

38th WEDC International Conference, Loughborough, UK, 2015

**SUSTAINABLE WATER AND SANITATION SERVICES
FOR ALL IN A FAST CHANGING WORLD**

**Lessons on small towns water and sanitation reforms
in Jigawa State**

Nasser Yakubu, Ali Abdullahi Umar & Sunday Shobowale, (Nigeria)

BRIEFING PAPER 2092

The paper attempts to discuss the Jigawa state's attempt at implementing its WASH (Water Supply Sanitation and Hygiene) policy on small towns which had led to not only improvement in access to water and sanitation but had empowered communities to take strategic decisions on options and tariff which ordinarily would have been impossible due to political pressure. The challenges of implementation include dealing with a large number of small towns (about 400 WCAs (Water Consumers Associations)) and strengthening the WCAs to move from the nurturing state to self reliance. Donor agencies have played proactive roles in supporting the small town reforms. One lesson is that for access in water and sanitation to be improved, policies need to focus more on small towns but these communities will need to be nurtured to address cost recovery and supported through structures at state level like STOWA (Small Towns Water Supply and Sanitation Agency) in Jigawa state and at Local Government levels like the proposed Local Government WASH departments.. The next step of whether the WCAs can delegate responsibility of water supply operation to local private operators, remains to be seen.

Introduction

According to OECD (2011), benefits of access to water, sanitation and hygiene far outstrip costs by a cost-benefit ratio of seven to one. It reported that the benefits include time savings from distances and/or queues at water sources, reduction in water borne diseases and other non quantifiable benefits such as social status, convenience, privacy, security, school enrolment, life expectancy etc. The report found that almost 10% of global burden of disease, especially, including 30% of deaths of children under 5 could be prevented through water, sanitation and hygiene intervention.

National water and sanitation policies and issue of access

Going by the Nigerian constitution, "except waters affecting more than one state" (FGN 1999) the responsibility of potable water supply and water-sanitation falls on each of the 36 states including Abuja. However, general support on policy formulation and direction is provided at Federal Level by the Federal Ministry of Water resources. In 2000, a National Water Supply and Sanitation Policy was developed which aims to contribute to the attainment of MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) and improve access to water and sanitation from 40% in 1999 to 100% by 2011 (FMWR, 2000). It classified water supply according to urban (populations above 20,000), small towns (5,000 to 20,000) and rural (less than 5,000). The National Water-Sanitation policy of 2004 covers water-sanitation issues related to disposal of household related waste water, faeces and hygiene (FMWR, 2004).

As at 2011 only 59% percent of the Nigerian population is using an improved source of drinking water - 73 percent in urban areas and 31 percent in rural areas (NBS-MICS, 2013). The national policy target on sanitation was to achieve 65% in 2010 and 80% coverage by 2015 (FMWR, 2004) but results from MICS(Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey) shows that access to improved sanitation was only 51% as at 2011 (NBS-MICS, 2013).

Access to water supply and sanitation in Jigawa state

Jigawa State is one of thirty-six states of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. It has a total population of 4,348,649 million (2006 census) and total land area of 22,410 sq km situated in north-western part of the country. In 2006, access to potable water was 65% while access to sanitation was 55% (NBS-CWIQ, 2006). The Jigawa state water supply, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) policy was developed in 2010 with targets to improve access to safe water supply and adequate sanitation to 100% by 2020. Studies in 2011 showed that it was 64.8% and 41.2% improved access to water supply and sanitation respectively (NBS 2013). In 2013, results from CWIQ (Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire) survey conducted by the Jigawa state directorate for Budget and Economic Planning and supported by SPARC (DFID), the access to improved water supply was 79.6% while 65.7% of the state's population had access to improved sanitation (JDBEP, 2013). The reforms in the Jigawa State WASH policy which is promoting the community management of small towns water supply through Water Consumer associations is one of the instrumental factors to the progress in the sector.

