



Partners for Water and Sanitation

Note on project reports

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REPORT ON COOPERATION BETWEEN PAWS AND SOUTHERN NATION NATIONALITIES AND PEOPLES ADMINISTRATIVE REGION'S (SNNPR'S) BUREAU FOR WATER AND SANITATION AWASSA ETHIOPIA SUMMARY OF FACT FINDING MISSION

Introduction

Partners for Water and Sanitation (PAWS) is a UK Government funded partnership with three stakeholder groups:

1. The UK government
2. The UK water industry
3. UK based civil society (e.g. NGOs and trade unions)

The aim of PAWS is to work in Africa with countries and local water service providers to provide capacity building assistance towards the achievement of the millennium development goals (MDGs) in the water and sanitation sectors.

Previously, Paul Turner of PAWS had agreed with the water bureau of the Southern Nations and Nationalities Peoples Regional State (SNNPRS) that a strategy paper will be developed which includes the following set of deliverable outputs:

1. Assess the application and suitability of existing policy.
2. Establishment of investment criteria.
3. A policy for standardisation of equipment, including availability of spares.
4. Confirm appropriate levels of service (water availability) applicable on a community / scheme basis.
5. Define responsibilities for implementation of schemes from region (zone) to community level.
6. Develop a scoring system to enable consistent prioritisation of schemes, including programmes for phased implementation.
7. Explore public / private initiatives and / or participation.

PAWS Visit to the SNNPRS Water Bureau

In January 2007, PAWS send a fact finding mission to the water bureau of the SNNPRS. The team consisted of Steve Bloomfield of UNISON and Adolf Spitzer of Mouchel Parkman Ewans. The aim of the fact finding mission was to gain an understanding of the key issues to be addressed for achieving the deliverable outputs, and to develop a strategy report for the sustainable re-commissioning of the water schemes. The team was also asked to provide an assessment of the technical and management support needed by the water bureau staff to achieve their strategic goals.

During the visit, which took place from the 8th to the 12th of January, the team met with officials from the water bureau, the sanitation department of the health bureau, representatives of community water committees and a representative of the water desk of the Alaba Woreda.

The team also visited five water supply schemes and a Woreda office. These visits took place on the 10th and 11th of January and included the following locations:

1. Submersible pump supplied scheme in Midre Genet (Sidamo zone, Shebedino Woreda)
2. Submersible pump supplied scheme in Abela Lida (Sidamo zone, Shebedino Woreda)
3. Hand pump (Afrodev) in a school compound in Gemeto (Sidamo zone, Awassa Zuriya Woreda)
4. Submersible pump supplied scheme in Aje Guba (Alaba special Woreda, no zone office between Woreda and water bureau)
5. Monolift pump supplied scheme in Lalo Gerebe (Hadiya zone, Bega Wacho Woreda)
6. Alaba Woreda office

Present Organisational Structure of Water and Sanitation within the Bureau's Area of Responsibility.

The SNNPR is one of 9 self governing regions of Ethiopia. Each region is subdivided into zones, woredas and communities. The SNNPR has 13 zones, 104 woredas (plus 8 special woredas) covering approximately 118,000 square kilometres in the Rift Valley area of Ethiopia. (See Diagram below)

SNNPR

Water Bureau

13 Zones

104 Woredas (Plus 8 Special Woredas)

Local Communities and Villages (Kebelles)

The Water Bureau is meant to be the strategic authority for the planning and development of water and sanitation provision. The woredas are equivalent to local authorities in the UK with a range of responsibilities including water provision. (The Bureau has a special relationship with 8 woredas and in these cases the Bureau also acts as the provider and supporter for the water service provision to the communities within those woredas). One of the tasks of the woredas is to work with their communities to provide water services in accordance with the strategies and plans agreed by the Bureau. In practice, due to a chronic lack of resources, most woredas and communities are dependent on development aid from NGOs and international donors. The communities, or kebelles, are the closest to the people and are delegated with the responsibility of directly providing water and sanitation services to their people. Each community has a Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Committee (Washco).

Schemes Visited by PAWS

The water supply schemes visited varied widely in their quality of services and water charges.

a) Midre Genet

The water scheme in the Midre Genet community, which serves approximately 20,000 people in three villages, appeared to be the best managed of all the schemes visited. Water is charged at 5 Ethiopian Birr per metre cube and, according to the water committee, 88,000 Ethiopian Birr of reserves have been built up for maintenance, repair and financing of water related activities.



