

COALITIONS

WATER SANITATION AND HYGIENE IN THE NEXT DECADE: A REVIEW OF LESSONS ON WASH COALITIONS TANZANIA.

Paper by

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Presented at the WSSCC regional consultation in Harare, Zimbabwe 20-21 September 2004

1. Country situation

1.1 Introduction

Since independence in 1961, the Government of Tanzania has earmarked provision of affordable water and adequate sanitation services as key milestones for human development. Translation of this commitment has, however, been patchy due to inconsistent political will and sectoral competition for scarce country resources. Population growth and migration have increased the demand for these services, particularly in fast growing urban and peri-urban areas. The high incidences of water-related diseases such as cholera and diarrhea have raised national concern. Investment in the sector is insufficient. In 2000 the House Budget Survey (HBS) reported that though 90% of urban households got their drinking water from improved source only 46% of rural households got their drinking water from improved sources. The Ministry of Water and Livestock Development (MoWLD) claims that in 2004 rural coverage is 53% and urban 73%.

The first Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper adopted by the country in 2000 referred to water and sanitation, but only water was included. It stimulated some thinking about water, although financing of the strategy was through the water and health sectors. The national commitment to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) indicates a target of halving the proportion of people unable to reach or afford safe drinking water by 2015. Reaching the target without increased investment in the sector is unlikely. There are three key challenges to improvement of the situation in water and sanitation:

- Sector reforms in the ministry of water to streamline linkages with the ministry for local government ,health, education and other related ministries;
- Poverty that is deepened by the current cost sharing arrangements; and
- Rhetoric of community participation which is not realized in practice.

The goal has stimulated thinking about multi-sectoral co-ordination, which was seen as a difficult concept for sectors to cross boundaries. In practice, it would require at least four ministries to work jointly in developing a vision for water and sanitation.

The PRSP II target is to improve access to clean and safe water from 53% in 2003 to 65% in 2010 of the rural population and from 73% to 90% of the urban population. Currently there are disparities in access to safe and clean water between urban and rural areas, across regions and even within districts. About 47 percent of rural households are still using unprotected sources of drinking water and appropriate maintenance of existing protected water sources continues to be a challenge. This has been reported in the MoWLD budget speech (2004/5) in the parliament the least served regions are Tabora (26.94), Singida (37.17) Mara (44.35) while Dodoma (78.53) has the highest water coverage.

The 2nd PRSP draft also reports that increasing costs of domestic water is of growing concern for the poor especially in unplanned urban settlements. Regarding sanitation, poor facilities prevail in the urban areas where about 90 percent of the households have to resort to site solutions. Flooding due to inadequate storm drainage further exacerbates the problem. In rural areas where most of the households have latrines, lack of hygienic use and maintenance raises concern.

An important commitment is that of fostering mechanisms at national and local levels that are clear to all stakeholders. The second PRSP monitoring will address the challenge of complete integration of the MDG targets and indicators, although clear strategies for these are not readily available.

1.2 The situation before

Remarkable differences featured when the pre-coalition situation was reviewed. Previously, co-ordination of approaches at all levels, including that of key ministries, was a wish never attained. Actors and policy makers worked in isolation and independent of each other with little cross learning. This was

worsened by lack of a national sanitation policy and strategy. The use of indicators to monitor progress was uncommon and lack of guiding principles for resource allocation was evidenced by duplication of programmatic interventions.

1.3 Description of coalitions

The Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) secretariat played a key role in the initiation of the WASH campaign in Tanzania. Although the WASH Coalition building process in Tanzania is just a year old it has been instrumental in helping to kick the start of the process. Introducing the WASH Campaign to various actors created an opportunity to build networks with key players involved in water, sanitation and hygiene as a starting point. WASH coalition building started at the national level, beginning with consultations between Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). There were also water and sanitation interventions by the ministries of Health, Water and Livestock Development, Community Development, Education, President's Office - Regional Administration & Local Government, and President's Office - Planning & Privatization. The national coalition organised two workshops to establish a framework for multi stakeholder engagement at local and national levels as well as developing a strategy for the WASH campaign within a multi stakeholder framework. Critical linkages for various levels were explored and commitments of stakeholders harmonised through transparent dialogues.

The national coalition is composed of six CSOs with water/sanitation focus and five key ministries of Health, Water and Livestock Development, Community Development, Education and President' Office (Regional Administration and Local Government). Routine interactions are strengthened by engagement of specific ministerial representatives to the coalition discussions and follow-ups.

District level coalitions are composed of sector representatives from departments of Water, Community Development, Health and Education within local government authorities, and of water and sewerage authorities, Civil Society representatives and in some places the media.

