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**DELIVERING WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE SERVICES
IN AN UNCERTAIN ENVIRONMENT**

**Enabling and capacity development for community based rural
water supply management in Gabiley, Somaliland**

Kamal Mohamed Amier, Somaliland

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Water supply, hygiene and sanitation service standards are poor in rural Somaliland due to inadequate service functionality and limited community capacity to play an effective role in the rural water supply management and their insufficient private sector involvement. In Somaliland, community role in rural water supply management is not clear in the national water policy and poorly regulated, this undermined the acceptability of the local community's willingness to participate meaningfully in the rural water supply system. Moreover, In terms of capacity development, different sectorial staff may have received several training workshops, but what often not done well is looking at impact of training workshops, seminars and short courses for local authority staff, NGO personnel as well as the village level committee members. This paper is aimed to discuss the current community managed rural water supply management option and strategies for capacity development. Therefore, this paper is looking at the generic management models and their relevance to Somaliland.

Introduction

Somaliland, like many other developing countries with political uncertainty and poor economic status, does not have clear and effective rural water supply, hygiene and sanitation policies and strategy. Such policies are written, but the lack of structure, limited resources and coherence makes them ineffective. The water regulation framework approved by the parliament of Somaliland for the water sector to perform efficiently has not been enforced effectively. In addition NGOs often claim that the Government is just too corrupt or too difficult to work with. The responsibilities of stakeholders have required greater clarification as there are no national and district level guidelines and standards upon which stakeholders can base the implementation of water resource development and water supply interventions in rural areas. More than 50% of the existing Berkads, earth dams and 45% of the boreholes are not functional at any one time due to poor quality construction and lack of effective community level on-going operation and maintenances of the physical water supply infrastructure or “Hardware”, which results high rate of failure.

Overview of Somaliland water sector

Access to water and sanitation in Somaliland has always been dire; with access currently at 41% and 40% respectively as Table 1 shows the list of the main water sources in Somaliland. However, the rural areas are normally worse off as compared to urban settlements in respect to water and sanitation. The main water sources infrastructure in Somaliland rural and pre-urban areas are currently in surface water sources in and small number of boreholes and motorised pump powered shallow wells.

The water sources for humans and animal use in rural areas are categorised as small earth dams/ pans, Berkads, hand dug open /protected wells, and boreholes which stand at 60%, 20% and 20% respectively (Swiss Caritas 2010 WASH report).

| Table 1. List of main water sources in Somaliland | | | |
|--|---------------|----------------------|---|
| Water sources | Number | Functionality | Remarks |
| Berkads | 7640 | 54% | 85% of the Berkads are privately owned |
| Balleys | 348 | Seasonal | 90% of the Berkads are privately owned |
| Shallow wells | 2175 | 50% | 10% of the shallow wells are with hand pums, |
| Borehole | 205 | 45% | Constructed with poor drilling equipments |
| Watersheds | 4 | | IFAD introduced the scheme to Teysa and Ijara villages for farming and it is working well |
| Sand storage dams | 3 | 80% | New to Somaliland |

Source: MMEWR, FAO 2008, IFAD 2006, WALIM 2007, Geopolicy/NICEF 2012

The current rural water supply is inadequate, Only 25% -38% of rural households have got access to improved rural water sources in Somaliland, particularly in rural areas where women and children travel long distances in the dry season to collect water for domestic and men walks with their livestock for watering. (UNICEF in 2008, MMEWR 2011, Action Aid 2011).

Gabiley rural water supply

Gabiley region is one of the 13 regions of Somaliland, it has the largest rural population in Somaliland and located about 32km west of the capital, Hargeisa In Somaliland. Gabiley region consists of 6 districts and 48 villages and 24 scattered settlements, more than 60% of the 35,000 population in Gabiley are agro-pastoralists. Gabiley Region is the most important agricultural area in Somaliland. Moreover, According to Ministry of Mineral Resources, Energy and Water Resources (MME&WR, 2011, UNICEF 2010) there are also 7 boreholes, two motorised shallow wells and one unprotected spring in Gabiley region. currently four motorised boreholes are functional, one out of the five functional boreholes is only for animal use because of the water quality. Three recently constructed boreholes, 2 in Botor and 1 in Demeeroboo villages have been constructed from 2008 -2012 and fully financed by international donor agencies, however the Demeeroboo village borehole which have managed by the village level committee have broken down within the first 4 year of its operation, Table 2 shows the summary of the main water sources in selected areas of Gabiley region.

