



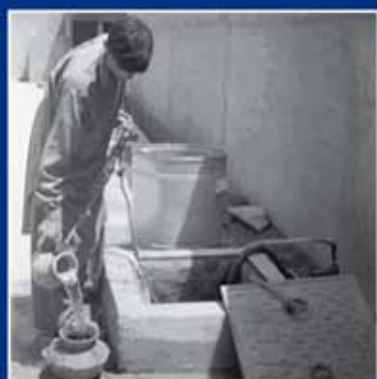
## Lessons from DFID water and sanitation programmes in Pakistan:

*Developing programmes with local government and civil society*

### Introduction and scope

This is one of a series of briefing notes that summarize lessons from DFID drinking water and sanitation (WatSan) programmes in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan. The DFID document 'Water and Sanitation in Asia' (2005) highlighted the need for regional lesson learning from DFID-supported WatSan projects, focusing particularly on governance issues. This is also the aim of this series of briefing notes, including the highlighting of innovative approaches of wider interest to DFID, its partners and other professionals in the sector.

The topics covered include an overview of the process of devolution in Pakistan with the introduction of the Local Government Ordinance (LGO) in 2001, outlining the evolving nature of DFID engagement with and support to Pakistan's development of the WatSan sector through a variety of projects. Emerging lessons are drawn to inform the development of future water and sanitation programmes in Pakistan and other low-income countries.



### Headline lessons from Pakistan

- *Supporting devolution* in Pakistan is ongoing and much remains to be done in making it effective. Key stakeholders see it as a positive process for improving accountability and services. WatSan is a priority sector.
- *DFID Pakistan's policy analysis* of the changing governance environment has informed effective changes to the focus of its programmes.
- *Strategic planning*, as part of local government reforms, should include:
  - developing a vision for municipalities;
  - long and short term aims with adequate budget provision;
  - internal and external communication to support planning and co-ordination; and
  - explicit consideration of sustainable maintenance of facilities.
- *Working with reforming municipalities* who are already undertaking effective reforms is an effective reform strategy. This can lead to good progress in pilot municipalities, which can have a good demonstration effect for other municipalities in the project that are contemplating reforms.
- *Linking practice with policy* is effective when making the case for change. Basing policy advocacy on community level project experience enables project partners to combine 'the grass roots' experience with high-level policy analysis.
- *Combining infrastructure provision with developing institutions* has good prospects of achieving more sustainable WatSan services. For example, the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) Rural Water and Sanitation Project (RWSSP) seeks to develop the capacities of local government organizations, as well as to provide demand responsive WatSan infrastructure.
- *The component sharing approach* to sanitation infrastructure is preferable to a cost sharing approach as it enables communities to develop a clear sense of ownership and allows them to proceed with their component of a project with much less bureaucratic interference or delays.



## The Challenges facing Pakistan

Pakistan faces some complex development challenges, with almost 70% of its poor being rural dwellers, dependent on agriculture. In spite of recent improvements in economic management and growth and some progress on poverty reduction initiatives, per capita income is still around US\$750.

The progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) targets has been modest. The percentage of the population with access to an improved water source rose from 55 to 65% from 1990 to 2005. The equivalent figures for access to improved sanitation increased from 25 to 35% and many of the MDGs might not be met by 2015 if progress continues at the current rate. High population growth, increasing at 2.6% per annum coupled with the presence of nearly 10 million refugees, mostly from Afghanistan, increased the number of people from 108 to 145 million people from 1990 to 2005. This high population rise undermines the effects of economic gains and reduces the impact of poverty reduction programmes.

The principles of economic growth and macroeconomic reforms have been prioritized by the Government of Pakistan (GoP) as the solution to widespread poverty, although any benefits from these measures so far have been unevenly distributed.

### **Devolution and water and sanitation**

Central to these reforms was the decision by the GoP to introduce a system of devolved government in August 2001, involving a range of large-scale administrative and political reforms, such as devolving WatSan services to Tehsil/Town Municipal Administrations (TMAs), or Water and Sanitation Agencies (WASAs) in larger cities. A merging of rural and urban services into the same delivery structure has occurred.

Prior to this, responsibility for the development and maintenance of WatSan took a predominantly top-down approach, lacking significant community participation. While bold steps have been taken in devolving powers to TMAs, concerns remain about the level of performance, and the lack of accountability and transparency. Considerable efforts are required to address both the incentives and capacity to fully implement the newly devolved system under LGO 2001.