1.4 The outcomes

The coalitions at national and district levels have mobilized local campaigns in six districts with the aim of influencing Local Government Authorities to improve planning processes and increase budget allocations for water, sanitation and hygiene in their district plans. Six districts have initiated WASH Campaigns targeting messages to District Councillors and communities for increased budgets and demand for water, sanitation and hygiene.

Being an example of co-coordinated interests, the national WASH campaign coalition was able to access advocacy opportunities which would otherwise be missed. The coalition organised satellite seminars, competitions and demonstrations on hygiene behaviour change during the Maji week celebrated at the national level in Songea, southern Tanzania. Participation and making presentations on the WASH campaign to the Regional Health Officers' Conference in Dodoma was another opportunity. Further, the district-based coalition members intend to synthesize contributions from district forums to feed into Poverty Reduction Strategy reviews through the National NGO Policy Forum (NPF), which is a national linkage between CSOs and the government on analysis of commitment to development targets under PRS and MDGs. The existence of the national coalition gave rise to the idea of taking the discussion to lower levels to get the local dimension of basic social services. In the case of decentralisation in Tanzania, the most appropriate level was the district.

Networking with a number of organisations WASH Campaign has helped to create forums to raise and discuss burning issues in water and sanitation and in some cases led to immediate action by the concerned actors. It has reinforced sector coordination, sharing of experiences and policy tools such as sanitation guidelines and the like.

At local level, the coalitions provides a potent force for influencing budgetary increases for water and sanitation as well as facilitating the assertion of poor people's basic rights to water and sanitation. Though the process is still at its infant stage, it has created a momentum where people express their concern and take action to improve their situation.

2.1 The way change came about

The consultations emerged from a series of activities which were facilitated by WaterAid. Meetings and discussions were held by key ministries to introduce the WASH Campaign and develop ideas on how it could complement what was currently being done in the respective ministries. Follow up dialogue and personal contacts with Permanent Secretaries MoH and MWLD were carried out to get more commitment to the agenda. Networks with Civil Society Organisation involved in the WATSAN sector were initiated. A WASH Consultative Workshop was organized followed by two core group meetings to perform a series of WASH activities. The subsequent discussions focused on how the WASH Campaign can facilitate the achievement of PRSP and MDG targets on water and sanitation.

2.2 Mechanisms of change

The change from isolation to coalition in Tanzania was the result of growing acceptance of multi stakeholder partnerships and a more transparent policy environment. The willingness of all partners to share information and a readiness to put together resources made it possible for joint formulation of visions. During the joint analyses, a need for harmonisation of commitment was raised. This is the period when actors accepted to prioritize coalition interests and to forego those of individual institutions. It was agreed that the priorities would be determined by the needs of communities benefiting from the services, and therefore the coalition needed to respond to such demands. A genuine partnership was seen as the only way forward for the "coalition", as this would solve the problem of competing interests.

Example of building networks/ coalitions

In Ilala municipality of Dar es Salaam, consultation meetings were held between WaterAid and Ilala Municipal Health Officers to understand the local government plans and lessons learned from interventions. The WaterAid team shared their experiences with municipal staff about availability of resources for support to communities and the need for joint planning with other stakeholders in the district. The municipal leadership was willing to hold more dialogue with other actors, including CSOs. The result of this was a district level coalition. Currently there is a City Sanitation forum which has WASH actors from the three Municipal Councils of Dar es Salaam.

In Mwanza, the Council was approached by a CSO group to discuss participation of community members in the planning of basic social services in squatter areas where 74% of the population live. The Local Government convened meeting with the CSOs, the urban water and sewerage authority and all Councilors. A consensus was reached on harmonising plans and establishment of a framework for the coalition. Following the consultative meetings initiated by ACORD, the local governance structures identified the need for collaboration and were ready to host dialogues with a wider group of actors from civil society, government projects, and community representatives from three wards in squatter settlements and the urban water and sewerage authority.

Both in Dar es Salaam and Mwanza, the coalitions are currently mobilising the private sector, as it is an important part of the equation. The Tanzania government is no longer involved in service delivery the task which is now in the hands of the private sector. With all these actors in focus, the potential for building sustainability are high, as the conditions necessary for continuation of collaboration are within the existing institutional set up and networks. This process can also be replicated elsewhere in the country.

2.3 Functioning of coalitions

The national level coalition identifies itself as a collective effort for monitoring the national commitment to achieving MDG targets and advocating for a coherent policy framework on water and sanitation in the country. The coalitions are working through forums and information sharing. The six district level coalitions have taken the role of co-coordinating interests at the local level to capture the context of the MDGs alongside PRS and other short-term commitments. The focus on budgetary allocations is a fixed priority intervention at local level. The WASH Campaign uses concrete evidence based advocacy to influence Local Government Authorities to increase the budget for water, sanitation and hygiene.