| Table 2. List of main water sources in Gabiley | | | |
|---|---------------|----------------------|---|
| Water sources | Number | Functionality | Remarks |
| Berkads | 435 | 54% | Associated with sanitation problems |
| Balleys | 147 | Seasonal | Associated with sanitation problems |
| Shallow wells | 76 | 50% | 10% of the shallow wells are with hand pumps, most of them are not protected |
| Borehole | 7 | 45% | 2 communities managed boreholes have been broken down with first four years of its operation. |
| Watersheds | 2 | ----- | Teysa and Ijara villages for farming and it has been working well since 2006 |
| Spring | 1 | ----- | One unprotected spring mainly animals and farming usage. |
| Sand-Storage dams | 3 | 80% | Swiss Caritas introduced the scheme to Somaliland |

Source: MMEWR, FAO 2008, IFAD 2006, WALIM 2007, Geopolicy/NICEF 2012

Regional water authority

The government district and village level institutions are either not established well or have no presence in the area. These institutions are underfunded and understaffed and therefore have limited capacity to implement, manage and regulate water and sanitation related activities.

Hence, the Ministry of Mineral, Energy and Water resources developed Directorate of National Water Resources to promote effective implementation of the decentralization strategy water resources management up to district level. Additionally the recent Geopolicy (2012) Study on Sector Functional Assessments

within Education, Health and WASH in Somaliland for UNICEF revealed that there is no decentralization policy framework supporting district local authority role in improving local governance. The Geopolicy (2012) report highlighted that the current process of decentralized service delivery of Somaliland does not have a clear focus at central, regional and district levels. Moreover, The final report on Towards Sustainable Operation and Maintenance of Rural Water Supply with rapid case study from Somaliland report done by Care International in 2010 emphasised that In the rural water supply Somaliland authorities are primarily concerned with strategic ground water sources, showing limited interest in shallow wells and with reliance on donor agencies in providing services through a community managed approach. Services typically include provision of hardware, functioning of village Development Committees (VDCs), and training of communities and VDCs in their obligations towards O&M. However, the results of such training do not appear to be durable, where the practices taught are not being sustained.

Community role in rural water supply management

Bolt, E. 2002 highlights that the community management of rural water supplies is widely considered to be a worthwhile management option. However, it is known that communities cannot do this on their own but with some sort of support. It is also known that community management should not be an excuse for governments at national, district or even local level to abandon their responsibilities for the sustainability of rural water supplies as well as an exit strategy for rural water implementing NGOs. Despite that the community based management rural water supply associated with difficulties of developing a long term strategic vision of extending and sustain the services; however, the users have a better mechanism of community participation.

Managing the water supplies and managing the operations and maintenance over a long period when they constructed is challenging for the local communities. Moreover Harvey & Reed, 2004 emphasises sustainable water supply of the community based management approach requires on-going support from an overseeing institution to provide encouragement and motivation, monitoring, participatory planning, capacity building and specialist technical assistance.

Main challenges facing the community based rural water supply management in Somaliland are:

- The community had no capacity to manage the scheme, particularly financial, O&M (major repairs) and long term strategy.
- Rural water supply committee based management is not well regulated with confusion of roles and responsibility
- Lack of effective supply chain
- The new facilities were inappropriate or unwanted or because the community was unable or unwilling to look after them (Shaw, J 2006, SWLIM 2007)
- Environmental problems (Erosion, land degradation and hydrological Droughts)

Community management roles for current technical options

There are different community roles for different water sources technical options and rural water supply management models in Somaliland, therefore, the following information in table 3 demonstrates community roles and responsibilities in each technical option for the Berkad, Earth dams and sand storage dams, shallow wells, water trucking and Boreholes. Moreover, for community management in rural water supply to be a feasible and sustainable management option, communities need to operate in an environment that is supportive (Browne, et al, 2003). National governments need to ensure that a conducive legal framework is in place that, for example, provides enabling environment for the community overseeing role in rural water supply management. At more decentralised levels of regional or local government communities must know about and have access to support from government structures themselves as well as by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or private operators.

