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MINISTRY OF WORKS

UNITARY  
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE  
FOR COMMUNITY WATER SUPPLY AND  
SANITATION (UIC)

WATER DEPARTMENT

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE COMMUNITY BASED MANAGEMENT  
OF RURAL WATER SUPPLIES PROJECT

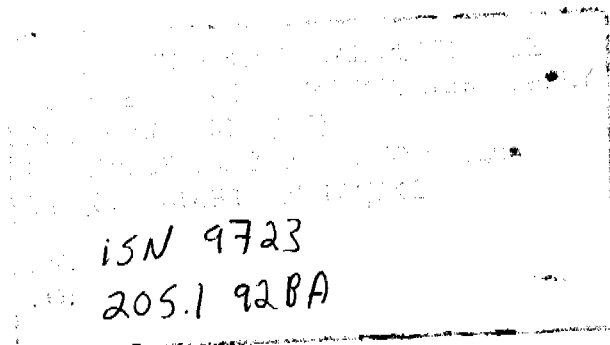
BY

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PAPER PRESENTED AT THE FIRST INTEGRATED TRAINING WORKSHOP  
FOR COMMUNITY BASED MANAGEMENT OF RURAL WATER SUPPLIES PROJECT.  
LOCAL COORDINATING TEAMS - SALIMA 28TH APRIL - 1ST MAY 1992

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## INTRODUCTION

I will open my presentation with a statement and quotation from the All-Africa Seminar on low cost Rural and Urban - Fringe Water Supply which was held in Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire in October 1986. It is popularly known as the "Abidjan Statement".

Conclusions and Recommendations from that particular seminar influenced developments which finally led to the organisation of a follow-up workshop in Mangochi, in Malawi in December 1986.

1.1 The Abidjan Statement

"Lasting health and economic benefits for the rural and urban - fringe populations of Africa can be achieved through increased community management of water supply and sanitation systems based on proven low-cost technologies. African governments and donors are urged to identify and commit adequate resources and provide all necessary support for the direct involvement of communities in choosing managing and paying for their water and sanitation systems."

Representatives of 30 countries of sub-Saharan Africa and 15 external governmental and non-governmental support agencies, together with other specialists from Europe, Asia and Latin America, meeting in Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire, in October 1986, endorsed this statement and the following 5 point strategy which they believed could assist in achieving substantial improvements in the health and living conditions of hundreds of millions of people .

1. **GOVERNMENT** have recognized that affordable and sustainable progress depends on adoption of low-cost technologies. That recognition should now be translated into long-term commitments and establishment of the institutional framework in which community management of water supply systems can be effective.
2. **COMMUNITIES** will be willing to take effective responsibility for running their own water supply systems, provided that they obtain the system that they

have chosen, can afford, and have the resources to sustain. Successful projects involve community members - with women having a vital role.

3. **AN INTEGRATED APPROACH** to health-related development brings maximum benefits from investments in the water supply and sanitation sector. There is strong evidence that water supply improvements planned alongside complementary activities in sanitation and health education have a multiplier effect on health and economic benefits.
4. **TECHNOLOGY CHOICE** must match the community resources available for upkeep of the system. Research into low-cost community water supply and sanitation technologies has demonstrated that equipment is now becoming available to match the favoured strategy of full community management of completed systems.
5. **MAINTENANCE** is the key long-term success. Community maintenance supported by a national strategy of standardization and well-organised distribution of spare parts, brings substantial increases in reliability and reductions in recurrent costs - bringing per capita costs down appreciably when compared with the alternative of centralized maintenance practised in many countries. The results is more dependable supplies of safe water, and continuing improved health.

2. SETTING OF NATIONAL STRATEGIES

In Malawi, 1.5 million rural people should today be served with potable water supplies close to their homes by 5,000 boreholes and 3,000 dug wells, all equipped with handpumps.

However, despite considerable investment of manpower and financial resources in maintenance, it is estimated that 3,00 to 4,00 of these pumps are out of order at any one time, with severe consequences for the users. It is also estimated that over 20,000 more boreholes and wells are required, and the need for a solution to the serious maintenance problems of today is clear.

In order to redress this in line with the Abidjan Statement and five point strategy, Malawi hosted a Workshop on National Strategies for Operation and Maintenance of Rural Groundwater Supplies in Mangochi in December 1986.

One of its main objectives was to make detailed recommendations including a timetable allocation of responsibilities, the inputs required, if any, from donors or other agencies regarding the selection, manufacture, installation, operation and maintenance and financing of handpumps for rural water supplies in Malawi.

These recommendations were to be considered by the Government by the Government information of policy for rural groundwater supply programme.

