



Water and Sanitation Program

An international partnership to help the poor gain sustained access to improved water supply and sanitation services

Sustainability of Water and Sanitation Programs in Kenya

Examining Impact of Participation, Gender, Poverty and Demand-Responsiveness

26614

Africa Region

Introduction

This field note is a consolidation of the substantive issues arising from Kenya Gender Assessments that were part of the Global Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) assessments undertaken in Latin America, Asia and Africa (Kenya, Malawi, South Africa and Zambia). The Gender Working Group of the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council, the Water and Sanitation Program in collaboration with the International Water and Sanitation Center (IRC) and sector agencies, initiated PLA. The assessment examined the linkages between the use of Demand-Responsive, Gender and Poverty sensitive approaches in design and implementation of water and sanitation programs and the overall impact and sustainability.

In Kenya, the assessment covered four communities, that is Mwembeni, Inyenzeni, Mwenengo and Mwangoni of Kwale Water and Sanitation Project (KWASP) in Coast Province. The project had been in existence for the last 14 years. The four communities represented the coastal, pediment and hinterland geographical zones of Kwale District and selection took into account the different ethnic groups and various water and sanitation technologies.



Ministry of Environment
and Natural Resources



Assessment Objectives

The assessment was to:

- Determine the extent, to which projects and programs are based on principles of demand responsiveness, were participatory, gender sensitive and had a poverty focus,
- Assess the extent to which participatory gender sensitive approaches had impact in sustainability of projects,
- Determine the factors that facilitated and or limited the implementation of participatory gender sensitive approaches in planning and execution of projects,
- Assess whether the projects and programs had different impacts on men and women, rich and poor considering the benefits as well as the burdens of operating and maintaining the Water Supply and Sanitation (WSS) services at the household level, and
- Use the findings of the assessments as inputs in the refinement of rural water supply intervention strategies.

PLA Assessment Methodology

The PLA initiative developed a participatory methodology appropriate for cross-checking information, now popularly known as the Methodology for Participatory Assessments (MPA)¹. The PLA assessment utilized the following participatory tools: wealth ranking, community mapping, transect walk, pocket voting and scoring, history of participation, ladders I and II and policy and organizational analysis. Qualitative data was analyzed during the field study while quantitative analysis using SPSS package was done after the study. In addition to the participatory tools, other methods used included focus group discussions, interviews, direct observation and a number of research instruments.

