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PIPED SUPPLIES FOR SMALL COMMUNITIES SURVEY

REPORT ON THE SURVEY TO ASSESS  
PROBLEMS AFFECTING SUSTAINABILITY OF TAP COMMITTEES

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## **BACKGROUND**

The Piped Supplies for Small Communities (PSSC) Project is an Inter-Country Programme implemented simultaneously in Zambia and Malawi. It is funded by the Netherlands Government through the International Water Sanitation Centre.

The Project aims at developing and demonstrating efficient and appropriate sanitation for use in rural and low income fringe urban areas. During the implementation of the project special attention has been given to the development of both Community and Agency Institutional Structures. Priority has also been given to promotion of the development of approaches that involves the community at every stage and which take into account of the social, financial and operation issues as well as the necessary technology.

The programme has also given emphasis to the complimentarity of Water Supply, Hygiene Education and Sanitation.

Finally, priority has also been given to training at all levels.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE PSSC PROJECT**

The general objectives of the PSSC project are:-

- To develop and demonstrate more efficient and appropriate ways of planning, implementing and managing piped water supply systems, with appropriate sanitation for use in rural and low income fringe urban areas.
- To promote the sharing and application of such knowledge and understanding at national programme and sector policy level and in other projects.

Specific objectives include:-

Financial management and technical aspects of piped water supply and sanitation systems.

- To set up and develop a number of study and demonstration schemes on these systems.
- To promote the large scale application of the strategies and methods developed.
- To contribute to the international exchange of information on aspects of piped water supplies and appropriate sanitation systems in line with the concept of Technical Cooperation amongst developing countries.

The project which is being implemented by three collaborating

ministries, Ministry of Works (Water Department), Ministry of Health and Ministry of Community Services was organized in such a way that the Ministry of Works is the Project Coordinating Institution (PCI) while the Ministries of Health and Community Services are the Project Participating Institution.

The three ministries together with Centre for Social Research of the University of Malawi form the project working group (PWG). This is the National Project Management Committee.

At the implementation level, there is the Project Team comprising a full time project manager from the Water Department, and two Project Officers from the Ministries of Health and Community Services.

At the demonstration level centre there is a District Working Group comprising of water supervisor, health inspector and community development officer.

An integrated team of extension workers form a local project coordinating team comprising of a water monitoring assistant, health assistant and community development assistant.

The community organizational structure of the project is such that at each demonstration centre there is a centre water council which is a sub-committee of the district development committee.

This committee, which is chaired by an elected member, has three sub-committees responsible for operations of water points, finances and health.

At the community level, tap committees are elected at each tap, to manage operations of the water points.

This community organizational structure has been formed ideal for the development of community based management in the public standposts.

### **TAP COMMITTEES**

Tap Committees have been regarded as the back bone for the success of the community based approach developed under the PSSC project.

The committees are elected by communities themselves early during the planning phase.

The committees are initially briefed on their responsibilities by Local Coordinating Teams.

They are then left to coordinate project activities during all the project phases.

The committees are then responsible for the management of operation and maintenance of completed water points including financial management.

### **TRAINING**

In order to operate effectively Tap Committees are trained during the initial period followed by refresher courses once in a year.

Specialized courses are also organized for Tap Committee Chairmen and Treasurers .

### **PROJECT EXPERIENCES**

Experience has shown that effective operation of the water points is dependent on the stability of the Tap Committees.

Where Tap Committees are strong operation of water points has been noted to be effective, whereas weak Tap Committees have proved to be ineffective in operation and maintenance.

### **UNSUSTAINABILITY**

Experience has also shown that inspite of the initial briefings, training, refresher courses and integrated extension support given to the Tap Committees they have proved to be unsustainable.

Communities once elected have tended to disintegrate within a short period of time.

A committee starting with the elected member is found to end up with one or two members within a period of less than six months.

With only a few members remaining in the committee a situation of anarchy develops as individuals become too powerful so that they begin to run the water points as if they were personal facilities.

This is the situation which led into the commissioning of the Tap Committees Sustainability Study.

The idea was to find out what is the main cause of Tap Committee disintegration.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of the study were outlined in the first proposal

which was submitted to the PSSC project manager in June, 1991. (see appendix).

The Survey Team had to revise the objectives prior to commencement of the survey in order to widen the scope of the study.

The main objective of the study in the revised proposals were to identify factors responsible for disintegration of Tap Committees within a short period of time after their election.

The idea was to find out why the Tap Committees were not sustainable in both the short-run and long-run.

Specifically the study sought to:

- Find out why Committee members dropped out before the expiry of their term of office.
- Find out the possible time period when most elected Tap Committee members began to relax and dropped out of the committees.
- Find out which of the office bearers within the committees, chairmen, secretaries, treasurers or committee members had the highest tendency to drop out.
- Find out which one of the genders, men and women had the highest tendency of dropping out from the committees.
- Identify which social groups within communities had the highest tendency of dropping out from the committees.