### **Pakistan's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper**

The idea that good governance is linked with poverty reduction is inherent in the technical and political objectives of devolution. Pakistan's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP 2003) sets out its development priorities and approach to poverty reduction, based on this principle. The PRSP is centred on four key elements:

1. Accelerating economic growth by focusing on sectors that generate employment, while maintaining macroeconomic stability through private sector development, investment policy and deregulation.
2. Improving devolution and governance by administrative decentralization and better access to justice and a broad package of civil society measures.
3. Investing in human capital through access to education, health care, and safe WatSan services.
4. Targeting vulnerable groups through poverty reducing policy interventions, social safety nets and financial assistance.

DFID and other donors have played an important role in discussions with government concerning the support of partnerships with non-state providers (civil society and not-for-profit organizations) to reduce poverty. The GoP has promoted various forms of citizen oversight and community participation. Most significant of these are the Citizen Community Boards (CCBs), which have been created in every district. CCBs can develop their own projects and claim up to 25% support from local government (LGO, 2001).

## DFID's Engagement with Development in Pakistan

DFID (formally ODA)'s support for Pakistan began following independence. Funding has increased substantially to £75 million in 2005/06. The portfolio combines technical assistance with poverty reduction budget support instruments, to allow government to allocate more resources to social sectors and to strengthen its budgeting & planning.

### **Country Assistance Plan**

DFID's Country Assistance Plan (CAP) (Feb 2005) provides support for implementation of Pakistan's PRSP policies and programmes through three strategic outcomes:

1. Increased incomes for the poor, supported by safety nets;
2. Improved delivery of social services to the poor, within a devolved government;
3. Greater accountability of the state to its citizens, with participation by the poor, especially women, in decision-making at all levels of devolved government.

### **DFID's engagement with the water and sanitation sector**

To achieve its broader aims of poverty reduction, DFID-Pakistan has adopted a twin-track approach of working both with local government and supporting civil society institutions. This is evident from the current portfolio of DFID projects that have WatSan components. DFID is currently working with civil society through the Rural Support Programme Network (RSPN) and the Devolution Trust for Community Empowerment (DTCE). The RSPN has also supported government reforms, particularly in relation to community participation.

Over the years the design of DFID's government support projects has evolved from infrastructure focused projects to participatory process programmes such as the Faisalabad Area Upgrading Project (FAUP). More recently, a new generation of DFID projects focus much more on governance issues. An example is the new DFID Faisalabad Devolution Project and the NWFP Rural Water & Sanitation Project, which have a clear governance emphasis together with the provision of services.

DFID is also putting significant inputs into emergency water and sanitation, in response to the October 2005 earthquake.

## A Process-Based Approach: The Faisalabad Area Upgrading Project (FAUP)

The FAUP was an innovative project that commenced in 1994 to develop a participatory 'process'-based approach to service provision in poor urban areas in Faisalabad, in order to improve the quality of life of those living there and to encourage community participation and self reliance. It was designed around two main components:

- (i) to improve the community level infrastructure and income earning opportunities in slums and Katchi Abadis;
- (ii) to improve city wide infrastructure by increasing water supply by 100% and by improving drainage. Costs for local improvements were to be divided equally between donor funds and the community's contribution.

There was initial reluctance to accept the participatory process approach, but satisfactory progress was achieved after 1996. In 2000, the project shifted in line with DFID's policy of extending support to the GoP's devolution programme. Part of this was an initiative to mobilize and capacity build Citizen Community Boards (CCBs) all over Faisalabad, which had a mandate for direct involvement in project planning.

In 2001, an Area Development or 'Package' model was adopted, where upgrading of whole areas took place, covering water, sanitation, paving and roads for those communities who were willing to make upfront contributions to the entire package, at a much reduced community contribution rate. It is interesting to compare this cost sharing approach with the 'component sharing' model of the OPP that is briefly described in Box 1.

The package model had to be completed within 18 months, but FAUP still achieved 100% coverage of secondary water supply and completed 100% secondary and tertiary sewerage systems and household level connections in all four project areas. However, the programme's speed and scale resulted in some sub-standard work, with more affluent households assuming leadership roles as they had the necessary funds to contribute more readily than others.

### Project achievements

Good coverage of WatSan services was achieved in the four project areas. In spite of its problems, FAUP has informed the development of a replicable model for urban upgrading with community participation in low-income areas, including factors such as: how the public sector can be involved; effective involvement of communities and women; effective formation of CCBs; and linkages between district governments and communities. The project made positive changes to the lives of beneficiaries, especially women and the poor, who became involved in planning and implementation. It showed that the public sector can deliver results, given the right incentives and environment.