STOWA as a water operator

In the year 2000, STOWA was established as a government agency responsible for, among others, provision and delivery of water services in small towns with population of 5,000 to 20,000 in the state (STOWA law, 2000). This responsibility meant that STOWA staff were directly operating the water schemes in all the small towns. The number of staff has decreased from 655 in 2006 to 525 in 2013. These staff report to the 7 zonal offices covering all the 27 LGAs that report to the STOWA headquarters at the state Capital in Dutse. With this organisational structure, STOWA was able to construct water supply projects, run the schemes and collect revenue in small towns just like its urban water utility counterpart. As at 2013, STOWA had constructed 577 water schemes to about 400 small town communities in the state serving about 30% of the population (about 1.9million people) the status of the projects were as follows.

Table 1. Status of schemes				
	As at 2006		As at 2013	
Status	Motorised	Solar	Motorised	Solar
Functional water schemes	103	12	264	286
Non-functional water schemes	120		6	1
Total	223	12	270	287

Source: STOWA monthly progress reports from 2000 to 2013

Jigawa state government buy-in

From 2006 to 2013, donors (EU and DFID) supported pilot water and sanitation projects were constructed in 33 small towns while the state government constructed 291 small towns' water supply schemes. As at 2013, 95% of the schemes were functioning. This success could be argued to be mainly due to the monthly allocations of N65million per month for diesel and lubricants supplied by the state government for the running of all water schemes which has been sustained over the past 7 years.

On technology options, it is interesting that initially the communities had more preference for motorised (generator) based water schemes. Gradually, the technology options are shifting from generators to solar powered schemes, since from 2006 to 2013, STOWA constructed 275 solar based schemes as against 47 motorized constructed in the same period (STOWA Monthly Reports, 2013) as described in table 1 above.

STOWA as a facilitator

The introduction of community management approach to small towns water supply and sanitation gradually started in 2006 by the establishment of 2 WCAs under JUWASS (Jigawa Urban Water Supply and Sanitation supported byDFID) and from 2007 to 2013, 33 WCAs were established under WSSSRP (Water Supply and Sanitatin Sector Reform Programme supported by EU) and EU water facility. The Jigawa State WASH policy of 2010 finally helped STOWA to change its focus to a facilitator through the establishment

of WCAs to own, manage and operate their systems in a more sustainable manner. These efforts triggered STOWA to establish a total of 212 WCAs in small towns as at 2013.

There are about 400 small towns under STOWA out of which 245 are now owned and managed by WCAs, this is a lot of progress. However, the existing CWAs need intensive capacity development and there is still a gap of about 255 small towns that require WCAs to be established. Also STOWA had low focus on sanitation in previous years.