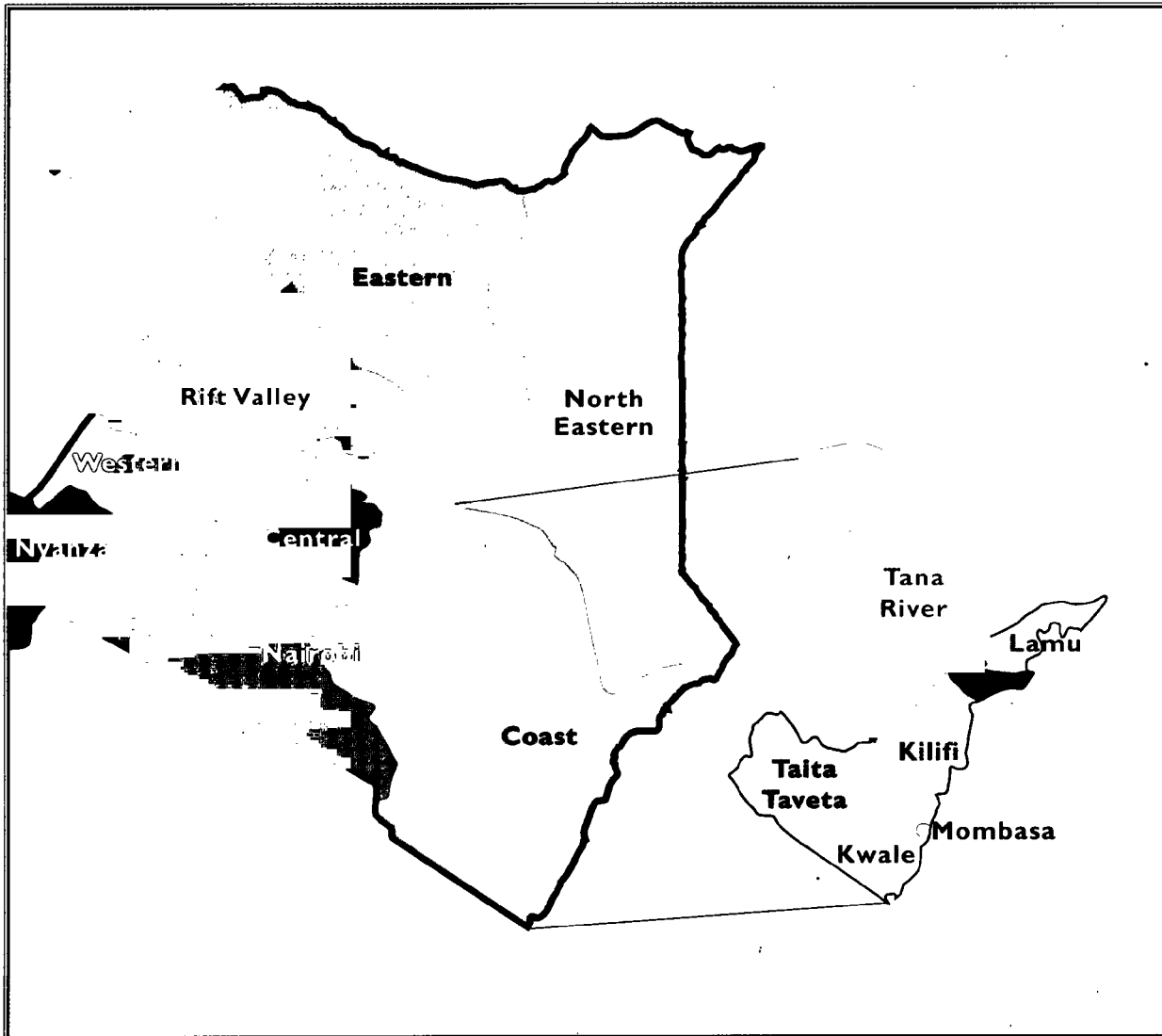
Background

The Republic of Kenya lies on the eastern side of the African continent. The Indian Ocean and Somalia border it to the east, Sudan and Ethiopia to the North, Uganda to the west and Tanzania to the south. The country has an area of 582,000km² and a coastline of 608km². Nairobi, the capital city, is an important international communication center.

Inter tropical convergence zones and altitude give rise to varied climatic regimes. Annual rainfall follows a wet and dry cyclic pattern with an average of 631 mm annually. This however, conceals the extreme contrasts from tropical rainforest to desert areas.

There are about 42 different ethnic communities in Kenya. The 1999 population estimate stood at 30 million. Child mortality has remained high at 8.3%. The Gross National Product is US\$280 per capita that has been declining since the 1980's. The estimated total water potential (from surface and groundwater) of 20,209 million cm³ far exceeds the total annual demand of 2,500 million cm³. However, less than 50% of rural populations and 70% of urban residents have access to safe water.

¹ A met-guide detailing the MPA is now available for gender mainstreaming and monitoring



Kenya National Development Policy in Context

Since independence in 1963, the government has sought to address priority areas of need identified as: poverty, illiteracy and diseases. The role played by water sector in economic growth was recognized in the 1970's and the government ambitiously invested and took over several water supplies previously managed by local communities or authorities and other public or private institutions. However, in 1986, due to dwindling resources (as a result of economic slow down), the government started encouraging local authorities to take over the management of water supplies. With increasing inefficiency and sustainability being elusive, the government undertook to address these problems through Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1999 on National Policy on Water Resources Management and Development. In this paper which focuses on poverty reduction, water is a main concern.

Kenya's Water Policy

The aim of the policy is to guide water sector activities to achieve sustainable development and management of water resources. The policy provides a framework in which the desired target/goals are set; outlines necessary measures to guide the entire range of actions to synchronise all water related activities and actors. The basic areas addressed by the policy include water resource management, water supply and sewerage development, institutional arrangements and financing for water sector. The ministry recognises the enormous task and concerted efforts in the adequate provision of these services and has formed both the Urban and Rural Water and Sanitation working groups, constituting various sector partners to deliberate and strategize on the delivery of services.

Currently, there are over 2000 water supplies in the country developed and managed by various actors including the Government (Department of Water Development) which is the main player, communities, municipalities, private individuals, institutions and other actors. However, most of the water sources and supplies have become unreliable over time. Sewerage facilities are unevenly distributed in favor of urban areas where they are managed by municipalities and councils. Pit latrines mainly serve the rural areas whose coverage is less than 40%.

Key Findings

Sustainability

Project sustainability is the ability to sustain itself in terms of functioning physical infrastructure and the proficiency of users and local management committee to effectively maintain, manage and finance the service. Sustainability is influenced by consumer satisfaction, technical and managerial abilities, financial arrangements, legal or informal ownership, access to tools and spare parts, technical support and backstopping.

