Loughborough University

This item was submitted to Loughborough's Research Repository by the author.
Items in Figshare are protected by copyright, with all rights reserved, unless otherwise indicated.

DRA to water supply and sanitation delivery in Oju

PLEASE CITE THE PUBLISHED VERSION

PUBLISHER

© WEDC, Loughborough University

VERSION

VoR (Version of Record)

PUBLISHER STATEMENT

This work is made available according to the conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) licence. Full details of this licence are available at: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/

LICENCE

CC BY-NC-ND 4.0

REPOSITORY RECORD

Onah, Andrew, and Aja Aleje. 2019. “DRA to Water Supply and Sanitation Delivery in Oju”. figshare. https://hdl.handle.net/2134/29581.

29th WEDC International Conference Abuja, Nigeria, 2003

TOWARDS THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

DRA to water supply and sanitation delivery in Oju

Andrew Onah and Aja Aleje, Nigeria

Introduction

PROVISION OF WATER supply and sanitation services without being demanded by target community is like a support offered to an unwilling recipient/beneficiary. In many communities in Nigeria today, water and sanitation services are delivered not on demand but on assumption that people in such areas need them. Facilities provided in this manner are hardly used, often abandoned or vandalized. It is to stave off this occurrence that the Oju project is focusing on demand responsive approach to service delivery.

This paper shares the concept of Demand Responsive Approach as adopted for the Oju communities and highlights the lessons learnt and challenges encountered so far. Specifically, the paper seeks to:

- to share the Oju water and sanitation unit process of demand responsive approach in service delivery.
- to highlight some of the successes and lessons learnt so far in course of the Oju project that would encourage the use of demand responsive approach (DRA) for project sustainability.

Oju

Oju is one of the local government areas in Benue State of Nigeria with an estimated population of about 320,000 people. It is predominantly endemic with water and sanitation related problems, which attracted international Aid from UNDP/World Bank Assisted Project (RUSAFIYA). This programme was not 'demand driven' in approach therefore could not be sustained. It is in order to stave off this occurrence, that the Oju project is focusing on demand responsive approach to service delivery.

Demand Responsive Approach and Community Mangement Process

Demand responsive approach and community management processes refer to a collection of strategies and processes employed to engage with communities or local people to generate demands, determine and prioritize their needs including planning, implementing and managing projects to meet those needs.

Essentially, demand responsive approach and community management are interwoven with no clear demarcation. Community Management however is a much broader concept, which entails elements of demand responsiveness in certain aspects of the community management processes and procedures. The following demand responsive approaches have been adopted and are being used in the Oju project.

Awareness Creation

In order to generate demand for water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion services, communities need to be aware of the availability of such project and how they can access it and work together to express demand. Awareness creation is therefore an important tool in demand creation and this is done in the Oju project through the following activities: Community mobilization through elected councilors/representatives in project areas as well stakeholders forum. The stakeholder's forum is in form of a meeting during which representatives of the communities, Community Based Organisations (CBO) and other stakeholders are briefed on the project

Applications from Communities

The cardinal objective of awareness creation is to empower communities to make informed decision as to whether they want the project or not. Once the issue of the project benefit, as regard meeting their needs, had been established, the communities are expected to express their demand for the services through formal application to the Water and Sanitation. Application from the community then becomes the first indication of community's demand for water sanitation services.

Vulnerability Assessment

At the receipt of applications from communities, the Water and Sanitation Unit (WASU) organizes a survey to determine community uniformity of demand across the various stakeholders within the community (women, men, children, rich and poor) using the following criteria; water supply status, attitude to defecation, access to medical facilities, wealth status and access to the community.

This is done through a process referred to as Rapid Survey, which is carried out using participatory tools and techniques consisting of Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and Structured Observation.

Presentation Of Result

The results of the vulnerability assessment are collated, analyzed and presented to the Management Committee (MC) for community selection purpose.

Community Selection

The Water and Sanitation management committee selects communities for intervention based on the result of the vulnerability assessments including other criteria such as demand (including date of application), geological feasibility and geographical spread. When two or more communities tie in the scoring, the MC to arrive at a final decision uses geographical consideration.

Terms and Conditions for Project Participation

In line with the Bible verse which states; "Can two walk together except they be agreed"? Amos 3:3, WASU holds discussion with community to agree on the Terms and Conditions (T&C) for working together. These terms and conditions define the roles and responsibilities in terms of commitment/expectations from the community and institutional management structure, including composition, gender balance, at the community level. Since this is a form of contractual agreement between the community and WASU for the project implementation, these terms and conditions are first shared with all members of the community in a general meeting. This affords the community members the opportunity to contribute to or discuss the T&C with a view to effecting changes in any term and condition, which they do not find agreeable or even out rightly reject the T&C. An example is Agidegbe community who after going through the above processes rejected the working conditions and as such the process could not continue. This makes the process participatory with all parties having the opportunity to contribute to the final document, which if accepted, is eventually signed by the community as an agreement to participate in the project.