## 2.1 Workshop Conclusions

The workshop set out to address this issue and its key conclusion was that:

"Self-help should play an important role in the maintenance of wells and boreholes as it does in most spheres of rural development in Malawi. Communities must be involved to the maximum extent possible in the planning siting and construction of their water supply, including the execution of routine repairs and the purchases of routinely wearing spare parts. Government has a major role to play in extension and training and the execution of major repairs that communities cannot handle themselves.

In reaching this conclusion, there was agreement on the following:

1. The existing maintenance system needs restructuring.
2. A procedure must be developed, tested and adopted for the achievement of community management of rural groundwater supplies. This procedure must then be followed in the construction and rehabilitation of all boreholes and wells.
3. Communities cannot be expected to take over the management of either old boreholes and wells in poor condition or those fitted with heavy and complex pumps. A substantial rehabilitation programme is needed to rehabilitate or reconstruct old boreholes and wells and to replace old pumps.
4. Standard handpumps should be locally manufactured be simple enough for communities to maintain with minimal tools and skills, and use easily replaced

and readily available spare parts that communities can afford to purchase.

5. The Ministry of Community Services should have a formal, role to play in community mobilisation for management of rural groundwater supplies.
6. The Ministry of Health should run a formal, programme of Health Education and Sanitation Promotion (HESP) in parallel with all rural groundwater development.

2.1.1. **Roles Spelled Out**

On the specific roles for collaborating ministries the workshop made the following conclusions:

(i) **Role of Water Department**

The Water Department should establish a specialised unit in support of all community water supply programmes.

This unit should develop Test and adopt clear PROCEDURE for Community Based Management of wells and boreholes equiped with handpumps.

This procedure must always be closely followed not only when new water points are being constructed but also when existing water points are being rehabilitated. The procedure is equally important whether government or a contractor is drilling boreholes.

(ii) **Role of Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and Community Services**

The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and Community Services (MoCS) is a service



ministry, with a Community Development Officer and several Community Development Assistants in each district.

MoCS has had a long association with rural water supply development in Malawi, having initiated the rural piped water programme in 1969 and managed it up to 1980. Many of the lessons learned and the methods adopted in this programme are directly applicable to the rural groundwater supply programme.

#### **Recommended Actions**

The MoCS should play a formal, specific and fully funded role in community mobilisation and training for community of rural groundwater supplies. This role needs clear definition and should be developed by proposed CSR study.

It is possible that additional charges could be added to the construction cost of boreholes and wells, to meet the cost of community mobilisation and thus to ensure that MoCS has adequate resources to perform this crucial task.

MoCS should be incorporated into a national, inter) ministerial steering committee which should oversee the rural groundwater supply programme.

(iii)

#### **Role of the Ministry of Health**

The Ministry of Health (MoH), through its Environmental Health Section is currently implementing a health education and sanitation

promotion (HESP) programme within several rural piped water supply project. The HESP programme, under the direction of the Principal Health Coordinator, is regarded as an outstanding success.

In order to maximize the health benefits of investments in rural water supplies it is generally recognized that health education and sanitation improvements are essential parallel activities.

### **Recommended Actions**

As a consequence of the success of the current HESP programme, a fully funded HESP component should be incorporated into the rural groundwater supply programme.

MoH should also be represented in the inter-ministerial steering committee.

## 3. **THE COMMUNITY BASED MANAGEMENT OF RURAL WATER SUPPLIES PROJECT**

In order to implement the 1986 Mangochi National Workshop Recommendations the Malawi Government sought assistance from UNDP to launch the Community Based Management of Rural Water Supplies Project in 1989.

### 3.1 **DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES**

The development objective of the Government to which this project is expected to contribute is to increase health and productivity of the population through the provision of safe and sustainable water supply and adequate sanitation services. The project objectives

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aim at reducing COM's share of maintenance costs for both borehole / handpump systems and piped gravity-fed schemes and to achieve sustainability of services through community based management of schemes.

### 3.2 Project Objectives

The principal objectives of the community based management project is to develop procedures and coordinate, monitor and render technical assistance to activities promoting community management in the rural Water Supply Sector in Malawi.

#### 3.2.1 Specific Aims

- To establish a community based rural water supplies management system, and an arrangement whereby the community will contribute to maintenance costs.
- To institutionalize procedures and linkages for interministerial collaboration and coordination in community water supply development.
- To create a special unit within Water Department to be known as the Rural Water Supply Support Unit which will be responsible for project implementation.
- To rationalize and standardise community based management procedures.
- To standerdise handpumps through replacing of existing pumps with VL0M type pumps.

- To establish quality and manufacturing procedures for handpumps and spare parts and their distribution.
- To implement established procedures in selected number of rural groundwater schemes.

