

Supporting Independent Water Schemes

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Background

- 2004 Water Sector Study identified significant role of independent schemes in delivery of water supplies to 17% of population (32,000)
- WASSP starting in 2005 includes support to strengthen local water committees in management and maintenance
- MWCS D facilitated meeting of independent schemes in 2006 to establish mechanisms for support including formation of IWSA

Role of MWCS D

- Lead agency under the EU WASSP (2006-2010) for capacity building support to independent water schemes
- Coordination of public services for the community from various agencies including management training, water quality monitoring & watershed management

Filling the Information Gap

- MWCS D commenced its support with a survey of base line information in 2007
- The 22 water supplies are gravity-fed from springs/rivers with individual household connections but very little storage
- Local communities generally arrange maintenance when the system fails
- Schemes face problems of water pressure, regularity and quality
- 99% of water committee representatives are male, of which 86% are titled chiefs
- Water fees are very low with the majority paying between 0-40 tala (US\$16) per year

Response Strategy

- Strengthen the capacity of IWSA including establishment of its office
- Formed working group including IWSA, MoF, MNRE, MoH civil society (SUNGO) to coordinate support
- Contract out in-depth research on IWS strengths + weaknesses and design of a training programme (SUNGO)
- Recruitment of consultants for technical analysis with support to schemes dependant on attainment of management standards

Training Programme

Training modules cover:

- planning
- financial management
- maintenance
- water safety & watershed management
- user rules & communication

Training of trainers and pilot testing was completed in July 2008



Roll-out of Training

- The training is now being rolled out to all 22 schemes to be completed before July 2009
- Training is provided to individual schemes or in groups of 2 or 3 depending on their size
- A preliminary visit to the scheme introduces the programme to local leaders and takes water samples to check quality
- Training is delivered using participatory methodologies over a 5 day period and includes inputs from MoH & MNRE on health/ watershed management



Provision of technical support

- MWCS D is currently recruiting a local firm to provide water engineers to analyse schemes and prepare upgrade proposals
- Requests for technical support will be channeled through IWSA
- Water committees will be required to demonstrate achievement of basic standards including regular collection of water fees, record keeping, setting user rules, and maintenance planning



Future Plans

- To assist IWSA to identify financing for its members to rehabilitate / upgrade schemes
- To promote self-regulation through agreement on standards for IWSA members
- To facilitate improved relations between IWSA and SWA
- To coordinate services from Ministries on water quality monitoring, water safety planning, water resource monitoring and watershed management



Policy Issues

- The role of independent water schemes in provision of rural services
- The sharing of water resources between community and public utility providers
- Local capacity to manage and maintain water schemes
- The role of local communities as partners with public water service providers – bulk water provision with local management of the distribution system
- Developing water safety planning