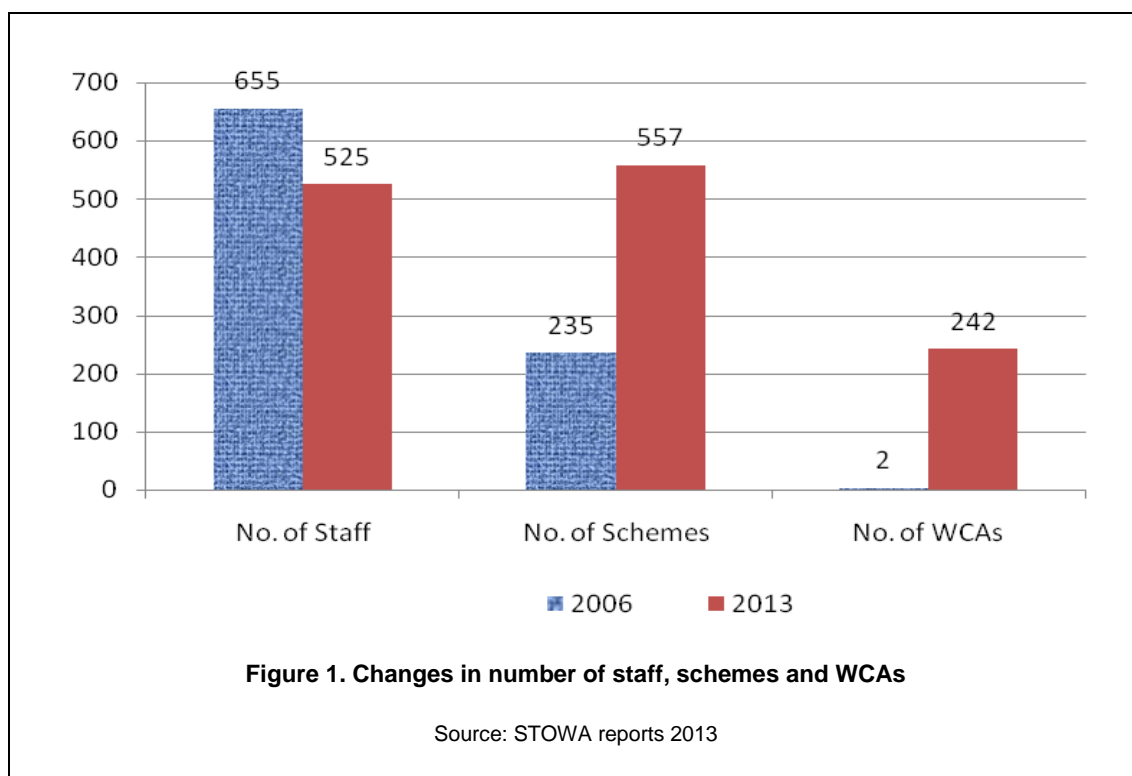
Internal restructure

With the on-going partnership under WSSSRP2 in Jigawa state, STOWA is being re-structured and strengthened to enable play its facilitator roles effectively. The on-going structural adjustment includes transforming the Operations department to Technical support department, the planning department strengthened with Monitoring and Evaluation unit and the creation of a new Community Management Department which is responsible for Community management, Sanitation and Hygiene. The seven zonal offices are being strengthened to carry out community management and M&E functions, to enable them coordinate activities of WCAs in the 27 LGAs of the state. WSSSRP2 is developing a ToT (Train-the-Trainer) community management guide to support small towns in 2 selected local governments in each of its 6 focal states in Nigeria.

Communities taking ownership

With STOWA transferring ownership of schemes to communities, the operation and maintenance is gradually shouldered by WCAs. The WCAs who are representatives of the communities have the responsibility of setting tariffs as well as organising O&M of the schemes. In some small towns, the WCAs identify volunteers who are given the responsibility of generator operation and collection of water revenue but in most cases it is members of the WCAs that take these roles. The operators are given some token allowances per month but their main incentive for the job is the high respect they get from the community.

Figure 1 shows how the number of staff has decreased while the number of schemes and WCAs are on the increase whereas total staff of STOWA has reduced from 655 to 525 from 2006 to 2013 respectively. Without the WCAs, STOWA would have required about 1,500 to 2,000 (ie 3 to 4 staff per scheme) staff to run the small towns schemes in the state. This would not have been attractive to the government due to dwindling financial resources and other competing needs.



Key lessons

- Population figures are sometimes contentious in Nigeria and the actual population of some small towns may appear to be less than the 5,000 people specified in the policies.
- However, the domestication of national policies and establishment of laws in year 2000 provided some foundation for improvement.
- The problem of water supply systems failing few years after construction is gradually being addressed in the small towns' water supply and sanitation sector of Jigawa state within a period of six years functionality has improved from less than 50% in 2006 to 95% in 2013.
- The achievements made from 2006 to date were mainly due to efforts by the state to adopt the community management based approach to small towns' water supply and the sustained funding of the sector is helping to keep the system running but only in the short term. The institutional strengthening of STOWA to move from being an operator of schemes to a facilitator and trainer of community to own and manage their schemes through WCAs is as a movement towards sustainable solutions.
- The technology options (e.g. solar) that move away from reliance on fossil fuel energy (diesel, petrol) not only save need for financial support from government, they keep tariff low and more friendly to the environment.
- In some small towns (like Sundimina, Maje and Sabon Garin Birnin Kudu) the WCAs were able to raise tariff up to N300 (\$2) to N500 (\$3) per month per house connection (Small Towns monitoring reports, 2012) which the communities are willing to pay due to improved services and sense of ownership. Whereas the tariff in other small towns fixed by government at N50 (\$0.3) to N100 (\$0.7) per month per household since year 2000 has not changed due to political pressure.
- With about 400 communities identified as small towns and covering a population of about 2million people or 30% of the Jigawa State's population, STOWA has a strategic responsibility to support these communities to maintain, improve and sustain existing access. Otherwise, this responsibility would have been lost if focus were just on Urban and Rural as the case in many states.