### 3.3 Expected Outputs

Methodologies and procedures for community managed rural water supplies.

#### Activities

- (i) Review and analysis of present approaches arrangement in community management.
- (ii) Review of organizational framework and inter-ministerial relationships.
- (iii) Review of cost sharing arrangements and related financial implementations.
- (iv) Formulate system and procedures to be followed at national, regional/district local levels.

### Output 2

Guidelines for handpump quality control pump installation and distribution of spare parts.

#### Activities

- (i) Formulate clear demarcation of responsibility Government vis-a-vis private sector, for quality control of pumps and parts.
- (ii) Introduce sustainable procedures for monitoring

the effective use and performance of pumps and parts.

- (iii) Review present ways of handpump (Afridev) installation and on this basis formulate appropriate procedures for installation and "handing over".
- (iv) Investigate options and institutionalize the organisational responsibility for distribution of spare parts.

### Output 3

An organisational set-up and staffing structures at national regional and district levels.

### Activities

- (i) Set-up a Rural Water Supply Support Unit for Project implementation, reporting initially directly to the Water-Engineer-in-Chief at the national level and to the Chief Water Supervisor at the Regional Level.
- (ii) Assess the continuing effectiveness of this unit in terms of its position and staffing organisation to implement project objectives.
- (iii) Prepare proposals on staffing requirements at different levels and assist in institutionalization of positions in project team.
- (iv) Review division of responsibilities between MoW, MoH, MOLG and other relevant institutions and prepare revised protocols for work sharing.

### Output

Rehabilitation of 30 boreholes with community involvement

Activities

- (i) Selection of sites for rehabilitation work.
- (ii) Community Mobilisation Campaign
- (iii) Equipment procurement and contractor assignment if required.
- (iv) Supervise contract activities if required and monitor community involvement in implementation.
- (v) Undertake/supervise installation of 40 VLOM (Village Level Operation and Maintenance) Afridev Handpumps.
- (vi) Monitor and evaluate "handing-over" procedure.

Output 5

Introduce community-based management in variety of rural water schemes.

Activities

- (i) Institute the procedures and protocols at the 10 borehole rehabilitation sites.
- (ii) Institute the procedures and protocols in a selection of existing schemes (including schemes which have been handed over for maintenance to MoW by other institutions.
- (iii) Institute the procedures and protocols in a selection of new schemes being implemented.

**Output 6**

Guidelines for programme monitoring and evaluation.

**Activities**

- (i) Introduce sustainable procedures for monitoring the effectiveness of community management and reliable reporting mechanism.

**Output 7**

Procedures to determine priority for rehabilitation and new construction of rural water supply schemes.

**Activities**

- (i) Prepare district programme for rehabilitation and new construction activities.

4. **PROJECT ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE**

4.1. **THE PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The community based management of rural water supplies project has a national steering committee known as the Project Advisory Committee (PAC).

The PAC is chaired by the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC) and is composed of the following collaborating ministries:

- Ministry of Works (Water Department)
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and Community Services
- Ministry of Local Government

4.1.1 **The Regional PAC**

The PAC is also replicated at the Regional Level where the Regional Administrators are chairmen and membership include regional representatives from the four collaborating ministries

4.1.2 **The Centre (TO) Water Councils**

At the district Level, we have Centre Water Councils which are sub-committees of the District Development Committee since District Commissioners chair DDCs, they as well responsible for CWC activities.

Membership of Centre Water Councils is a bit wider. In addition to the district representatives of the four collaborating ministries, party leaders, councillors, chiefs and prominent businessmen sit on the council. In other words all DDC members are illegible to serve on the water sub-committee.

4.2. **Responsibilities of the PAC**

The major function and duties of PAC can be summarised as follows:

- To facilitate the implementation of the project.
- To discuss and review the workplan of the RWSSU.



- To review recommendations to be made on policy issues rules and regulations, financial and cost recovery matters and assist in making them effective.
  
- To facilitate intersectoral and donors coordination. The PAC is expected on a regular basis to convene once every third month.

A part from the supervision of the project, the role of the PAC is advisory only. Its recommendations have to be approved and implemented by the relevant sector authorities.

#### **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION TEAMS**

At the project implementation level we are supposed to have a project team comprising of a Project Manager from the Water Department, and three Project Officers one each from the three collaborating ministries.

This structure is expected to be replicated at both the regional and district levels where representatives from collaborating ministries are supposed to form working committees.

At the area level, we have Local Project Coordinating Teams comprising of Water Monitoring Assistants, Health Assistants and Community Development Assistants drawn from three of the collaborating ministries.

It is this group of Extension workers that we are here to orient this week.

However, this gathering will also be used to consolidate national regional and district working teams since they are all represented here as resource persons.