Talking to Water Committee Members in Midre Genet

At the time of visit, cubicles for public showers and demonstration latrines were being built, in a drive for improved sanitary standards throughout the community. The water committee also facilitated training in hygiene by inviting trainers in the fields of public health and hygiene to give lectures in churches and other public places. The trainers are supplied by the woreda office at a cost of 58 Ethiopian Birr per day.



The pumping Station at Midre Genet.

b) Abela Lida

At the time of visit, there was no supply of water in Abela Lida due to the pump being broken. It was stated that the pump was broken for over a week and that it was taken to the workshop of the water bureau for repair. According to the water bureau's workshop head, the pump was to be installed the day after the visit but there still remained an issue with the diameter of the rising main being significantly reduced by iron deposits. The water scheme at Abela Lida serves approximately 8,000 people through four distribution points. Water is being charged at 10 Ethiopian Birr per metre cube.

c) Gemeto

The Afrodev hand pump in the school compound at Gemeto was functioning well. Water can be obtained by children and adults alike for free.



School children getting water at the Afrodev hand pump in Gemeto

d) Aje Guba

The water supply scheme at Aje Guba appeared stretched over its capacity. At the time of visit, there was a large crowd of people queuing for water. According to the secretary of the water committee, people start arriving at four o'clock in the morning.



People congregating at the Aje Guba water point.

No exact figures for the population served by this water distribution point could be obtained. The secretary stated that the scheme is meant to serve 8 villages, but people from other villages also come to the distribution point. He estimated that in the dry season approximately 2,000 people visit the water point every day. The yield of the well was stated to be 2 litres per second and the scheme had only small storage, as the bigger of the two storage tanks was leaking and temporarily taken out of service. The secretary also stated that people arriving at the distribution points typically have to wait several hours before being served (e.g. people arriving in the morning often have to wait till mid to late afternoon before being served) and that conflict with cattle herders is an issue during the dry season. Water is charged at 6 Birr per metre cube and the water committee has built up reserves of approximately 60,000 Ethiopian Birr for maintenance and repair.



Women waiting at Aje Guba for their turn to collect water in 20 litre plastic bottles

e) Lalo Gerebe

The water scheme at Lalo Gerebe had been out of service for approximately two years, due to pump failure. It was stated by Water Committee members that the shaft of the monolift pump broke due to sand and silt blocking the pump. It was stated that the well's water level had fallen below the intake of the pump, making it unproductive. However, according to the water bureau's head of operation and maintenance, it is not clear whether the well only needs rehabilitation or has indeed become unproductive.

Pump and Equipment Maintenance

During discussion with water committee members at all of the visited schemes it became clear that counterfeit parts of poor quality are of a major concern. Having access to people with the required skills for basic maintenance and repair appears to be of serious concern for some of the schemes, while others appear to cope fairly well. Sufficient financial resources for major repair works is of

concern to all the schemes visited and, at the time of visit, even the well run scheme in Midre Genet would not have had the means for a replacement or reserve pump. Concern was also voiced on the time it took for the water bureau to re-commission a water supply scheme when a major break down (e.g. pump failure) occurred.

Other Organisations Supporting the SNNPRS Water Bureau

Subsequent to the visit it has been learned that SNV-Ethiopia already provides some support to the SNNPRS water bureau. SNV is a development organisation funded mainly by the government of the Netherlands. SNV concentrates mainly on the field of capacity building and had been engaged in supporting the water bureau in developing their 5-year strategic plan. They are now planning to extend their cooperation with the water bureau into the following areas:

1. Integration of water policy guidelines.
2. Development of project operational plans for putting the 5-year strategic plan into practice.
3. Database management.
4. Stakeholder participation and collaboration.
5. Mechanisms for sustainable water and sanitation management.
6. Gender equality.
7. HIV/AIDS.

It is felt that PAWS needs to closely coordinate its support to the water bureau with SNV-Ethiopia to avoid duplication of effort and conflicting advice to the water bureau. It is also felt that close coordination of SNV and PAWS support to the water bureau would be to the advantage of the three parties, water bureau, SNV and PAWS.