It is acknowledged that this project did not sufficiently address governance issues that were exacerbated by rapid staff turnover. These lessons have been incorporated into subsequent DFID-supported programmes.



## Faisalabad Devolution Project

In 2004, DFID commenced the Faisalabad Devolution Project with local government partners in Faisalabad district (population 5 million). It is a multi-sectoral governance project with a WatSan component that has the following purpose:

*Efficient, effective, democratic and transparent local government which is responsive to the needs of local communities and priorities of poor people and which can be replicated elsewhere in the province, in place in Faisalabad.*

The key project outputs are:

1. Transparent, accountable & sustainable planning, budgeting, management and revenue generation systems.
2. The enhancement of the capacity of councillors and local government staff to work effectively and in a participatory way with communities.
3. District Government use of better systems and ways of working to improve access and quality of school education.
4. TMAs' (municipalities') use of improved systems and ways of working to enhance access to and quality of WatSan services.
5. Communities empowered to voice their priorities to union councils, and to participate in planning, implementation and monitoring of local government programmes.
6. Effective monitoring, impact assessment system and communications strategy so that lessons are learnt, acted on and disseminated within and outside Punjab.
7. The Strategic Policy Unit (SPU) strengthened to play a key policy and co-ordinating role in the district.

### Implementation strategies

The Faisalabad Strategic Policy Unit (SPU) developed a five year Strategic Operational Plan in 2004 for the district, which recognized the lack of specialized skills. It is committed to providing quality services through integrated, sustainable development, and through partnerships between public, private and government organizations.

The SPU identified the need for training and capacity building for effective planning. In response to this, a series of courses for Tehsil Municipal Officers has been provided.

A change management plan for the water sector is being developed by the SPU with the support of GHK consultants. The plan includes the financial and operating plans, with performance measurement, MIS systems and capacity building.

The initial focus of the programme is on two tehsil municipalities in the district including Jaranwala, which had already demonstrated that it can effectively implement reforms and work with many partners. Lessons from the progressive Jaranwala municipality are being widely disseminated as means of promoting reforms elsewhere.

The SPU has produced comprehensive water and sanitation performance reports for Jaranwala municipality, together with local partners. However, progress has been hampered by uncertainties about the devolution process during 2005. These issues will hopefully be resolved soon.

#### ***DFID-Pakistan response to the 2005 earthquake – Emergency water and sanitation***

The earthquake that struck Pakistan and parts of Kashmir caused over 75,000 people to lose their lives with a further 4 million people affected. Four months after the earthquake, a quarter of a million people are still in relief camps.

The DFID-Pakistan funded NWFP Rural Water and Sanitation Project (RWSSP) had trained staff in health and hygiene and in technical aspects of water and sanitation in districts in the earthquake affected areas. DFID-Pakistan realized that these trained staff and project resources (offices, vehicles, supply chain etc) could potentially make a valuable contribution to the water and sanitation component of the relief effort.

The DFID supported RWSSP has distributed thousands of hygiene kits to women in the large camps and has rehabilitated damaged water supplies.

UNICEF has co-ordinated the water and sanitation interventions of the many agencies and NGOs involved. DFID will also provide £70 million for reconstruction.

It is clear that responses to such disasters require strong co-ordination, getting the right people in post and clear lines of responsibilities (Tedd, 2006).

## **NWFP Rural Water Supply & Sanitation Project (RWSSP)**

The RWSSP was originally designed in 1998 to improve institutional capacity of the NWFP Tehsils/TMAs and to deliver low-cost, sustainable WatSan services in the province. It has a clear governance and reform emphasis.

The RWSSP was reviewed and reinstated in 2003 with DFID assistance, to meet the changing needs of the region, focusing on the wider devolution programme to reduce poverty by providing increased access to low-cost, appropriate and sustainable WatSan services. The project partners are the GoNWFP, TMAs, Union Administrations (UAs), beneficiary communities, DFID and the Sarhad RSP (which is part of the wider RSP network).

The Government Project Coordination Unit (PCU) is responsible for management and implementation. SRSP provides institutional capacity building on a wide range of subjects with GoNWFP, TMAs, UAs, community organizations and CCBs.

Some of the more innovative features of the project include:

- improving institutional relations between different tiers of government;
- integrating water and sanitation, with hygiene promotion included;
- institutional capacity building of local government;
- increasing community contributions and responsibility for operation and maintenance;
- women's mandatory role in decision making;
- poverty focused resource allocation;
- effective data collection and database management; and
- co-ordination with other capacity building projects in the province.