The coalitions at district level are not institutionalized, but have been able to facilitate the partnerships through convergence of common elements. The coalitions have established guidelines for communication, strategic linkages outside the group and mobilisation of resources for influencing changes. The coalitions are now brainstorming how to maintain the momentum and mobilise more partners outside the current networks. A search for more partners is being undertaken, but the levels of expectations are being carefully analysed. The coalitions will have to be maintained through maintaining the high level of enthusiasm between different actors. Recent discussions have indicated that the only way to achieve sustainability will be to keep the coalitions modest and maintain a vision on proposed achievements. Although it is not conclusive and perhaps too early to consider future prospects, the awareness of members on the shared vision suggests promises strong coalition sustainability.

A follow-up mechanism has been agreed upon, whereby responsibilities on monitoring, mobilisation and participation are rotated among members. The outstanding question at the local level is to ensure that follow ups are linked to accountability systems in local government authorities. This is being achieved through mobilisation of political commitment of the elected leaders of local government authorities. The increasing involvement of local authority leaders would open the way for increased transparency and accountability.

During the WASH Campaign Consultative workshop which involved key ministries, local and international NGOs and Community Based Groups working in water sanitation and hygiene, several limitations of promoting sanitation and hygiene were observed. One major observation is the lack of a national sanitation policy with a clear institutional framework to enable poor people to have access to clean and safe drinking water, sanitation and improved hygiene. Coalition building was recognized as a force to raise these issues and gain commitment, as well as moral and material support to improve the situation in the country using the WASH Campaign.

3.1 Why did the change occur?

There are several features of the enabling environment which have helped the WASH Campaign coalitions to emerge. The strength and commitment of WASH partners has laid a strong foundation for the coalition. Every partner has incorporated the WASH Campaign into its routine work.

The dialogues on PRSP were an important space for raising the agenda on water and sanitation at national and district levels, as they combined political, administrative and economic dimensions of achieving targets. Maintaining the coalitions has been successful due to support beyond the membership. Linkages with Local Government Authorities have promoted the inclusion of debates on water and sanitation in the list of priority social services. The coalitions have also been able to disseminate information widely on what is expected. Groups that were previously not considered for sharing, particularly donors, have risen to the challenge by encouraging their projects and field partners to consider links with the national MDG commitments.

3.2 Why did coalitions operate in the way they did?

The key driver to the operation of these coalitions is the realisation of the need to achieve synergy and local co-ordination. The WASH campaign has been considered a useful entry point for actors participating in the broad range of services from water, environmental sanitation to hygiene education. Partners are continually realizing the value of identifying the comparative advantage that could be brought together to achieve coherent strategies and approaches that would enhance effectiveness, create more cross-learning opportunities and improve resource allocation.

3.3 Why did the coalitions lead to results?

The strength that led to coalitions delivering results is rooted in joint commitment and concrete plans for achieving outcomes. The strength of partnership is heavily dependent on the strength and commitment of individual partners which is based on the activities of the organisations. In both Ilala in Dar es Salaam and Mwanza, the basic incentive for participating members was the opportunity for sharing of ideas that could contribute to achieving the MDGs as they are translated in the local context. Collaborators realised they could not foster achievements without establishing logical links that lead to coherent outcomes. The collective commitments on action were extended to joint monitoring and adaptation of strategies, particularly on maintaining high levels of member participation.

WaterAid in Ilala and Temeke Municipal Councils in Dar es Salaam initiated community participation geared at creating partnership and sharing of decision-making in maintaining safe environmental sanitation and hygiene in the locality. This stimulates their participation and helps to overcome beliefs, customs and their pertaining behaviors. It is a stage for consolidation of water sanitation and hygiene issues, working out strategies, assigning roles and responsibilities, developing a plan of action and agreeing on tools to monitor and evaluate progress. The process helped to identify issues that can be solved at community/street ward, Council, CSOs and other higher levels for financial and human resource back up support. This lays the ground for raising sanitation and hygiene issues which should lead to increased allocation in the municipal budget lines. It is expected that identified sanitation issues can be reflected into the ward and Ilala Municipal Council plans and budget lines.

So far, it is worth appreciating the following changes:

- The increase of awareness on water, sanitation and hygiene among decision makers, community members and development actors.
- The merging dialogues about exploring alternatives to current financing and approaches for achieving goals on water and sanitation.

However it is worthy to note that the strength of partner organizations is the seed for growth of coalitions. It is worth taking into account that the capacity of the individual organisation is the key in establishing and maintaining partnership.

4. Conclusions

Achieving the targets set for 2015 on water and sanitation in Tanzania without using creative approaches and increasing budget into the sector is unlikely to be achieved. In order to demonstrate changes in approaches towards a process rather than sticking to targets only, the coalitions will have to evolve rapidly to develop more engagement and strategic linkages both at the national and local levels.

