



Working with partners and people

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RURAL WATER SUPPLY Project for Eastern Province (RWS-EP) is funded by the Government of Germany (KfW) and the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ). The 90% contribution made by the Government of Germany is supplemented by GRZ contribution of 10%. The project is administered through JBG Gauff Ingenieure for the Department of Water Affairs in the Ministry of Energy and Water Development. Eastern Province was chosen as the operational area due to low water coverage. The overall coverage rate within the province was less than 35%, with variations in each of the 8 districts. The provision of over 560 protected water points will improve the situation in the rural communities.

Historically, RWS was a predominantly technical project, but in Eastern Province it has increasingly become participatory with emphasis on working collaboratively with other partners and stakeholders in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Education (WASHE). Particular emphasis is placed on working co-operatively with recipient communities.

This paper presents how Rural Water Supply Project has been working and involving partners and stakeholders in the water sector, so that there is ownership and collective responsibility for the water points being established. The paper also outlines the process which the project uses in working in each district, as it seeks to establish protected water points in rural villages. A consultative and participatory approach is used, starting from the district council and sub-committees, government departments, NGOs, other projects and sub-district staff through to the community level.

Collaboration at district levels

At district level, the District Development Co-ordinating Committee (DDCC) is responsible for co-ordination of all development activities in the district. This committee draws its membership from District Heads of government departments and NGOs. The Committee, which also forms the District Administration, has a subcommittee called "District Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Education" (D-WASHE). This subcommittee is comprised of officers representing government departments and NGOs in the DDCC relevant to WASHE. The subcommittee is responsible for co-ordination of all WASHE activities in the District. D-WASHE meetings are expected to be held monthly and the project makes an effort to send a representative. During the meeting, RWS staff provide information about the project, selection criteria, and updates on activities. The D-WASHE

is expected to provide direction and assist the project to problem-solve when necessary.

Collaboration with other partners

Collaboration with other partners such as UNICEF, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Peace Corps, Lutheran World Federation (LWF), Eastern Province Women Development Association (EPWDA), World Visions, Micro-projects Unit (MPU), and Rural Investment Fund (RIF) has been fruitful. While RWS has been able to provide safe water, other projects and programs have taken up the responsibility of addressing issues relating to health and hygiene education. Other partners have taken an emphasis in the sanitation component where new water points have been established. In the case of rehabilitation of a water point provided by another partner, there is consultation between stakeholders regarding future plans of the water source before the project begins. The Peace Corps have collaborated with the project by providing catchment area maps and conducting hygiene education with RWS-seconded staff in communities. EPWDA identified women's groups in Mambwe District and requested the Project to train them as Area Pump Menders. The co-operation and collaboration among the WASHE stakeholders in the Province creates a synergy that brings about complimentary roles, successful completion of programmes, better analysis of achievements, and better prioritization of needy communities.

Collaboration with the community

The project interacts with the community during assessments and verifications, motivation meetings, community siting, drilling, well construction/rehabilitation, handpump installation, V-WASHE training and hygiene education. The active participation of the community is requisite to the working of the project, as the communities are seen to be in partnership with the project in the provision of safe water.

A schematic diagram showing the sequence of events in a RWS Project is given in Figure 1.

Identification and selection of needy communities

In most cases, the initiative to have clean water provided comes from the community. The needy villages make applications to the D-WASHE for assistance. The D-WASHE also receives submissions from Community Health Workers,



Figure 1. Sequence of events in RWS project

women's groups, Neighbourhood Health Committees and Area Community Organisers. Extension officers who assist the communities in making applications (i.e. teachers, agriculture extension officers, community development officers and Environmental Health Technicians (EHTs)) also make recommendations of needy villages. Since chiefs are still influential in Eastern Province, the traditional leadership is also used to generate lists of needy villages.

The D-WASHE scrutinizes the applications and compiles a list, which is submitted to the DDCC for approval. The approved list is endorsed by the chairperson of the DDCC

and submitted to the Provincial Water Engineer, who represents the client department. This list is finally submitted to Rural Water Supply Project.

The approved list should contain information about the ward, chiefdom, constituency and RHC of the applying village. Other information on the village characteristics such as population, current water source and conditions, distance from the village, accessibility of the area and availability of WASHE facilities (pit latrines, dish racks, rubbish pits) is desirable but in most cases, it is not available and an assessment visit is required.

