus to the transition of fundi from 'doer' to 'trainer', as the limited staff numbers demand the optimisation of resources. It has also contributed to the villagers belief that the future is in the communities hands and not to expect much of the GOT.

### **3)Sense of Ownership**

Ownership and 'Duty of Care' of completed water supplies is unclear in the Water Policy, as is the contribution expected from villagers.

In Kondoia we estimate the community contribution to be in the range of 15-30% of the total cost. This contribution is in the form of skilled and unskilled labour, local

materials, purchase of operation and maintenance tools and a financial contribution towards the capital cost.

Increasing the village contribution seems to increase the villagers' responsibility and sense of ownership.

### **4)Sanitation/Hygiene Education**

The acknowledged weakness of the programme is the sanitation and hygiene education component.

Attempts are being made to work through rurally based health staff and teachers to mobilise, motivate and stimulate the work of VHCs, and mobilise and increase the involvement of women.

However in an area dominated by villages of very low density farming communities sanitation facilities are not a great priority. The male domination in what is predominantly an Islamic society makes involvement of women difficult.

We see the main objective is to stimulate the 'demand' to which we can then respond, and to adopt a research extension approach to identify the more effective approaches.

### **5)Sustainability**

The WAMMA implementation programme is not sustainable without external financial support.

However the individual village water, sanitation and hygiene education projects are designed to be sustainable on completion.

Water schemes are operated, maintained and managed using village resources. Sanitation improvements are supported by a revolving fund after the provision of a buffer stock of material from WaterAid.

The PEMS is set up to be self-financing, and in the future as the capabilities of the villagers is increased and consolidated the demands for follow-up support from the WAMMA team will reduce.

### **6)Future**

Donors other than WaterAid are beginning to acknowledge the success of the WAMMA process by financing an expansion of the programme. The SNV funded Kondoia Integrated Rural Development Project (KIRDEP) is supporting a US\$250,000 WAMMA programme this year.

Although WaterAid has a long term (5-10 year) commitment to support the Dodoma WAMMA Programme, a phased reduction in the WaterAid activities is planned.

In Kondoia District the WaterAid Resident Engineer will be withdrawn in early 1996, and the withdrawal of the advisors in other districts will follow. Although support from WaterAid will continue the programme management will be the responsibility of the government partners.

## **Conclusions**

The WAMMA programme has demonstrated that a government structure based on top-down development can be successfully transformed into a facilitating structure which can mobilise and stimulate communities to take control of their own development.