

KWALE WATER AND SANITATION PROJECT



ONCE A SUCCESS, NOW A FAILURE

KIGOMBERO WATER POINT - KIKONENI LOCATION

A CASE STUDY:

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AKNOWLEDGMENT

Thanks are due to the Secretary who devoted her time to ensure the typing of this case in time.

Special thanks goes to the community who gave this information which led to the compilation of this case.

IDENTIFICATION:

A case study of a water point formerly a success but now a failure because it went dry.

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TYPE OF CASE: Learning and Discussion

SOURCE OF INFORMATION

The information content in this case was collected from the community by:-

- * Interviews with committees and community.
- * Discussion with the local resource people i.e. village chairman, Kanu Chairman and religious leaders.
- * Some information was collected from the Office file.

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THE CASE:

Kigombero water point is situated at Kigombero village in Kikoneni location. It is within a market centre for the village. It is about 7km from Ramisi sugar factory.

The borehole is among the first boreholes to be drilled by the project. It was completed on 10.9.84. The borehole is one of the deepest borehole the project has ever drilled. It has a depth of 53 m. Water rest level was at 45 m and struck level was 52m.

When it was completed, people at Kigombero were very happy. Water was now available and close to them. The long distance used to be covered in search of water was considerably reduced. To ensure the proper management of the water point, the community formed a committee to be responsible for daily running of the water point. This composed of men and women. The committee's role was to monitor the progress of the water point in terms of cash contribution, cleaning of the water point site, convene meeting to discuss water related issues. The water point was functioning and used as intended. The beneficiaries used the time saved to work at their shambas, others concentrated on small scale business to earn a living. It was a new turn of life for the people in the village and their standard of living had been lifted.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE:

The availability of water close to people was not enough for Kigombero people. The community organised themselves to raise money for operation and maintenance. It is a project policy to ensure funds are raised for the future maintenance of the facility. The money is usually used to buy spares when the handpump is commissioned to the community.

In some other community projects, failures are common both in the project which leave, maintenance to the community. Some projects take up the responsibility for maintenance while the community is not permitted to take up any role beyond reporting a fault. In the first case the basic reason for failure appears generally to be that the community is given insufficient (if any) support in the organization of a system of maintenance. In the second case, there is lack of regular servicing by the caretakers. Sometimes there is bureaucratic delays in the response to reports by communities of faults and of insufficient concern at high levels to provide adequate resources. This includes transport for maintenance because of the greater Public attention paid to new schemes. This project has managed to cope with this type of problems. KWASP has developed a maintenance system which has worked very well. The project has a programme of training community volunteers on how to operate and maintain their handpumps. The training is done free of charge. Kigombero water point is among the project handpumps which benefited from this training.

In this particular water point three pump caretakers were selected and trained on how to repair a broken down pump. When this training is finished and trainees qualified the project starts processes of commissioning the project to the community.

Contribution on operation and maintenance funds is decided by the beneficiaries. They have to set and decide how much each household will contribute either weekly or monthly. At first the community agreed to contribute fifty cents =/ 50 per week. They changed this to one shillings per week and later five shillings per month.

Gender Issues and Women Involvement:

The involvement of women in this water point was very high when the borehole was still functioning. However after sometime, men became interested in leadership. Noticing this, women decided to stay aside and leave them to manage the water point. Men's leadership did not last long as there was mistrust among themselves. The biggest problem men were facing was how to approach women especially during payment on operation and maintenance funds. Men found it difficult to pursue women members to pay for maintenance funds. The other problem is that committee led by men was not trusted enough. Men were accused of misusing funds by community. As a result, contribution on operation and maintenance decreased. Borehole site was dirty as nobody bothered to clean it. As one woman puts it, "Men were only interested in the money but not leadership "We left everything to them and now they are coming back to us again" As the village chairman puts it, "we decided to leave all activities concerning water to women. How can a man supervise his wife at the kitchen to ensure food is cooked properly: I was not in favour of the committee lead by men."

The project takes women involvement in both water and sanitation development as crucial issue. Although KWSP has no policy regarding women - in - development, (WID issues,) the project is trying to encourage women to participate in decision making levels at community development projects especially in rural areas. Any rural community project which ignores the involvement of women in planning decision making, implementation and commissioning is bound to fail or will have a short life span.

Cost of the scheme (borehole)

The cost of the borehole from drilling, casing installation and pump equipment was broken down as follows:-

- * B/hole depth - 53m
- * Cost of drilling one metre is = Kshs. 1000.00
- * Cost of a pump casing and installation 15,000 00
- * Hence :- 53 m X 1000 - Kshs 53,000.00
- * Cost of a pump and installation - Kshs. 15,000 00

Total	Kshs. 68,000 00
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The cost of this water point is therefore Kshs 68,000 00 excluding the following:-

- * Salaries and wages for the staff.
- * Cost of labour provided by the community.
- * Cost of transport for delivering materials to site.
- * 10% overhead of the total cost

The Collapse of the Boreholes*

After three years of drinking clean and safe water the Kigombero people were hit by a calamity. The calamity was that their borehole got dry. A thing which the community did not expect for a long time. However, people did not lose hope because they were optimistic that the borehole would be repaired by the project. This is so because the borehole had earlier been repaired by the project staff whenever there is a breakdown. Communities' expectations were not met. People waited for so long until they lost hope. The borehole is now dry completely. There are no committee members. The borehole site is very bushy. It is even difficult now to know if there was a borehole as the place is completely covered with long grass.

The community is now in a dilemma not knowing what to do. This is a situation where communities' wishes and aspirations were not met. The former beneficiaries are now in a difficult situation as they went back to their former sources of water. This has really demoralised the community. The community is now planning to make a follow-up to the project and find out what is happening to their water point. However, there seemed to be a problem as to who will make that follow-up. Some men are of the view that an ad-hoc committee comprising of women should be formed to follow-up that issue. This suggestion came because men felt women can be listened to easily than men in water issues. The community is now suggesting to be given another borehole because it is not their fault. From this case one can learn that failures don't only come due to poor planning, non-involvement of communities in all stages or the conceptual gap between people and planners but failures can be due to externalities. Natural bottlenecks can make a project collapse.

This is exactly what happened to Kigombero water point. No one is to blame for its failure. When projects fail like this, it is very hard to have the responsibility to find out what are other alternative methods to be used to help the community. By this I don't mean the project to select or change the technology but to try and drill a replacement borehole for the community. When this replacement takes long communities will lose interest especially during operation and maintenance and during contributing money for maintenance.

Although the project is currently faced with a high demand of requests by other communities in other areas of the district there is great need to look back, weigh and measure our performance to see where and what went wrong. Although it is not the project's objectives to serve all the people in Kwale, nevertheless, this group is already organised and implementation of another borehole will not cost the project many resources.

Recommendations:

1. Since the project put a lot of effort and resources to ensure the borehole is serving the community there is need for the project to re-schedule its activities and plan of operation to drill a replacement borehole for this people.
2. People have stayed long now since their borehole got dry. It is therefore recommended that a meeting be held with the community so that they can be told what is the project's stand regarding their dried water point. The meeting should be organised by the project's community section plus the ground staff in the field notably the area PHT and CDA.
3. The community also needs to be advised not to misuse their operation and maintenance funds until a decision is made on the replacement programme.

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