Contact with SNV was made by Adolf Spitzer before his return to the UK. A phone call to the SNV office in Awassa was made on 15 January 2007 and a first meeting between a SNV and a PAWS representative was arranged. It was agreed to use this first meeting to update each other on their planned activities with the Bureau and to establish ways of communication and coordination between the two organisations.

Apart from SNV, which is judged to be the most important partner for PAWS to coordinate activities with in Awassa, the water bureau also cooperates with a number of other organisations (e.g. JICA, the Japanese volunteer organisation, providing training for pump technicians). The names of (potential) partners for cooperation, fields of cooperation and the water bureau's projected benefit are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Collaborators and their potential contribution to SNNPRS water bureau (extracted from draft *Strategic Plan For Water Resources Development Bureau Of SNNPRS; 1998-2002 E.C (2006-2010)*)

Collaborator	Field of collaboration	Comparative Advantage
Arba Minch University	Research, counselling and training	HRD (Capacity building); electrical, mechanical and hydrological training
Ethiopian management training institute	Training and counselling	Capacity building, project design on minerals and energy; management skills
Awassa university	Training and research	Capacity building and research
Addis Ababa university	Training	HRD
Mekele university	Training	HRD
Productivity improvement centre	Training	HRD
Sodo rural technology promotion centre	Improved fuel saving technology	Improve fuel saving technology
Ethiopia mapping enterprise	Sale of different criteria mapping	Collect info on underground resource
Technical and vocational institutes	Training and technical support	HRD
Standardisation authority	Technical support	Standardise technologies
Information bureau	Technical support	Promotion
Bilateral, multilateral, NGOs (SNV-Ethiopia, JICA)	Capacity building and coordination	Implementation capacity building/HRD
Construction designers and consultants	Technical support	Transparent and efficient service, technical support and capacity building
Water resource development bureaus of other regions	Experience sharing	Wide range of experiences to learn from.

Comments and Assessment

The team has carefully considered the strategic plan and issues raised during the discussions. It is concluded that several objectives in the strategic plan may be difficult to achieve within the projected time frame. It has also been concluded

that some objectives can be achieved by the bureau on its own. However, other objectives can only be achieved with the support and cooperation of other stakeholders (e.g. woredas, health bureau, national government and donors). It is evident that a lack of financial resources is the main cause preventing the bureau from achieving its aims. In addition, there is also a lack of sufficiently trained human resources. Despite these constraints, great efforts are being made by all parties involved to achieve the set goals.

In summary, the team have identified the following issues for further consideration and attention:

1. A significant increase in funding at all levels appears to be required to achieve the MDGs for water and sanitation.
2. The aim to provide access to potable water within 500 metres of urban dwellings and within 1,500 metres for households in rural areas by the year 2015 appears to be unrealistic, considering the situation found during the field visits and given the constraints listed above.
3. The water bureau's aim to standardise equipment is strongly supported.
4. There is a need to tackle the unavailability of spare parts of the right specification and quality.
5. Communication between key stakeholders (i.e. water bureau, health bureau, Woredas and NGOs) needs improvement.
6. The effectiveness of water committees appears to vary widely and capacity building efforts in this area need to be strengthened.
7. The current procurement system is not very efficient and ways of making it less bureaucratic should be developed and explored (e.g. sending a purchaser from 275 km from Awassa to Addis Abeba for collecting pro forma invoices, which then have to be signed off in Awassa before the purchase can go ahead is costly as well as putting strain on already scarce human and transport resources).
8. The schemes would benefit from a greater level of training on a range of subjects, including technical skills, project planning and management, community liaison, and financial reporting.
9. The schemes would benefit from hydro-geological mapping of the SNNPRS to enable selection of sustainable well sites based on informed decisions. The vice head of the water bureau stated that hydro-geological maps of the SNNPRS are available. However, it appears that there is still little information on aquifer re-charge areas (which would need special protection) and whether boreholes are located in re-charging or sealed aquifers.
10. Similarly, the schemes would benefit from water quality mapping of aquifers of the SNNPRS to enable selection of sustainable well sites based on informed decisions. Large areas of the SNNPRS are subject to volcanic activity with aquifers often bearing water with high mineral, metals and salt contents (e.g. fluoride contents in schemes of the Alaba Woreda are often significantly above safe drinking water limits).