Assessments and Verifications

The assessment team from RWS project moves into communities with seconded staff who are also members of the D-WASHEs. The maps provided by other partners at this level are useful, as these help to determine accessibility and locations of the villages to be assessed and verified. During assessments and verifications, information on the list is verified and new information added. The project also checks the following:

- A minimum population of 200 people;
- Readiness of villages to be grouped together to share a water point if necessary;
- Clustering of needy locations (i.e. within reasonable distance from each other) to ease the movement of machinery and personnel in order to create a more economical coverage of the areas;
- Road accessibility for heavy goods vehicles; and
- Names of needy locations presented to RWS Project should not be duplicated on lists given to other water supply partners.

Appointments and motivation meetings

Once the assessed community has qualified for assistance, an appointment for an information and motivation meeting is made through the village headman. Need for everybody to attend is emphasized, as the attendance is indicative of the commitment of the community to work with the project in maintaining the water point. Major activities of motivation meetings include:

- Drama performances with key message of co-operation;
- Community informed about their role: namely assisting in digging wells, crushing stones, collecting river and dambo sand for apron construction; cash contribution for purchase of spare parts and their need to fund raise to ensure sustainability of water points;
- Formation of village WASHE Committee and registration; and
- Community to choose 3 suitable locations for water point.

Community and geological siting

After the community has chosen three locations, the project siting team works with the community to determine whether their chosen locations/sites are suitable for water points. If the community sites are unsuitable the hydro-geological siting team will choose another site for them. On the basis of the geology, a recommendation is made concerning a suitable installation (borehole, well rehabilitation or new well construction).

Water point construction and handpump installation

In addition to ferrying river and dambo sand for apron construction, the village is asked to provide unskilled labour (6 people) to assist the well digging teams each day. During handpump installation, caretakers and area pump menders are present to acquire knowledge and skills. This is to ensure that knowledge on maintenance remains in the community.

V-WASHE training

After handpump installation, V-WASHE training takes place. Targets of the training are V-WASHE Committee members and headmen, neighbourhood committee members, Community Health Workers, Traditional Birth Attendants and any other WASHE partners operating in the area. The purpose of the training is to equip the communities with knowledge in issues relating to management of RWS and capacity building at the most basic level. Topics include; what is a committee, how does it function, roles and responsibilities of each member, ways of fundraising, how to use a cashbook and preventive maintenance.

Monitoring and hygiene education

Hygiene Education is conducted for both V-WASHE and all water point users. During V-WASHE training, topics relating to personal hygiene, home hygiene and village

Table 1.

Challenges	Measures Taken
1. Poor spatial distribution of water points in districts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-operation with district planners, D-WASHEs and District Administration concerning better distribution of water points
2. Irregular D-WASHE meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project reinforcement of district response to WASHE
3. Overlap of geographical areas with other WASHE partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open communication/information sharing between partners and D-WASHE
4. Poor accessibility and non availability of people during rainy season	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise work during dry season - although activities are year round
5. Cultural restrictions limit the active participation of women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender awareness in project activities • Working through women's groups • Special training for women

hygiene are covered. The above is expanded during village meetings to include types of water sources, ways in which the water sources can be contaminated, water collection and water storage methods. In addition, hygiene education workshops for community health workers from 3 to 4 RHC catchment areas are conducted. The objective of these workshops is to provide orientation to Community Health Workers (CHWs) and Traditional Birth Attendants and to involve them within their catchment areas in the promotion of hygiene education in water and sanitation. During these workshops, monitoring forms, devised by the project in conjunction with the Ministry of Health, are introduced to the participants. After the workshops, the monitoring forms are used by CHWs to monitor WASHE activities and disease patterns in areas where the project has provided water points. After the CHW has filled in the forms, they are passed to the supervising EHT, who submits them to the District Director of Health's office. The project accesses information in these forms from the Ministry of Health. Information obtained through monitoring is used by

WASHE partners at community and district levels for follow-ups.

Challenges and summary

RWS project is committed to using existing systems in its efforts to provide accessible, reliable and quality water to the communities. It has made efforts to involve WASHE partners in its programmes at all levels through regular meetings, seminars, workshop and individual interaction. Efforts are continuously being made so that the long term sustainability of water points is ensured in the Eastern Province.

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