All the four water supply systems visited during the assessment in 1999 were functioning and offered satisfactory adequate services of water supply throughout the year. Effective financing of the systems is expected through locally agreed payment modalities. The user charges determined by the committee are not adequate to cover operation and maintenance costs thereby forcing members to make additional contributions. Poor financial management (with user fees being managed by either one or a few officials), failure to keep proper records and prepare budgets severely affect these projects. In addition, no water committee had

arrangements for replacement of facilities or major repairs. This points to some unpreparedness. Water committees are responsible for determining user fees per 20 litre-jerrican services, setting up meetings, organizing for repairs, records keeping, water safety and cleanliness. Minor repairs do not exceed two days, and are undertaken by trained committee members but outside trained artisans are hired to undertake major repairs on voluntary basis for a small token. However in every community, there are one or two highly trusted members bestowed with most of the major responsibilities of keeping the systems functioning.

The water facilities are easily accessible to all potential users and are consistently used. Overall 75% of satisfaction was reported, irrespective of gender and socio-economic status, in all the water communities. Thus KWASP meets most of the conditions for sustainability, which are functionality, and community management. However, financial management requires further guidance on user fee rates and consistent fee collection/payments.

Requirements for Sustainability

Functional System	Effective Functioning	Effective Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant objectives • Active involvement of target groups in design and implementation • Design and implementation must relate to objectives • It must be feasible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets set target • Not wasteful and evaluation • Provides adequate for target group in terms of water and or sanitation services • In good state of repair • Repairs are timely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper allocation of resources • Continued monitoring • Preparation for future needs e.g. expansion, replacements. • Effective Use

Demand - Responsiveness

Demand-Response Approach (DRA) guides individuals and the community in making informed investment decisions based on expected benefits, value attach to the service and satisfaction level (of 75%). Voting exercises in all the four communities concluded that 50 -80% of the demands for water by both gender irrespective of their socio-economic status, were adequately met. Time saved in fetching water (mainly by school children) and improved health were highly noted with less value being given to kitchen gardening, construction purposes and lessening danger of drowning in unprotected boreholes

and other hazards. Water is affordable and readily available in adequate quantities to all people. Children benefited more as they had more time for their school work and continue to learn even during the dry seasons. Of the proportions of benefits delivered, 80% are worth the cost.

Accessibility to latrine facilities is 45% leaving the rest to use the bush. Where these facilities exist they are shared at no cost. Benefits from sanitary facilities were considered negligible.

Gender Participation and Project Ownership

Gender Participation (active involvement of men, women and children) in projects recognizes the respective roles of each group as partners in development which in turn enhances sustainability. In KWASP, gender was not considered during the design stage as a focus but rather the role of women in water and sanitation.

In the four communities, the project undertook most of the decisions, leaving members with very few decision-making powers (of siting and management of the system). Gender involvement took the traditional forms in KWASP with men rich and poor doing the few heavy tasks compared to women who did the of the bulk work.

Women dominate in the water management committee

except for Mwenengo. Both genders used and were satisfied with the service provided. Men provided unskilled labor of security and cleaning of water source. Review of frequency and time indicated that the tasks are not heavy/time consuming for any group. There was no gender discrimination as both performed tasks equally. In Mwembeni and Mnyenzeni, men did bush clearing; while in Mwenengo and Mwangoni, it was done by both genders. Construction materials were carried by all gender. In Mnyenzeni and Mwenengo, women provided water and men took a small role. In Mwembeni only women provided water for construction. Women cooked food in all communities and men contributed cash for food purchase. Overall men did the heavy tasks based on traditional roles.

Division of Tasks by Gender

WOMEN	MEN	BOTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning of water source area • Clean spring box in Mwenengo • Minor repairs [Mnyenzeni Mwemengo, Mwembeni] • Security [Mwembeni] • Paying user fees [Mwembeni] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unskilled labor and major repairs • Security at night - in some community such as Mnyenzeni • Repairs in Mwangoni • Buying of spare parts [Mwangoni, Mwembeni] • Collection of user fees [Mwangoni] • Record keeping [Mwangoni, Mwembeni] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repair and maintenance • Cleaning of sites [Mnyenzeni] • User fee collection [Mnyenzeni, Mwembeni] • Meetings [Mnyenzeni, Mwembeni] • Buying spares [Mwenengo, Mwembeni, Mnyenzeni] • Repairs [Mwembeni] • User fee determination [Mnyenzeni]

In addition, the communities contributed by clearing the bush, drawing water for construction, and transporting hardcore and murrum. They also contributed money to buying food for builders, cooking for artisans and assisting in construction as well as taking over complete control of subsequent management, operation and maintenance. In all communities, however, there were a few individuals who had not fully accepted the water system as their own. This is because they still saw these systems as gifts that donors can replace if the need arises. Some of them felt that they should have got something better.