In order to meet these objectives, there was need for the study team to:

- Assess why elected Tap Committee Members failed to attend meetings or participate actively in committee activities.
- Identify possible causes of misunderstanding among Tap Committees.
- Evaluate the degree to which Tap Committees received external support from Local Leaders and Extension Workers.

### **1.3 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

At the outset six centers were selected for the survey. The six centers were selected on the bases of geographical and cultural diversity in order to come up with reliable data.

The six centers were selected by the Survey Team with the help of the Project Manager in early July, 1991. The six centers identified were as follows:-

Mulanje, Balaka and Monkey Bay in the Southern Region, Salima Mponela and Dowa in the Central Region. However since it was forecast by the Project Manager that the survey team members would be weary after being in the field for along time and that this posed a danger to the data collecting exercise, the centers were reduced to four: Balaka, Salima Monkey Bay and Mponela.

The above mentioned centers include both the oldest and most recently established demonstration centers and one unaided centre. Balaka amongst these centers, Salima and Mponela are the oldest demonstration centers, Monkey Bay is one of the most recently established centers while Balaka is unaided centre, it is not supported under the PSSC Project.

To make sure that numbers of Communal Water Points (CWPs) selected for interviews in the four centers were proportional, 2/5 of the Communal Water Points were chosen for interviews at each centre. Systematic Random Sampling and Simple Random Sampling procedures were employed to determine the (CWPs) where interviews were to be conducted. In this case the survey team had a list of (CWPs) at each centre numbering from the first to the last one. Using Systematic Random Sampling procedure, every third CWP on the list was picked for interviews.

But where the number of CWPs was not exactly divisible by 3, Simple Random Sampling Procedure was adopted in addition to the systematic Random Sampling Procedure. Using simple random sampling procedure, every remaining CWP was written on a small separate piece of paper. Later on the pieces of paper were caste in a box. The box was shaken and a member of the team was asked to pick a piece of paper from the box.

In all, 32 Communal Water Points were selected for the Survey. And at each centre, 4 types of questionnaires were administered. There were separate questionnaires for Tap Committee Members, Water Consumers, Extension Workers and Local Leaders. At every (CWP) a maximum of 5 committee members were interviewed of which 3 were office bearers and 2 were ordinary committee members. In addition to this, 3 water consumers were also interviewed at each Communal Water Point. A maximum of 3 Extension Workers and 3 Local Leaders were also interviewed to verify their roles in the selection and running of the Tap Committees.

For the whole survey, a total of 117 Tap Committee Members, 96 Water Consumers, 12 Local Leaders and 12 Extension Workers were interviewed making a total 234 respondents.

The data that was collected by administering questionnaires to the interviewees was supplemented by observed data.

#### 1.4 Preparation for Survey

Preparation for the survey commenced after receiving an approval from the Controller of Water Services who spared his precious time to read the survey proposal.

The preparatory phase of the survey, as stated earlier on, involved personnel from the Ministry of Community Services and the Ministry of Health both based at Kasungu and the Water Department Headquarters. Preparatory work primarily included a review of the draft questionnaire developed from member from the Ministry of Community Services.

The review of the draft questionnaires was conducted in the Water Department Library at Tikwere House. Among the issues which debated, was the need to add some more valuable questions to the questionnaire so that enough and relevant information was obtained from the respondents.

With this awareness fully created in mind, the Review paid special attention to the questions which were designed to focus on Tap Committees unsustainability so that quality data was collected.

In order to have quality and relevant data collected questionnaires for Tap Committee Members, Water Consumers, Extension Workers and Local Leaders were designed. However, questions for these groups were in one way or another framed to throw some light on the factors behind the unsustainability of Tap Committees.

A questionnaire for Tap Committee Members was produced with various sub-headings to examine a number of factors such as the extent to which the community participated in the election of the existing Tap Committees and its performance.

The questionnaire also examined a number of other aspects of community organization such as behavioral problems, decision-making and co-operation among Tap Committee Members themselves.

The questionnaire for Water Consumer sought almost similar information to that of the Tap Committee questionnaire only that the questions were presented in a way in order to acquire some useful information which the Tap Committee Members could not disclose to the interviewers.

The questionnaires for Local Leaders and Extension Workers were designed to find out what external support the Tap Committees received from the C community if there was any.

The questionnaires also looked for information about prevalent problems confronting the Tap Committees which are referred to Extension Workers or Local Leaders.

### 1.5 Organization of Field Work

As was the case during the preparation period, field work also involved personnel from the Department of Water, Ministries of Health and Community Services. In all, the survey team comprised of six members and used one vehicle to travel from one centre to another. Three members of the team were from the Water Department (two of which were from Chancellor College student employees), two were from the Ministry of Community Services and one from the Ministry of Health.