11. Based on the strategic 5-year plan, detailed project plans, setting out achievable milestones and the required human and financial resources need to be developed.

Recommendations

Based on the above assessments, the team makes the following recommendations for support from the PAWS partnership:

Training / Advice

To increase the organisational capacity of the SNNPRS water bureau, the water desks in the zones and woredas, and the water committees. It is recommended that, wherever possible, technical training should be combined with practical assistance. The following fields of training needs have been identified:

1. Project planning, including development and implementation of project plans.
2. Communication between stakeholders, including development of communication protocols and their practical implementation.
3. Sustainable water usage, including aquifer mapping and determination of sustainable water extraction rates, and strategies for protection of aquifer recharge areas and their practical implementation.
4. Techniques for upgrading raw to potable water, means of removing excess ion, salts, and metal contents in particular.
5. Maintenance and repair of certain types of pumps, generators, tanks, etc.
6. Operation and maintenance of water schemes for cities and larger towns (leakage detection and repair, pressure management, operation of treatment works, etc)

PAWS Delivery

1. Water Company Managers with experience of producing workable project plans derived from the 5year strategic plan for use by bureau managers to enable them to monitor progress on a regular basis. (Possibly based on a balanced scorecard approach?) SNV Ethiopia has already provided some assistance in this area and any further assistance provided by PAWS should be closely coordinated with SNV.
2. Either Water Company external relations experts or NGOs with community liaison experience to work with the bureau's NGO liaison officer and with the water desk officials from woredas and community water committees.

3. Water Resource experts who can assist in developing an achievable way forward to enable a hydro-geological survey to be undertaken of the bureau's area.
4. Water quality experts who can advise on appropriate technologies to deal with the contaminants found in water sources.
5. A procurement expert who can assist in the development of a model maintenance and parts system for use by the Bureau, woredas and communities.
6. Water engineers who can advise on the most appropriate methods to detect and eliminate leaks, maintain water mains, maintain network pressure, and operate water treatment works.

Production of By Laws / Protocols

An expert in the development and implementation of water user regulations / bylaws to govern the rights and obligations of all relevant parties concerned with the provision and use of water services.

Fund raising

Training, advice and information is needed to improve the capacity of the SNNPRS water bureau, as well as the water and sanitation desks in the zones and woreda offices, to identify potentially available funds and to be able to prepare project proposals for consideration by potential donors. This should also include capacity building in the preparation of business plans, project progress and financial reporting. PAWS should further assist in the identification of UK based donors for the provision of financial aid and support for water supply and sanitation in the SNNPRS bureau.

PAWS needs to provide an expert working for a UK NGO with experience of fund raising and the preparation of business cases in support of financial appeals is needed.

Implementation of Asset Database

There is a need to establish a basis upon which progress on the MDGs can be measured and a more comprehensive maintenance system can be developed.

PAWS needs to provide an expert in asset management and maintenance to advise and assist in the development and operation of a database of existing assets.

Communication

The Bureau needs to work with a range of other stakeholders to achieve the majority of its strategic aims. For example the Health Bureau for sanitation issues and woredas for the delivery of water services at community level. This means that clear and effective relationships must be established that identify each partners' rights and responsibilities. To a large extent the provision of by-laws / protocols should help to develop effective communications. However there is a need to develop an approach to the engagement of other stakeholders to secure their involvement and participation in the development of by-laws and their eventual implementation.

PAWS needs to supply partners with experience in communications and consultation methodologies who can advise the bureau's managers on the development of an appropriate way forward to achieve the maximum level of buy in by the various partners / stakeholders. This would be most suited to an NGO already working in the area and with an ability to spend the necessary time with the various stakeholders.

Future Actions

The priority at this stage is to get this report and its recommendations accepted and agreed by both the PAWS Steering Committee and the SNNPR Water Bureau.

PAWS must then organise to deliver the assistance identified in the recommendations above. It is proposed that a programme of assistance is developed over the next 12 months in conjunction with those partners who agree to provide staff to help with the tasks identified.

It is stressed that to maintain PAWS credibility as an organisation that can deliver something in practice it is considered by the authors that the time for action has now been reached and it is hoped that PAWS partners will respond enthusiastically to the challenges outlined in the recommendations.

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