The WASH Campaign has facilitated the establishment of partnerships for addressing the concerns of poor people's access to water; sanitation and hygiene as well as creating opportunities for collective learning and sharing that contribute to the way forward. A series of participatory planning meetings, identification of partners, dissemination of WASH Campaign materials and facilitation of sanitation forums have been the core activities carried out in the search for coalitions.

Engagement with Local government authorities has been targeted to get the commitment of Councilors increase budget for water sanitation and hygiene in their plans. Budget allocation and following up the implementation of the WASH planned activities by Councilors can improve the accessibility of water, sanitation and hygiene to the people. The current Local Government Reform which aims at bridging power resources and authority to the people is another opportunity for sustainability of Wash Coalitions.

Coalitions are not straightforward partnerships, as the rules and guidelines are not readily tailored on day one. Coalitions bring together governance structures, institutional leaders, mass media and community members to address public interests on public goods. Building of coalitions starts with a long process of mobilisation of interests toward convergence on shared values and interests. Involvement of communities is usually questioned by governance structures in areas where participatory local governance is not a standard practice. Joint mobilisation of resources among partners is ultimately desired, but building trust on how such resources are used to deliver interventions must be given time, as it is an iterative process.

The self-coordination of actors has added value to mobilization. WASH partners have jointly developed a strategy, communication messages and plans for community mobilization. Members of the community are beginning to gain trust and appreciate seeing development actors working together for example ministerial officials and community groups. This process will increasingly stimulate dialogue and raise the profile of sanitation in the planning process at local level thus improving the provision of water sanitation and improvement of hygiene.

Currently the impact of the action plan on achieving the MDGs is that it has stimulated discussions and questioned the efforts towards achieving national sanitation targets. The long-term impact of the WASH campaign on national policies is that these forums and dialogues will be linked to national policy processes like the Poverty Reduction Strategy II and Public Expenditure Reviews.

In Temeke and Ilala Municipal Councils of Dar es Salaam, for instance there are positive signs of increasing resources for sanitation by providing working equipment for cleaning trenches, rakes and carts for collecting solid waste.

The coalition in Mwanza has started facilitating dialogues on lifeline water tariffs for poor people in the squatter settlements and gender networks are advocating for sanitation related infrastructure support to female-headed households in marginal areas. Linkages with some advocacy groups are also identifying other issues like the need to support HIV/AIDS affected and female-headed households to achieve affordable access to water and sanitation.

4.1 Lessons on what and how things happened

Although the coalitions are hardly one year old, there are promising lessons that we could build on:

- the critical linkages for coalition building are not automatic, and need to be nurtured beyond the conventional institutional partnerships between government and non-state actors at local and national level;
- participatory planning processes need mutual understanding, shared vision and commitment to what is to be achieved;
- expectations from different stakeholders need to be known at the initial stage;
- members who collectively identify themselves with the shared roles and responsibilities and who are not imposed always promote ownership of coalitions;

- political commitment is a prerequisite for influencing increases in resource allocation for water, sanitation and hygiene at the local government level;
- the Government structures at local and national levels play a central role in triggering coalition linkages provided that they articulate their traditional Co ordination responsibilities;

- in the consultation processes, there is need for flexibility and adaptability to new happenings. The approach opens a forum for exchange of information, experiences and promotes proactive learning that is essential in influencing sanitation behavioral change;
- community pressure groups have emerged, taking up the role of following local government commitments and community involvement in environmental sanitation management. This has led to the establishment and strengthening of co-ordination of actors in the provision of water, sanitation and health services;
- building coalitions is time consuming and as such needs patience, as the critical linkages are not automatic;
- participatory planning is an effective framework in which bottom up planning takes place, allowing people freedom to express their concern and make the passive proactive;
- it takes some time for the impact to be realised and needs a close follow up to see that plans are implemented and for the group to reflect on emerging issues is needed; and
- the coalitions provide an effective tool for planning, social transformation and advocating for increased political commitment on water sanitation and hygiene.

Specific recommendations for further work:

- close follow up on expanding the exploration, building and maintaining collations at local and national levels;
- engaging and sustaining the interest and involvement of government officials both at national and local levels should be explored and promoted at the beginning of the coalition initiatives to increase the potential for sustainability;
- emerging pressure group structures need systematic support on participatory methodologies and confidence building so that they can complement the core coalition efforts;
- the linkages between sustainable livelihoods and awareness on improved sanitation should be articulated first by development actors, so that they can themselves support communities to understand the links, otherwise the two are not readily seen as closely related;
- the participation of the private sector in coalitions has to be explored within the existing governance framework. The public-private partnership is easily leveraged in situations where participatory local governance is fully acceptable by governance structures.
- there are no simple prescriptions for coalitions to expand their work. Innovative and context specific strategies should be explored to open opportunities for replication and rolling out interventions; and
- mass media strategies that unite communities need to be explored to support coalition to reach wider communities and stakeholders.

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