In the field the survey team was split into three groups each composed of two members. In these groups one member was responsible for interviewing while the other one was responsible for recording the responses. Each group covered 4 CWPs at Balaka and Salima and 1 CWP at Monkey Bay and Mponela.

During the survey, there was constant reporting to the team leader on how the survey had been conducted at the end of each day. After reporting on how the survey had been conducted every group went through it completed questionnaires to check if there were any errors or omissions made. The Team spend a maximum of three days and a minimum of one day at each centre before it finally proceeded to the next centre.

At the end of the interview at each centre, general observations were presented to the team and then taken down by a secretary who was chosen every time these observations were being discussed.

Recording and summarizing of collected data was done at Madisi. One member of the team was chosen as the chairperson of the data recording exercise. The team worked from 7:30 am to 12 noon and from 1.30 to 4.30 pm during the first two days. In the last two days the team worked even during the evening due to pressure of work.

### 1.6 FIELD PROBLEMS

There were four main problems which the team encountered while conducting the survey, recording and analyzing the data. The problems were as follows:-

Firstly, people in some centers were not informed in advance of the survey team's coming to interview them. This hindered the progress of the survey since the target population was either not found or was hostile for being taken by surprise.

Secondly, transport hampered the progress of the whole exercise. The capacity of the vehicle was not enough to enable the six members of the survey team be transported at once to the next centre. For instance the vehicle had to transport four members of the team on the first trip from Monkey Bay to Salima and the remaining members had to be picked on the following day.

Thirdly, the team did not have enough data recording sheets such that a member of the team had to travel twice from Madisi to the Water Headquarters in Lilongwe to prepare and collect the sheets. This also hindered the progress of the exercise.

Lastly, time allocated for data entry and analysis was not enough. As a result of this the team had to work day and night at Madisi to cope up with the pressure of work. But this did not help since the team did not complete the whole exercise and had to do so later.

## II THE SURVEY FINDINGS

### II.1 Introduction

The information in this section is drawn from four types of questionnaires, namely questionnaires for Tap Committee Members, Water Consumers, Extension Workers and Local Leaders.

The information presented in this section is divided into four main categories. First is a sub-section encompassing questions aimed at examining how the Tap Committees are formed. The second sub-section embraces questions which assess the performance of the Tap Committee. The third sub-section contains questions which examine the Tap Committee structure while the fourth sub-section examines decision making in the Tap Committee. The last set embraces questions which deal with external support that Tap Committees receive.

These broad sub-sections will be used to present the findings. It is worthy pointing out that apart from the four types of questionnaires mentioned above, another information was obtained through observations which were taken down. This information will be used in the next section.

In this survey, 117 Tap Committee members, 96 Water Consumers and 12 local leaders were interviewed making a total population of 234.

#### 1. ELECTION OF TAP COMMITTEES

##### Conducting Tap Election

Since tap committees have been given powers to manage the Communal Water Points, the Project is then interested to see that committees responsible for Communal Water Points should be strong and reliable for effective operation and maintenance of the standposts.

The way tap committee members were elected to office was an indispensable factor in determining whether a Tap Committee would be sustainable or not.

According to the survey findings, 92.3% of the respondents reported that Tap Committee were elected by majority voting. This implied that water consumers were assembled at one place and elected people of their own choice. Although this was common in most of the Tap Committees, it was also found out that other committee members were appointed by Local Leaders (2.6%) and others still just volunteered to become committee members (2.6%) (see table below).

**TABLE 1: TAP COMMITTEE FORMATION**

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	%
By Majority Voting	108	92.3
Approved by Local Leaders	3	2.6
Volunteered	3	2.6
Water Monitoring Ass.	1	0.85
Don't Know	2	1.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Involvement in Tap Committee Elections**

Local Coordinating Teams were formed in 1988. These are centre teams comprising Health Assistant, Community Development Assistant and Water Monitoring Assistant.

Despite that the project encouraged an integrated (team) approach, Water Monitoring Assistant individually conducted most of the elections of Tap Committees.

A jointly approach (LCT) was not much used conducting elections. Only 6.7% of the respondents accepted to have seen the extension workers in a team (LCT) conducting the elections.

This may be due to the fact that some of the committees were elected even before the formation of Local Coordinating Teams in 1988.

Community Development Assistants and Health Assistants were only seen in 13.3% and 9.7% of the elections respectively.

**TABLE 2: INVOLVEMENT IN TAP COMMITTEE ELECTIONS**

	O	%
Local Leaders	25	12.8
C.D.A	26	13.3
W.M.A	98	50.3
H.A	19	9.7
L.C.T	13	6.7
Don't Know	8	4.1
Consumers only	6	3.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Role played by Leaders during Elections

Local leaders who are regarded as immediate bosses of people in the villages, did not play any role in most of the elections of tap committees.

The study team approached Ward Councillors, MCP Officials and Village Headmen with a view to find out what roles they played during elections of tap committees.

Seventy five percent of the leaders who were interviewed denied and said that they were not involved in the elections.