Project Impact

- All target groups in each community have access to reliable water.
- Selling of water, using kitchen gardening and tree nursery planting has widened the choices of income generating activities.
- Extensive behavioral change has been realized in communities (Mwembeni and Mwenengo) that used open water sources and have turned to protected ones for drinking, cooking and washing utensils, all categories of members reverted to use the bush contrary to before the project when they used ordinary latrines.
- The project has provided information to households to improve their latrines.
- Hand washing after defecation is practiced throughout all the communities.
- Behavioral change in relation to sanitation and hygiene practices was the highest in Mwenengo Community.

Institutional Arrangements

The water committees were not all together always well informed as officials and local leaders cross-examined one another on several areas in the management of their water systems. The water committees lacked a viable institution with which to pursue further development suggestions or seek guidance on some pertinent technical issues including sanitary technology, rising prices of less durable spare parts and absence of an authority or institution with which to discuss these problems.

All the above constraints can be attributed to weaknesses of the District Focus for Rural Development Strategy to demystify itself from the central role at district level. Another major setback is the inability to create a working relationship with community projects, lack of extension services to grassroots ministry of Water Resources and weak committee management systems that often lack direction.

Lessons Learned and Best Practices

Study from the four communities indicated that participation, gender- poverty- and demand-responsiveness has greater impact on sustainability of water and sanitation programs under the following conditions:

- Lower cost and local appropriate technologies are used.
- Conducive and enabling organizational and institutional support systems and arrangements are in place to enhance gender, poverty concerns and demand responsive approaches.
- Gender balanced participatory approaches are promoted and utilized throughout the project cycle.
- The project has an in-built income-generating component while at the same time incorporating social services.
- Participating households and communities perceive greater benefits from their investments over and above their efforts and resources, with education on reinvestment.
- Water and sanitation programmed are properly integrated with the Ministry of Health taking the lead in promotion of hygiene and environmental sanitation. As such, the demand for sanitation as a necessary and essential component of water and sanitation projects in the country should be raised.
- Communities make informed choices towards sustainability with responsibility.

Recommendations on the Way Forward

- Water management committees should be revitalized through capacity building initiatives.
- The sanitation component in the district should be revisited - more effort to ensure success in district.
- Women and men irrespective of socio-economic status should be encouraged to participate in non-traditional roles.
- There should be greater integration of water and sanitation component in projects with Ministry of Health in the forefront in promotion of environmental sanitation.
- Technical advice and regular follow up (monitoring) by parent ministry should be enhanced.
- Institutional arrangements should be given greater emphasis as necessary conditions for sustainability of water and sanitation projects.
- Private sector initiatives should be supported with the aim of creating and enhancing a district base of operation and maintenance capacity to service the hand-pump technology.
- PLA as an assessment method should be adapted to suit different conditions and promoted within local set-ups and additional quantitative data from a larger sample should be collected for statistical extrapolation.
- Structural bottlenecks that hamper integration and creativity should be streamlined to enable the different shareholders contribute to the promotion of participation, gender, poverty focus and sustainability in water and sanitation projects.
- The instituted Gender Steering Committee under the patronage of the Department of Water Development in the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources should be revitalized to provide guidance on the follow up action for integration of DRA, gender and poverty sensitive approaches in the WSS sector.
- The Gender Assessment Committee (GAC) or PLA Team should be pursue dissemination of the assessment findings to the Rural Water and Sanitation Working Group in the Department of Water Development and or the Sanitation Working Group in the Ministry of Health with the aim of defining a strategy on the Way Forward.

PLA assessment conducted in four communities in Kwale revealed several opportunities and challenges for government agencies, donors, policy makers, project implementers and beneficiary communities. This assessment outlined the importance of community participation, gender, poverty focus and demand responsiveness in ensuring project sustainability.

Water and Sanitation Programme Africa Region (WSP-AF)

The World Bank

Hill Park Building

P.O. Box 30577

Nairobi - Kenya

Telephone: (254 2) 260300/400

Facsimile: (254 2) 260386/380

E-mail: wspaf@worldbank.org

Website: www.wsp.org

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Prepared by:

Katua K. Munguti

Reviewed by:

Rose O. Lidonde

Edited by:

Brazille S. Musumba

Production by:

The Creative Business

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