



Collaborative funding of rural water supply

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SINCE 1979 WHEN World Vision Ghana (WVG) started Rural Development work in Ghana, the cost of providing reliable source of potable water in the communities was becoming increasing more and more expensive to fund.

Meanwhile water is the most essential single commodity for sustainable rural development in Ghana.

In order to fully address the need, WVG commissioned the Ghana Rural Water Project (GRWP) in 1984 as a large-scale water supply effort because of the huge budget required. In the first phase of the drilling programme, from 1984 – 1990, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) provided funds for the drilling of 455 wet wells fitted with handpumps in nine out of the ten regions of Ghana.

In the second phase that covered 1990 to 1995, 529 wet wells fitted with handpumps were provided with funding from the Conrad N. Hilton fund as the major donor. The concept of collaborative funding during this period and World Vision Unites States (WVUS) provided a matching grant to support the community Health Education and Sanitation component of the programme.

Initiative

It has become obvious over the past two decades of the water supply programme that for water supply and sanitation facilities to be sustainable, all beneficiaries and other stakeholders must be involved from programme inception through implementation to monitoring and evaluation. This calls for effective collaboration with beneficiaries and other stakeholders to identified and pool resources. It also requires that, roles and responsibilities are identified and shared.

WVG has been implementing these lessons and learnings as it collaborates with communities and the Local Government represented by the District Assemblies at the local level. Other collaborators include local an external Non-Governmental Organisations in the Greater Afram Plains (GAP) of Ghana.

This paper describes the experiences if WVG, GRWP in facilitating a collaborative funding scheme for rural water supply in one district in the GAP.

Methodology

World Vision Ghana as a lead agency creates forums for all collaborators to share ideas through project start-up workshops and review workshops. This is the stage where the programme is crystallized and the programme cost emerges. When the question of funding arises, participating collaborators pledge their resources and full commitment.

Additionally, issues of programme management, supervision, monitoring, sustainability and accountability are discussed and appropriate institutions are established. For these institutions to be functional, their training needs are also identified and appropriate actions are taken to enhance their management capacities.

Implementation

The Kasei Water Project is one of the success stories of this initiative. The project is designed to serve a population of about 9,400 from a cluster of 3 communities in the Ejura-Sekyedumase District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The project involves the mechanization of a prolific GRWP - drilled boreholes; storage and distribution of water by gravity at stand pipes through pipelines. This was identi-

Table 1. Summary of finances

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High level tank



fied as an alternative source of water to this cluster of communities where drilled boreholes were dry. Unfortunately, the cost of this project was too high for the GRWP budget to finance.

Funding

A health related and medical NGO in the area called the St Luke Society and a local Animal Husbandry which is a semi private enterprise joined their resources as a bait to attract GRWP to consider the project as an alternative source of water for the people in the area.

The local government – District Assembly and the beneficiary communities were also involved from the embryonic stage of the project. The former offered to provide funds for the purchase of the pipe (PVC and galvanised) and pay for part of the pipe laying cost, while the latter willingly offered to dig the distribution network trenches through communal labour. GRWP also provided technical supervision/consultancy.

The critical source of funding required was for the procurement of high level tank from Britain. The plan was

therefore shared with World Vision Britain who in turn received a favourable response from the Lion's Club in Britain.

Sustainability/maintenance

A water programme management committee has been formed to monitor and manage the facility. The committee is made up of representatives all the financiers of the project (except the Lion's Club).

Their role, inter alia, is to establish tariffs, provide a mechanism for the collection of tariffs, constantly monitor water distribution from source to the standpipes. Any fault is quickly identify and rectified to avoid breakdowns.

Lessons and challenges

In order to enhance the institutional capacities of the various committees, a systematic training programme was developed and implemented. This was designed to enable members to improve their skills in technical functions of the water supply system, supervision management, accountability, maintenance, monitoring and evaluation.

Community education sessions aim at community awareness about ownership of the facility. Issue of maintenance and sustainable were also addressed to ensure that people understand the philosophy of paying for water supply.

The community education programmes also brought about an appreciation of the water supply mechanisms including water level monitoring in the boreholes building and clearing house for accountability.

Recommendations for the future

In communities through opinion leaders and recognizable indigenous institutions should be involved from the early stage of development initiatives. There should be opportunities for strengthening their capacities instead of forming parallel institutions.

This will guarantee the ownership, maintenance and sustainability of facilities that are installed.

Conclusion

Collaborative efforts in community water supply programmes provide strong basis for effective resource mobilization and management for sustainable development.

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