However in CWPs where Local Leaders were involved in conducting elections, most of them were involved in the supervision of the elections and advising on the quantities of a good leader. (See table below).

**TABLE 3: ROLES PLAYED BY LEADERS DURING ELECTIONS**

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	%
Conduct Elections	2	16.7
Advise on qualities of a good leaders	1	8.3
Not involved in elections	9	7.5
Total	12	10.0

### Leadership Qualities

The project developed some guidelines for election of tap committees which were intended for reference during elections. It was hoped that the guidelines would enable the elections come up with the required quality of personnel to work in the committees.

The study team discovered that most of the people who came for the elections were not instructed what to look for when electing tap committee members. In 55.8% of the cases, consumers were not instructed on what leadership qualities to look for.

However, some few water consumers mentioned that they knew some leadership qualities like good behaviour, being well to do understanding, hardworking and influential.

Those people who gave good behaviour and hardworking as good leadership qualities, explained that members who were

hardworking and at the same time of good behaviour, enable the committee to survive throughout its term of office. And those who mentioned 'well to do' as one of the good leadership quantities were not hesitant to point out that it was easy for a well to do person to replace tap funds if he/she embezzled the funds. (Refer table below).

**TABLE 4: LEADERSHIP QUALITIES**

	FREQUENCY	%
Good Behaviour	31	27.4
Co-operative and understanding	8	7.1
Hard working and dedicated	5	4.4
Influential and well -to -do	6	5.3
Not instructed	63	55.8
Total	113	100

It is therefore reasonable to conclude that the qualities of good leadership were not stated to the people since those who mentioned the few qualities above used common sense and had difficulties in coming up with these answers.

## 2. **PERFORMANCE OF TAP COMMITTEES**

The PSSC project structure is such that at centre level, there is the Centre Water Council which is a sub committee of the DDC, the District Working Group and then the Local Coordinating Team.

The three institutions are both responsible for supervision of the Tap Committees.

Tap Committees are directly responsible for managing the Communal Water Points and the effective operation and maintenance of the standposts therefore depends on the good performance of the Tap Committees.

### **Tap Committee Meetings**

During the Survey, Interviewers found out that most of the tap committees conducted meetings. 75.2% of the respondents mentioned that they do meet to discuss CWP issues. A failure was Only Noted in 23.1% of the cases.

Tap Committees are composed of 9 - 10 elected members. The study team interviewed office bearers to find out the rate of absenteeism during committee meetings.

It was found out that the majority of the tap committee members do turn up for committee meetings. This is because 33% of the cases indicated no absenteeism in the meetings. Very minimum absenteeism was noted in 21.4% of the cases while major problems of attendance were experienced only 10.7% and 4.5% of the cases respectively.

TABLE 5: MEMBERS WHO ATTENDED LAST MEETING

NUMBER OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS ATTENDED LAST MEETING	NO	%
1 - 4	12	10.7
5	5	4.5
6 - 8	24	21.4
9 - 10	37	33.0
Don't know	34	30.4
Total	112	100

Other Positions held by Tap Leaders

Recognised influential people in the communities were mostly given several positions. Apart from being members of the tap committees, others had positions in the party, the churches and the farmers clubs.

The survey noted that holding a number of positions does not have any effect on the performance of a member in the tap committee.

The majority of committee members (59%) had no any positions apart from being members of tap committees. 41% of the members were apart from being members of the tap committees also committed to party, church and farmers club activities.

Hence, most of the interviewees still accepted that they had drop outs in their committees. 61.7% of the respondents mentioned this.

**TABLE 6: OTHER POSITIONS HELD BY TAP COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

COMMITTEE	ABSOLUTE FREQUENCY	%
Party	32	27.4
Church	13	10.0
Farmer's club	3	2.6
None	69	59.0
Total	117	100

It was further noted that tap committee members who also held positions in other fields were also the most hardworking people in the Communal Water Points.

Reasons for Dropping Out of the Committees

There were a number of reasons behind Tap Committee members dropping out of the committees.

The majority of the people mentioned that tap committee members dropped out due to change of place of residence, insults and quarrels, lack of cooperation and embezzlement of funds.

In 32.9% of the cases it was reported that tap committee members dropped out of the committee because they were divorces and had gone home when others had followed husbands on transfer.

This was possible because Communal Water Points are located in semi-urban and urban areas fringes where the residents do not stay permanently. Most of them are either businessmen or working class.

11.2% of the respondents said that some tap committee members withdraw because of quarrels and insults. Whether these were quarrels between office bearers or between ordinary consumers and tap committee members, it was not specified.

In 10.5% of the cases, members dropped out due to lack of cooperation. Office bearers in the committees did not cooperate in doing things.

Eight point four percent of the interviews mentioned that other members dropped out because they had eaten CWP funds or because they were being suspended to have embezzled CWP funds.