Challenges

The challenges to surmount in sustaining the existing levels of access to potable water and sanitation in small towns include:

- Reduction in reliance on state subsidies for operation and maintenance.
- Strengthening and nurturing of WCAs to govern the systems to enable private sector partnership (local operator) rather than manage it themselves through volunteering.
- Strengthening of STOWA as started under WSSSRP to effectively support the WCAs in over 400 small towns.
- Ability of water tariffs to reflect direct operating costs and capital maintenance.
- Supporting WCAs to form coalition or cooperatives to support each other.
- Sanitation is also just being introduced in STOWA and the implementation of CLTS (Community Led Total Sanitation), for example, in all small towns require more efforts and support and synergy with Local Government WASH departments.

On the whole, having a policy that focuses on small towns water supply is a good starting point in post MDGs planning. Developing a structure dedicated to support small towns water supply and sanitation at state level with a zonal or cluster arrangement would assist for better planning, management and improvement of access to safe water supply and sanitation in Nigeria in a more sustainable manner. Building the capacity of communities in small towns to own and make appropriate water supply and sanitation decisions as well as transferring operational responsibilities to skilled local operators is necessary to address some of the challenges.

Acronyms

CLTS	Community Led Total Sanitation
CWIQ	Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire
DFID	Department of International Development, United Kingdom
EU	European Union
FMWR	Federal Ministry of Water Resources
JDBEP	Jigawa State Directorate for Budget and Economic Planning
JSWB	Jigawa State Water Board
JUWASS	Jigawa Urban Water Supply and Sanitation
JMWR	Jigawa State Ministry of Water Resources
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
NBS	National Bureau for Statistics
RUWASA	Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency
SPARC	State Partnership Accountability Responsiveness and Capability
STOWA	Small Towns Water Supply and Sanitation Agency
STWSSP	Small Towns Water Supply and Sanitation Programme
WCA	Water Consumer Association
WSSSRP 1	Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Reform Programme- Phase 1 – Supported by EU
WSSSRP2	Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Reform Programme- Phase 2 – Supported by EU

References

- FGN (1999), Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999.
- FMWR(2000), National Water Supply and Sanitation Policy of 2000, Federal Ministry of Water Resources, Abuja, Nigeria.
- FMWR-STWSSP(2000), Small Town Water Supply and Sanitation Programme, Implementation guidelines, Federal Ministry of Water Resources.
- JMWR(2010), Jigawa State Water and Sanitation Policy of 2010, Ministry of Water resources, Jigawa State, Nigeria.
- JDBEP-(2013), Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire Survey of 2013, Jigawa State Directorate for Budget and Economic Planning, Jigawa State, Nigeria.
- NBS-CWIQS(2006), National Bureau for Statistics, Core welfare Indicators Questionnaire Survey, Federal Republic of Nigeria.
- NBS-MICS(2013), National Bureau for Statistics, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey of 2011, Federal Republic of Nigeria.
- NPC(2006), National Population Commission, 2006 National Census, Federal Republic of Nigeria.
- OECD(2011), OECD (2011), Benefits of investing Water and sanitation: An OECD Perspective, OECD Publishing.
- STOWA LAW(2000), Small Towns Water and Sanitation Agency Law of 2000, Jigawa State, Nigeria
- STOWA MONTHLY REPORTS (2013), Small Towns Water and Sanitation Agency monthly reports for the year 2013, STOWA, Jigawa State, Nigeria.
- STOWA MONITORING REPORTS (2012), STOWA WCA Zonal reports for 2013, STOWA, Jigawa State.

Contact details

Nasser Yakubu,
 Water Supply & Sanitation Sector Reform Programme
 Small Towns Water Supply
 Ministry of Water Resources,
 New Secretarial Complex, Dutse, Jigawa State, Nigeria.
 Tel: +2348062288423
 Email: Nasser.yakubu@wsssrp.org