A total of 5,527 WatSan schemes are expected to be completed by 2008. Through TMAs and communities, handpumps, gravity schemes, street paving and drains, and school sanitation are being implemented. The project review conducted in February 2006 found that the project had mechanisms for targeting the poor and these mechanisms are being explicitly poverty focused, which was not the case in the past government programme.

#### **Box 1: The OPP Component Sharing Approach in Faisalabad**

The NGO Anjuman Samji Behboob (ASB), with limited support from WaterAid, has been developing community sanitation and water services by adapting the OPP (Orangi Pilot Project) approach to the Faisalabad city situation. From 1995 to 2004, ASB report having worked on sanitation in 70 communities in 529 lanes; facilitating the laying of sewers benefiting 6,600 households in the city.

The 'component sharing' approach developed by OPP (where the community pays for and develops its lane sewers, while government develops the primary infrastructure such as the main sewers) has proved to be a successful development model for urban sanitation in a number of cities and towns in Pakistan including Karachi and Lodhran. This approach does however require significant community demand for service improvements so that they are willing to meet their necessary time and monetary costs.

In comparison with the traditional 'cost sharing' approach (where community groups pay a contribution to the new infrastructure development scheme), the 'component sharing' approach has some clear advantages:

- 1) the communities can develop a clear sense of ownership and empowerment by taking full responsibility for sections of infrastructure;
- 2) component sharing generally allows community groups to proceed with their component of the project, with much less bureaucratic interference or delays caused by government agencies; and
- 3) the total infrastructure costs are less.

Careful community mobilization by capable facilitators is required to achieve successful outcomes.

## Rural Support Programme Network (RSPN)

Inspired by the success of the participatory Agha Khan RSP, a number of RSPs emerged in different parts of the country during the 1990s. The RSPs are now the largest not-for-profit development group in Pakistan. The RSPs have broad expertise but particularly in community participation and policy advocacy in relation to many services including water and sanitation.

The purpose of the Rural Support Programme network (RSPN) supported by DFID since 2000 is to:

*Enhance its capacity to support communities in working effectively with decentralized local government and in managing their own development in a sustainable manner.*

Some of the innovations introduced by the RSPN are:

- helping devolved councils work more effectively with communities;
- introducing micro-finance and enterprise development;
- working with the Community Trust for Community Empowerment for support in forming and training Citizen Community Boards; and
- as part of a decentralized government approach, RSPN provides training for men and women councillors in working responsively with local communities.

### Project achievements

A recent review of the programme confirmed that the project has fully achieved its purpose:

1. RSPN has played an important advocacy role to create an enabling environment for the establishment of pro-poor policies, including the Local Government Ordinance (2001).
2. It has influenced the government to recognize the importance of community management in the new National Water Policy (2005).
3. The GoP has accepted the concept of social mobilization by RSPs being extended to all poor households by 2010.
4. Best practice of RSPN has been documented and disseminated, through workshops, newsletters, videos etc.
5. RSP has mobilized resources both from government and donors.
6. RSPN staff serve on a number of government policy committees.

## Key Emerging Lessons

### DFID policy analysis informing the evolution of programmes

DFID-Pakistan's own analysis of the changing governance environment has informed effective changes to the focus of its programmes.

### Promoting a culture of strategic planning

Local government reforms such as devolution present major organizational challenges but also provide a unique opportunity for cultural shifts to be made in the way services are planned and delivered. Such changes in culture and the necessary enabling environments (for local government) are required if progress is to be made on introducing improved procedures for planning, preparing and documenting water supply and sanitation investments. Planning should include a consideration of:

- developing a vision to provide clear direction for municipalities;
- long and short term aims with budgets allocated accordingly;
- internal and external communication to support planning and co-ordination; and
- explicit consideration of maintenance requirements.

### Understanding government structures and ways of working

In projects that are used as agents of change, understanding government structures and ways of working increases the likelihood that interventions may last. There are interest groups who resist devolution and change. Effective strategies have to be developed to encourage a sense of confidence in the reform process.

### Working with reforming municipalities

If government capacities are developed before project design and implementation takes place, it can lead to better projects. But project spending and progress can be slow in the first couple of years. An alternative strategy is to initially work with municipalities who are already undertaking effective reforms. This can lead to good progress in pilot municipalities, which can have a positive demonstration effect for other municipalities who are contemplating reforms as part of the project. Creating momentum at the beginning of a project is important. This is the approach adopted by the Strategic Policy Unit (SPU) as part of the Faisalabad Devolution Project. The SPU has been working with Jaranjwala municipality who have already introduced many innovative reforms on infrastructure services including water supply.