Besides the above reasons, there were other reasons such as some people had asked for private connections; others were suspended from the water points as they had failed to pay their monthly contributions; others still saw that there were no incentives offered for being members of Tap committees and a small number of female committee members had been discouraged by their husbands from participating in CWP committees. (See table below).

**TABLE 7: REASONS WHY SOME TAP COMMITTEE MEMBERS DROP OUT**

REASONS	FREQUENCY	%
Change of place of residence	47	32.9
Insults / Quarrels	16	11.2
Suspended due to embezzlement of funds	12	8.4
Have now private connections	6	4.2
Not co-operative	15	10.5
Free water nearby	8	5.6
Lack of money	5	3.5
Lack of incentives	4	2.8
Passed away	4	2.8
Discourage by husband	6	4.2
Other*	14	9.8
Don't know	6	4.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>100.1</b>

\*Other includes overuse of powers, fear each other, occupied with business, sickness, mobile, forward to tack positions and does not apply.

### **Extension Support**

Local Coordinating Team being integrated team that coordinates the operation of Piped Supplies for Small Communities project at local level, its members have/had been empowered to render extension services to the Communal Water Points.

The study team noted that tap committees received adequate extension services from the LCT members.

The provision of the extension services to the tap committee differed from one centre to another centre. This is evident since 45.5% of the extension workers made contacts with tap committees fortnightly while 18.2% visited Tap Committees monthly as indicated in the table below.

**TABLE 8: FREQUENCY OF LCT MEETING WITH TAP COMMITTEES**

RESPONSE	NO	%
Fortnightly	5	45.5
Monthly	2	18.2
Every two months	1	9.
Whenever there is a problem	1	9.2
Never conduct meetings	2	18.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Though there was adequate visits by extension workers in most of the centres, it was sad to note that some few extension workers 18.2% do not conduct meetings in the Communal Water Points.

There is need to encourage all the extension workers to make frequent visits to the Communal Water Points since such visits enhances hardworking and proper care of the standposts.

Females of age group between 25 - 35 seconded by females of age group between 36 years of age ad above constituted hardworking committee members.

Females used water frequently in their every day activities such as washing utensils, clothes and for bathing. As such water to them was indispensable us no wonder they formed the most hardworking members in the Tap Committees.

House wives especially of age group of 25 and above were the most stable members since most of the were married having a number of children. And such these people do not make unnecessary movements. (See table below).

**TABLE 9: TABLE GROUP BY AGE AND SEX**

AGE	MALE		FEMALE	
	NO.	AS % OF ALL	NO.	AS % OF ALL
15 - 24	-	-	1	9
25 - 35	-	-	6	54.5
36+	-	-	4	36.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### Functions of Tap Committee

Tap Committees had a number of functions. According to the survey findings, the functions of Tap Committees included: supervision of the cleaning of Tap surrounding settling quarrels on the CWP; giving feedback information on monthly contributions and issues discussed by the committee; repairing of taps and reporting faults to the Water Department.

The majority of the people, during the survey, mentioned supervision of the cleaning of tap surroundings, and settling of quarrels on the taps with 37% and 17% of the responses respectively as the functions of their Tap Committees. (See table below).

**TABLE 10: FUNCTIONS OF TAP COMMITTEE**

<u>RESPONSE</u>	<u>NO.</u>	<u>%</u>
(a) Collect and remit monthly contributions	13	9.6
(b) Settle quarrels	23	17
(c) Ensure Communal Water Point surrounding clean	50	37
(d) Give feedback information	4	3
(e) Water control	5	3.7
(f) Repairs	5	3.7
(g) Report faults to Water Department	5	3.7
(h) Committee not functioning	<u>30</u>	<u>22.3</u>
Total	135	100
	=====	=====

However a good number of people (22%) expressed that their Tap Committees were not functioning. These people knew that their Tap Committees were not functioning due to the following reasons:

- they were not being given any feedback information on monthly contributions collected and the water bills;
- their tap premises were not kept clean;
- it took along time before the tap was repaired and that quarrels at the taps were left unsettled. This indicated that some few Tap Committees were not working.

### Time when Tap Committees Members drop out

Most of the committees were stable for thirist 12 months. During the survey the majority of the respondents (41.7%) reported that most elected committee members apparently relaxed after serving in the committees for two years. This was like that because the term of office for tap committees was unlimited. These committee members could not be active throughout. Thirty three point three percent (33.3%) and 25% reported that Tap Committee members dropped out after serving for one year and 6 months respectively. (See table below).

TABLE 11: ELECTED MEMBERS RELAX AND DROPOUT

	NO	%
After 3 months	-	-
After 6 months	3	25.0
After a year	4	33.3
After 2 years	5	41.7
After 3 years	-	-

Therefore as shown by the survey results above there is need to set or lessen the life to lessen problem of unsustainability of tap committees.