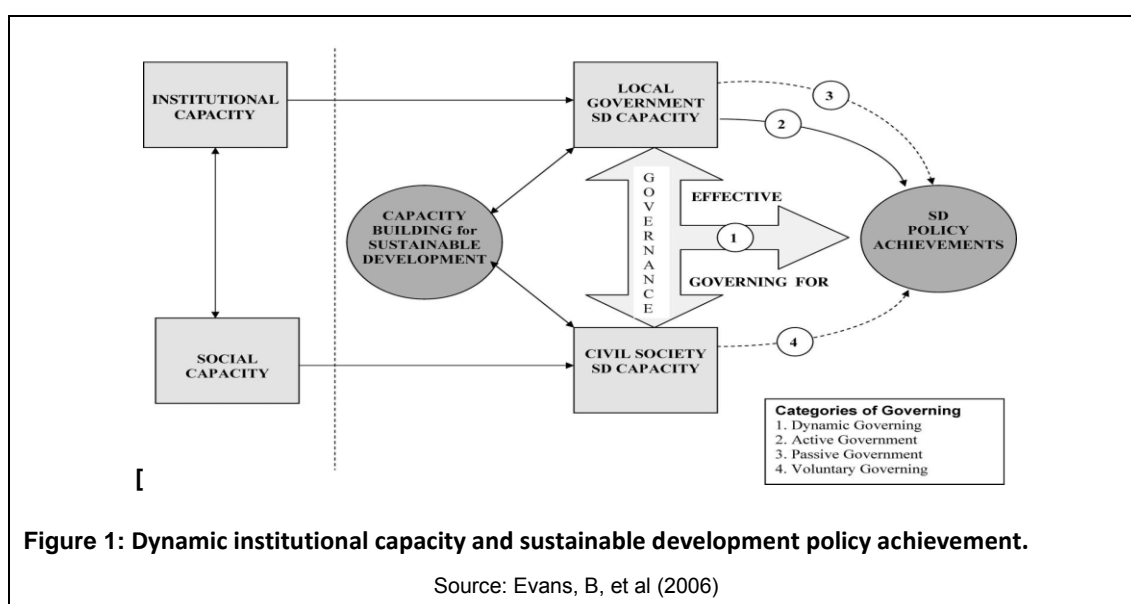
| Table 1. Rural water: management models for technical options | | |
|--|---|---|
| Technical Options | Management model | Aspect of community roles |
| Deep borehole | 70% of the boreholes are in PPP | Security, assist cost recovery, oversees the facilities |
| Hand pumps | Village level operation and maintenance (VLOPM) | Self-Supply, village based mechanics |

| | | |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| Shallow wells | Village water committee | Mainly self supply and regular maintenance |
| Berkad/small earth dams | Village water committee/individuals | Fencing, annual cleaning and re-digging trenches |
| Water trucking | Private and Self-Supply | Comments on price and the water quality |
| Rain water harvestmen | Village water committee and school administration | Community volunteers |

Source: Based on the reviewed NGOs projects and the author's experience

Capacity development gap in Somaliland

In Somaliland there is a significant need of strengthening the capacity of the community groups to play an effective role in the rural water supply management and articulate their needs, concerns and demand water supply and sanitation improvements. Recent Geopolicity (2012) Study on Sector Functional Assessments within Education, Health and WASH in Somaliland for UNICEF emphasised that although there is limited availability of water resources, lack of infrastructure facilities and mostly inadequate existing facilities, associated with weak managerial, financial, and human resources necessary to extend reliable and safe services to the population. The report addressed that the local communities are required capacity to play recognizable role in PPP rural water supply approaches, which need to be clearly stated in the national water policy and regulations in Somailland. This paper suggests *that the* dynamic institutional capacity and sustainable development policy framework, highlighted by *Evans. B. et al (2006)*, (see figure 1) implementation could provide on-going capacity development support to be provided to decentralized regional water authority staff in Somaliland to enable them to fulfil their role (planning, monitoring, regulation and policy implementation, etc.) in greater sustainability of rural water services.



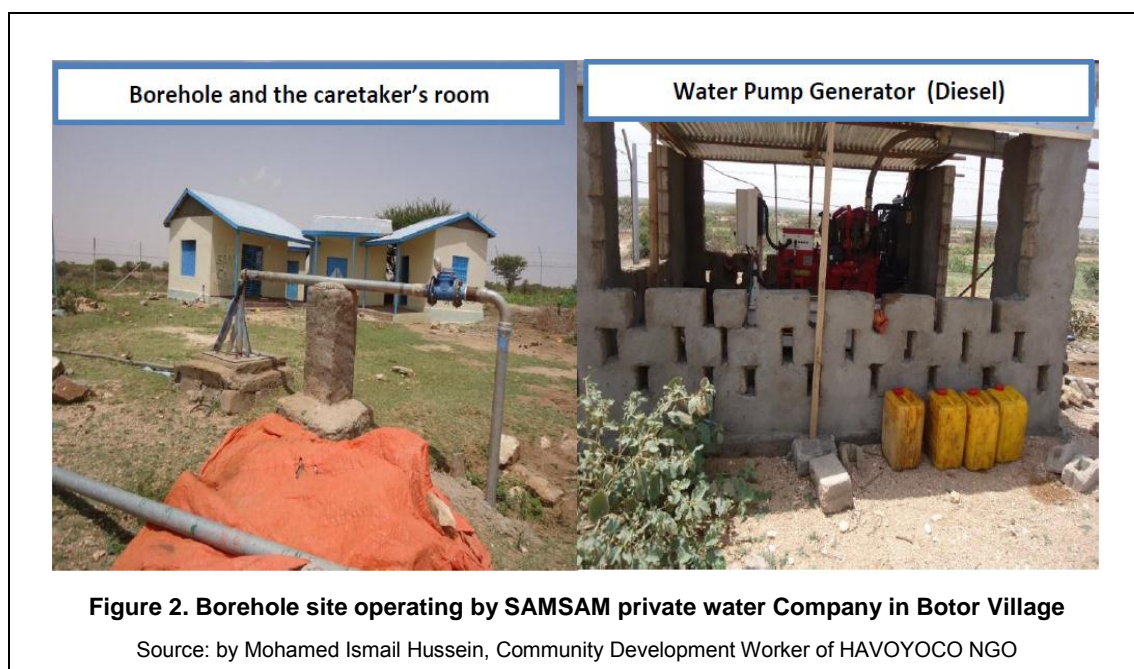
Enabling community based rural water supply