Establishment of Water and Sanitation Committee

In the event of the community and WASU accepting the conditions and the terms, WASU staff then guides the community to form a community based organization known as Water and Sanitation Committee (WASCOM) for the management of water and sanitation activities therein and inaugurate it. WASCOM formation is also a strategy for ensuring community participation and ownership of the project. WASCOM formation is usually one of the agreed T&C. The members of this committee are selected by the community and include women in order to ensure gender sensitivity and equity at decision-making at this level. Those selected by the community must meet certain standard of honesty and probity and are people the community trust.

Baseline Information Collection

Baseline activity is carried out in the community in a participatory manner to determine the community household vulnerability status (through household wealth assessment), hydro geological conditions and population of the community. This involves a participatory process using such tools/methods as Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Key Informant and Observation (Geology Walk). During the exercise, a household wealth assessment is done. The result was used by the community for allocation of latrine subsidy for individual householder and in some cases for individual contribution for water facility.

The procedure for the wealth assessment is that at a general meeting, members of the community identify different classes of wealth including rich, medium and poor. They then set the criteria for measuring each of the wealth group/class. The community also identify some key informants, numbering between 3and 5, who rank the various households, voting using some agreed criteria that are usually denoted by objects/symbols. Each of the key informant votes separately and at the end of the voting the score of the informants are summed up to find the average, which then depicts the wealth class of each of the households.

Community/Wascom Training

Since the cardinal objective of participation through the demand responsive approach is to ensure community management and ownership of their livelihood improvements as well as development, it therefore becomes necessary to adequately prepare and position communities to do so. This is done through training of WASCOM and some community members on all aspects of the project for effective management. The training covers the following areas.

- Community management
- Hygiene promotion (using the hygiene evaluation procedure)
- Construction of latrine slabs and hand dug wells.
- Hand pump installation and maintenance.
- Minute keeping and stock management for water and sanitation committee secretaries.

This training empowers the community to plan, implement and manage the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene project to meet their need. It is at this training that the community action plan emerges which forms the basis for monitoring and evaluation of the project in future.

Purchase of Hand Pump

The community purchases her hand pump as the true indication of her commitment through community contribution, which is solely coordinated by the community members themselves. At this stage, the community is ready for provision of physical facilities.

Construction of Water Point

The community having shown her commitment by purchasing a hand pump, geophysics is then conducted to locate the possible drilling site. The community selects the sites where geophysics is carried out.

Purchase of Tool Kit

The community then purchases her tool kit from the area hand pump dealer to be used for installation and maintenance of the hand pump.

Completion of at Least 5 Pit Latrines

Experience so far has shown that many communities are slow when it comes to latrine construction compared to the Water Supply. If this trend is allowed, the aim of Integrated Water and Sanitation will be defeated. It is therefore agreed with the community that at least 5 latrines should have been completed and put in use before continuing with water supply, particularly, installation of water point.

A number of community members who volunteer for latrine construction are given subsidy vouchers, using the community household ranking list.

Monitoring and Evaluation

As part of the demand responsive and community management process, the community during their action planning, determine set targets in the components of the project and also determine how they want to monitor these and who should be involved and what time they want to do monitoring to enhance efficiency of the project. What this means is that project monitoring is community-based and carried out by members themselves. The communities are in turn monitored by WASU.

This monitoring and evaluation involve the following process;

- Routine visits to community by the WASU staff
- quarterly meetings with Water and Sanitation Committees.
- Local Government wide water and sanitation meetings.

Learning Points

Demand Responsive Approach though time consuming, is vital and produces more sustainable results. Between 1998 and now, over five hundred applications have been received from different corners of the Local Government Area. This is a clear indication of the effectiveness of the Demand Responsive Approach.

At the birth of this project in 1996 to 1998, the project started working in Adokwu, Edumoga, Ikpakilewu, Odubwo and Oyinyi as control communities. Mobilization was extremely difficult in these coomunities because they were selected without community initial demand. Latrine uptakes were discouraging. Latrine materials were given for free. Householders in Adokwu saw it, for example, as "your own" and not "my own". Some people use the latrines constructed as their resting places instead of for excreta disposal.

To date a total of 98 Boreholes drilled in various communities, 5 hand dug wells constructed, over 100 pit latrines [including non project communities] and one rain water harvester are all still in operation. More attention is given to the facilities that the members of the community have need of, demanded and contributed for and consequently better cared for.

Conclusion

In conclusion therefore, the success story of the Oju project has shown clearly that the Demand Responsive Approach is very necessary for sustainable water and sanitation project implementation and should be adopted by all rural water and sanitation projects if the millennium development goals are to be achieved.

ANDREW ONAH and AJA ALEJE. Water and Sanitation Unit, Oju LGC, Oju, Benue State, Nigeria. (mathocholi@yahoo.com)