### 3. COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

Members of the study team suspected that the structure of the tap committees would be one of the possible contributory causes of poor performance of tap committees and high drop out of committee members. Special attention and examination of Tap Committees.

#### Sex with higher number of dropout

Though most tap committees were composed of both make and female members. Others were composed of females only. In water points where committees were of both sexes, females out numbered male members.

It was also found out during the survey that unsupported centres registered a higher number dropouts than unsupported centres. For instance Balaka which was one of the unsupported centres had the highest number of drop outs (66.7%) whereas supported centres like Mponela and Monkey Bay had drop outs ranging from 0 - 10% and 0 - 60% respectively.

The number of committee members dropping out was higher in the unsupported centres than in supported centres because of

the following reasons. There were no Local Coordinating Teams to organise CWP activities. Support which extension workers rendered to the Tap Committees was very minimal. Extension workers visited the Tap Committees in these centres rarely and no meetings were held whereby extension workers would help Tap Leaders in their everyday organisational and operational problems. The only extension worker who visited Tap Committees once or twice a month was the Plant Operator who went in CWPs to read meters and remind them about payments of monthly bills.

In most of the Tap Committees male members dropped out more than the female members. The study showed that 42% of the male members had dropped out of the committee at the time of the survey while only 25% of the female members had done so.

TABLE 12: SHOWING AN EXAMPLE OF DROP OUTS IN COMMITTEE

<u>ORIGINAL ELECTED NO.</u>		<u>TOTAL PRESENT NO.</u>		<u>TOTAL DROP OUTS</u>			
M	F	M	F	M	F		
				No.	%	No.	%
33	256	20	178	14	42	59	25

There was a higher number of male members who had dropped out of the Tap Committees because most males looked at the management and operation of CWP activities as a job belonging to females.

#### Handling of CWP Funds

In most of the tap committees there was a tendency for tap committee members to overlap their roles. This was so due to selfishness among committee members and also due to the fact that other key members have taken keen interest in handling CWP funds which is the responsibility of the Treasurers.

During the survey it was evident, for example, that the role of the treasurer shared among three key leaders. In 33.3% and 23.8% of the cases it was ascertained that funds were handled by the secretary and chairperson respectively. While in 29.5% of the cases only, it was reported that the treasurer handled funds.

**TABLE 13: HANDLING OF CWP FUNDS**

<u>NO.</u>	<u>%</u>	
25	23.8	Chairperson
1	1	Vice Chairperson
35	33.3	Secretary
2	1.9	Vice Secretary
31	29.5	Treasurer
2	1.9	Committee Members
5	4.8	Key Keeper
4	3.8	Don't Know
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>100</b>

Overlapping of roles caused sustainability of Tap Committees because this frequently caused conflicts among committee members. Since some committee members saw to it that their roles were being played by others they felt they had no role to play in the committee, as a result they stopped working for the committee.

Among the positions with tightest number of drop outs (47%) was treasurer. This was like that, as it has already been explained, because most of the treasurers were suspect due to embezzlement of funds. Furthermore other treasurers were not happen when they were being suspected that they embezzle funds. In order to avoid such suspicious and at the same time quarrels, such people decided to stop working for the committees.

Ordinary committee member was another position with a high number of drop outs. Ordinary committee member were not assigned with specific roles in the running of Communal Water Point activities and they felt as being in the outer circle of the commit itself. As a result of this these people were discouraged to participate fully in Tap Committees. Other key leaders like the chairperson and secretary withdrew from the committees mostly after they had embezzled Communal Water Points funds.

**TABLE 14: POSITION WITH THE HIGHEST DROP OUT RATE**

<u>RESPONSE</u>	<u>%</u>
Treasurer	47
Ordinary Committee Member	35.3
Chairperson	11.8
Secretary	5.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

4. **DECISION MAKING IN THE WATER POINTS**

Decisions concerning the organisation, management and operation of Tap activities were made at various levels and the way they were made affected the cohesion of Tap Committee members.

**Settling of problems**

However during the survey it was found out that decision making was not the cause of misunderstandings among Tap Committee members. The majority of the committee members (69%) confirmed that problems in the Communal Water Point were solved unanimously and that the chairperson's decision (16.8%) also played a major role in the settling of problems this was in line with the recommendations contained in "Committee Procedure" where it is laid down that problems should be showed unanimously and that urgent issues should be handled by the chairperson.

**TABLE 15: SETTling OF COMMUNAL WATER POINTS PROBLEMS**

<b><u>RESPONSE</u></b>	<b><u>%</u></b>
Unanimously solved	69
Chairperson decision	16.8
Secretary's decision	5.3
Other1	8.9
TOTAL	100

Other1 includes no decisions, meeting ends in suspense Not Applicable.

**Referral system for conflicts**

In most water points cases were reported only to extension workers had its root cause aminating form the election of tap committees which were in most cases conducted by extension workers without involving Local Leaders.