The changing nature of managing water resources means moving from a traditional top-down, supply led technical based, secretarial approach towards a more participatory approach in which all stakeholders play role in financing, service delivery and managing the resources, the community based management water supplies can only maintain their service delivery with an enabling support from the government including the technical and involvement of the private sector. Most of the decentralised regional water authority and local community based organisations are currently lacking the necessary work facilities, both technical and financial resources to create an enabling platform for the community role in rural water supply management. A strong framework of rules, effective regulations, clear institutional roles and responsibilities, in which all stakeholders could play recognisable role in sustaining rural water supply. This framework is called the

“enabling environment”, it links between enabling and effective capacity development levels, It also allows an organization to operate and deliver on its mandate with effective policies, and that enable up to individual level at which capacity refers to the skills, experience and knowledge that are vested in people to achieve common goals.

Success of local enabling capacity development in Gabiley

Following the success SHABA private water company based Borama in Awdal region, SAMSAM private water company have also recently demonstrate with some success in Gabiley district. The increased role of the local private operators which is linked to the demand for increasingly professional rural water supply maintenance and repair services resulted that some communities are served with improved water supplies. This is in community oversight management approach. For example Botor village water committee role is to oversight Botor water field (2 boreholes, 20 communal berkads) Managing by SAMSAM water company and in partnership with Gabiley local government authority (see figure 2).



Conclusion

The most of the water supply project failures can be attributed to institutional, rather than technical inadequacies, due to poor regulations and insufficient support to community based institutions (SWALIM 2007). Moreover, given the current lack of national standards and qualified technical and professional staff, the level of support to communities dependent on rural water supplies is generally not sufficient in either Somaliland. This makes the currently the water, sanitation and related services in rural communities in rural areas inadequate due to high rate of dysfunctional rural water supply schemes that completely relying on external support for operation and maintenance, despite the fact that adequate revenues could be generated from community managed supply water sales which could have been contributed to sustainable operation and maintenance. A joint publication by Oxfam GB and WaterAid 2001, Both Oxfam and WaterAid recognise there is no generic blueprint for Community- Based Water Resource Management (CBWRM). However, it is important to recognise enabling factors and operating principles that will directly support the management of water resources locally. Care (2010) Towards Sustainable Operation and Maintenance of Rural Water Supply research report Critically, suggests that there is a need for a paradigm shift from the traditional project-facility based approach to a program service-based approach for sustainable O&M of rural water supplies with an effective management model consistently applied that government policies and strategies supports community involvement in rural water supply management. Capacity development is the essential element of the international development agenda in Somaliland and even more important than finance. Limited of the capacity of the development local actors is one of the compelling development challenges and resulted in poor service delivery (World Bank 2008A).

Therefore, this paper emphasizes that the problems related to failure of community based management rural water supply in Somaliland are linked with poor enabling and effective capacity development to local stakeholders. Therefore, the dynamic institutional capacity development framework policy implementation appears to be the most suitable instrument for improving the enabling effective capacity development to both local governmental and civil society institutions, and it would be able to build on and expand the successful establishment of policies in the water sector, this will further strengthen a government that still lacks capacity and has the potential to empower local government regional water authorities (Oxfam GB 2010, Volker 2005 and UNICEF 2010A).

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Contact details

Kamal Mohamed Amier BSc, MSc
Cofounder of Horn of Africa Voluntary Youth
Committee (HAYOYOCO)
24 Castle House, Siddals Road, Derby, UK
Tel: 07958244319
Email: kamalmohamier@hotmail.com