### Linking practice with policy

Policy advocacy can be very effective if it is based on community level project experience, when making the case for change. The RSP network is constantly in touch with RSPs throughout the country. It has been able to combine 'the grass roots' experience with high-level policy analysis.

### Policy change requires time

Policy change takes time to be effective. At least five years on reform programmes should be allowed to create the required evidence base and support for change. However, opportunities need to be explored for achieving 'quick wins' such as short term initiatives that have a good demonstration effect to influence change.

### Combining infrastructure provision with developing institutions

Projects that seek to develop the capacities of local government organizations, as well as provide demand responsive infrastructure, have good prospects of achieving more sustainable water and sanitation services. This is being done as part of the NWFP Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Programme.

### Component sharing vs. cost sharing approaches

The component sharing approach was originally developed as part of the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) for lane sewers. It has been successfully replicated in several urban areas of Pakistan. Component sharing has advantages over the traditional 'cost sharing' approach. For example: the communities can develop a clear sense of ownership for their part of the infrastructure and it allows community groups to proceed with their component of the project with much less bureaucratic interference or delays. It does, however, require effective facilitation and good demand for new infrastructure amongst the participating communities.

## Development of water and sanitation services

DFID's work with NWFP and other local partners has revealed the following priority aspects of institutional management that require strengthening:

- understanding the roles and responsibilities of different levels of government;
- enhancing technical and computer-based expertise;
- improving data collection and management practices;
- promoting holistic provision of services;
- improving planning, monitoring and financial systems;
- supporting innovative approaches to community participation and sector policy reforms;
- the development of water quality standards; and
- developing local training institutes to meet the needs of local government.

## Project development procedures

It is necessary to continually review and revise the project approaches over time. Amongst the key areas of focus identified on current projects are:

- to check the representativeness and inclusiveness of community groups and local authorities;
- to review whether the project strategies mainstream gender in their approach to health, water and sanitation issues at the community level;
- to cover a sample of communities to ensure that short-listing is effective and that the poorest communities are being identified;
- to assess whether the initially conceived outputs and activities are still relevant to project objectives;
- to review and if necessary, redefine team and partner responsibilities and commitments; and
- to review and share project lessons with similar programmes.



This briefing note presents experiences of DFID-Pakistan of urban and rural water supply and sanitation programmes following devolution.

## Key references

- Abid, M. S. (2003) *Inception Report – NWFP Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project*. Peshawar, Pakistan.
- Ahmad M. Z. (2005) *Pakistan – Water and sanitation services in a devolved government system*. 31st WEDC international conference, Kampala, Uganda.
- DFID (2005) *Rural Support Programme Network Project (RSPN) – Project Completion Report*, DFID, Islamabad, Pakistan.
- DFID (2003) *Faisalabad Area urban Upgrading Project Evaluation*. Produced by a four member consultancy team, Pakistan.
- Strategic Policy Unit (2005) *Performance Report – 2004-05*, Government of Faisalabad, Pakistan.
- Tedd L. (2006) *Note on DFID-Pakistan Response to October Earthquake – Emergency Water and Sanitation*, DFID Pakistan, Islamabad.

Briefing Note compiled by Julie Fisher and Kevin Sansom of WEDC

The contribution of the DFID-Pakistan Office is gratefully acknowledged

Photographs by John Pickford, Jonathan Rouse, M. Sohail and Leonard Tedd

For further information, contact:

**WELL**  
**Water, Engineering and Development**  
**Centre (WEDC)**  
**Loughborough University**  
**Leicestershire LE11 3TU UK**

Email: WELL@Lboro.ac.uk  
Phone: 0 (44) 1509 228304  
Fax: 0 (44) 1509 211079  
Website: <http://www.Lboro.ac.uk/well/>

## WELL WELL is a network of resource centres:



WEDC at Loughborough University UK  
IRC at Delft, The Netherlands  
AMREF, Nairobi, Kenya  
IWSD, Harare, Zimbabwe  
LSHTM at University of London, UK

TREND, Kumasi, Ghana  
SEUF, Kerala, India  
ICDDR, B, Dhaka, Bangladesh  
NETWAS, Nairobi, Kenya  
NWRI, Kaduna, Nigeria

This note was funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID). The views expressed, however, are not necessarily those of DFID.

Published by WEDC on behalf of WELL.