The study revealed that the majority of Tap Committees (38%) referred their problems to Water Monitoring Assistants and that only a smaller number of the committees (27.4%) referred their problems to Local Leaders. It is important that local problems beyond the ability of the Tap Committees be first referred to Local Leaders.

**TABLE 16: REFERRAL SYSTEM FOR CONFLICTS**

<u>RESPONSE</u>	<u>NO.</u>	<u>%</u>
Local leader	34	27.4
W.M.A.	47	38.0
C.D.A.	4	3.2
H.A.	3	2.4
Higher Executive Committee	9	7.3
Not referred to anybody	25	20.0
Other	2	1.6
TOTAL	124	100

The involvement of Local Leaders in the election of tap committee members and subsequently in the running and management of CWP activities would be an answer to establishing good referral relationship between Tap Committees and Local Leaders.

Although tap committees were given little support by local leaders they were being given adequate support by extension workers. Field workers from the Ministries of Health, Community Services and the Water Department paid visits to tap committees in order to assist them.

#### Replacement of Office-bearers

Replacement of Office-bearers in the tap committees had been effected through nomination.

During the survey it was ascertained that bearers were carried out through nomination i.e. the committees sat down and decided to choose people of their factor to committees being unsustainable.

It was also noted in 20% of the cases that Water Monitoring Assistants, alone nominated and replaced office bearers. This again was contrary to project guidelines which stress in the elections.

It would have been important if LCT members and Local Leaders jointly conducted tap elections. However this was the case in 5% of the respondents who said that LCT members jointly conducted the elections and also only in 10% of the respondents who reported that Local Leaders were involved in the elections (See Table below).

**TABLE 17: REPLACEMENT OF OFFICE BEARERS**

<u>RESPONSE</u>	<u>NO.</u>	<u>%</u>
Consumers	3	15
Tap Committees	6	30
W.M.A.	4	20
L.C.T.	1	5
Local Leader	2	10
Don't Know	4	20
TOTAL	20	100

**Tap Committee Support**

The major source of support for tap committees was Extension Workers. The study team asked Tap Committees to explain if they had any other source of support apart from that of Government extension workers.

The Majority of the tap committees 79.0% denied and said that they do not have any other source of support apart from that of extension workers very few tap committees (16.9%) accepted to have noted the support of Local Leaders at times. Well to do people also gave a hand especially when committees required financial support. About 0.8% of the interviewees mentioned this.

Tap Committees are supposed to get immediate support from Local Leaders. It must always be remembered that Local Leaders (the village headmen, ward councillors, political leaders etc) were/are the only individuals who are regarded as seniors in the communities.

**TABLE 18: OTHER SOURCES OF SUPPORT FOR TAP COMMITTEES, APART FROM EXTENSION WORKERS**

	<u>NO.</u>	<u>%</u>
Local Leaders	21	16.9
Well to do people	1	0.8
None	98	79.0
Don't know	3	2.4
Other <sup>1</sup>	1	0.8
TOTAL	124	100

The Tap Committees were not being supported by Local Leaders possibly because leaders were in the first place not very much involved in the elections of tap committees.

Tap Committee meetings were also conducted without the knowledge of Local Leaders. 83.3% of the Local Leaders who were interviewed said that they were not invited to attend Tap Committee meetings. Only 16.7% of them remember to have been invited to attend Communal Water Point committee meetings at one time or another.

## 5. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Apart from the information that was collected by using questionnaires during the survey, general observations were also made by the members of each group and were taken down. In some cases an impromptu interview with Tap Committee members, water consumers, extension workers and local leaders was carried out. The members of each group also took down what they observed with their own eyes. The observations made were as follows:

- Firstly, during the survey it was noted that Water Monitoring Assistants do not have up-to-date records on the total number of people drinking from communal water points and also the total number of people drinking from other sources.
- Secondly, it was observed that despite the training offered to Local Co-ordinating Team (LCT), members still overlap in their roles even when the required person to rightly deal with the existing problem is available and this complicates matters. Thus there is no demarcation of what particular duties each member of the Local Co-ordinating Team is supposed to play. All the same in the absence of one department's representative, the other members can execute their duties.
- Thirdly, it was noted that embezzlement of funds by individual Tap Committee members is one of the major contributing factors to the unsustainability of Tap Committees. The other Tap Committees members become discouraged when an individual tap committee member embezzles the funds they eventually withdraw from the Tap Committee and leave the member who misappropriating the funds to run the Tap Committee alone. This is so because the accounting of CWP funds is left largely in the hands of few Tap Committee members as a result of this the funds are prone to embezzlement.

- Fourthly, it was noted that there is under utilisation influential leaders staying in proximity to Communal Water Points who can be consulted to render some assistance. For instance in Monkey-Bay the District Youth Chairman is staying close to Communal Water Points but does not take any part in the running of CWPs.
  
- Lastly, in line with the points outlined above, it was also noted that there are faulty procedures that are used to replace the drop out committee members and that the water consumers are not introduced to the new committee members. In some cases either the chairperson and secretary or a few office bearers select people of their own choice to replace the members who have dropped out.

Therefore the above outlined problems, as it can be noted, likely contribute to the ever increasing number of Tap Committee members being discouraged or stopped for working for Tap Committees.

## SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

### INTRODUCTION

This section presents the summary of survey findings.

It should be pointed out that the summary of the findings will feature areas which have really been observed to be so conducive to unsustainability of tap committees.

### SUMMARY

#### Problems affecting sustainability of the Tap Committees

1. Dropping out of Tap Committee members due to:-

- (a) Change of place of residence. Communal water points were located in peri-urban and semi-urban areas where most of the residents were either working class or businessmen.

Workers were posted anywhere at anytime while businessmen travelled from place to place. These movements made them stop working for the committees.

- (b) Quarrels among committee members themselves were also responsible for discouraging tap committee members from working for the committees.

- (c) Embezzlement of CWP funds also caused some individuals to be suspended from the committees. Others dropped out because they were being suspected that they had embezzled public funds.

- (d) Some of the committee members were very uncooperative. They even failed to cooperate on issues agreed upon during committee meetings. These compromising members (chairman, secretaries and treasurers) to stop working for the committees because the key leaders felt there were not being respected.

2. Lack of guidance in selection of Tap Committees

Before and during the elections water consumers were not instructed on good leadership qualities to look for when electing tap committees.

Leaders were also neither invited to assist in conducting the elections nor asked to say something about the people they are staying with.

As a result of this, Tap Committee members elected did not

posses the desirable leadership qualities required.

It should not be forgotten that local leaders are knowledgeable. They know people who are unco-operative in their areas. They have people in mind who at one time or another misappropriated public funds.

3. **Re-election of Office Bearers**

As found out by the survey, re-election of office bearers was largely done by tap committee members and Water Monitoring Assistants through nomination. In most cases consumers did not take part in the re-elections of office bearers. Committee members elected in this way did not have the approval and support of water consumers and this served to ignite quarrels between tap committee members and water consumers and hence in the long run contributed to the disintegration of the tap committees.

4. **Sex with a higher tendency to drop out**

Male committee members had a higher tendency of dropping out of the tap committee as compared to female committee members. This was so because men felt that the running of CWP was a job for females.

5. **Relaxation**

The study team discovered that most of the tap committees were stable during the first 20 months and that most of the members apparently relaxed after serving in the committees for two years.

This was like that because the Term of Office for tap committees was un limited. This relaxation made most of the committees unsustainable.

6. **Overlapping of roles caused misunderstandings amongst committees members. Key members in the committees like chairman and secretaries very much liked the duties of treasurers.**

Contributions (money) in most of the CWPs were being kept by chairman and secretaries. This caused most of the treasurers to withdraw from the committees.

7. **Referral system for conflicts**

The system of referral which was being followed in the communal water points has also conducive to the unsustainability of the committees.

Village Headmen and Party Leaders in the local communities were/are responsible for settling disputes (conflicts). They found it very embarrassing to see that conflicts were being referred to Government Extension workers.

No wonder tap committee members told interviewers that they mostly got support from extension workers.

This problem originated right from the time committees were being elected.

Local Leaders were not invited to assist in conducting the elections. May be that is why they feel the project is a non concern for local leaders.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

After the analysis of the data and identification of the problem areas, the following are the recommendations:-

1. Permanent and dedicated residents within the surrounding of CWP be elected. This will ensure that Tap Committee members mark for the whole of its life span thereby acquired from seminars useful and productive.
2. Local Leaders should be involved in conducting tap elections, supervision of the operation of CWP also in solving conflicts when they arise in the standposts.
3. Water consumers should be instructed on the good leadership qualities to look for before electing committee members so that suitable people should be chosen.
4. The right procedures should be followed to replace the dropout committee members and that the new office bearers should be introduced to the water consumers.
5. An accounting system should be devised and placed into effect to ensure proper management of funds and eradicate

embezzlement. Local and affordable receipts preferably made from an exercise book and local stamp be used WMA should stamp receipts.

6. In order to ensure that more men are encouraged to take positions in tap committees, guidelines should be used during elections whereby it is recommended that 40% should be men and 60% women.
7. The lifespan of the tap committee should be reduced to 2 years so that new members are elected to replace the outgoing tap committee members before they are tired and start to relax.
8. A well-defined system of referral should be devised so that tap committees members know where to refer problems they have failed to solve. There is need for Local Leaders to play a significant part in assisting tap committees preferably form part of the referral system.
9. Tap Committees should conduct meetings regularly in order to discuss and solve problems which arise in the Communal Water Points.
10. All Local Co-ordinating Team members should be available when Tap Committee elections are conducted.
11. Tap Committees should be visited frequently by LCT members in order to help them in organizational, financial and mechanical problems.