

Evaluation of WaterAid Pakistan programme

Final report

Kevin Tayler, Rehana Shaikh, Thérèse Mahon and Munawar Hassan

Executive summary

The evaluation

This report presents the findings of an evaluation, carried out in November and December 2011, of the WaterAid programme in Pakistan. The evaluation team was led by an international consultant and included a national consultant and two WaterAid staff members, one from WaterAid Pakistan and one from the South Asia Regional Team. Field work lasted from 21 November to 4 December and was preceded by meetings, Skype discussions and sharing documents. The evaluation assesses the relevance and effectiveness of WaterAid's programme in Pakistan and provides recommendations for improving the programme in the future.

Pakistan context

Pakistan is the most urbanised country in South Asia, with a current population of around 187 million people, around a third of which live in urban areas. The estimated population growth rate is 1.57%. Past GDP growth has typically been in the range 4-8% but was only 2.7% in 2010. The country has suffered from several natural disasters in recent years, most recently the 2005 earthquake, Indus floods in 2010 and Sindh floods in 2011.

Politically and administratively, Pakistan is a federation of four provinces the Islamabad Capital Territory and federally administered areas. Since the passing of the 18th Amendment to the Constitution, all responsibilities for water supply and sanitation have been devolved to provincial departments and district and tehsil/taluka level local governments.

Federal and provincial governments have produced a number of policies and strategies, including national drinking water and sanitation strategies, a Government of Punjab Sanitation Policy and a Government of Sindh Sanitation Strategy.

Official figures from 2008/9 state that 89% of the population received water from piped systems or tubewells and 78% of households had access to a toilet. However, it cannot be assumed that all water obtained from piped systems and tubewells was potable and that all toilets were hygienic and regularly used. Coverage for both water supply and sanitation is higher in urban than in rural areas and there are significant differences in coverage between different provinces and districts.

WaterAid globally and in Pakistan

WaterAid Pakistan was set up in 2006. It currently has three programmes, one at the national level and the other two covering Punjab and Sindh. The evaluation assessed the Pakistan programme against WaterAid's key aims, which emphasises the need for a rights-based approach to sanitation, places strong emphasis on capacity-building and recognises the need to support governments and service providers to develop capacity to deliver safe water.

The Terms of Reference require that the evaluation includes a high-level assessment of the country programme and make recommendations as to WaterAid Pakistan's future direction, using lessons from current and past practice to improve future performance.

Key sectoral issues

Pakistan has water and sanitation sector policies but implementation of policy is weak. Coordination between different Government departments and between the Government and non-government organisations is poor.

Available funds are often wasted, because of poor decision-making, weak budgeting procedures, inadequate designs and low quality construction. The immediate reason for this situation is lack of capacity but this in turn is a consequence of weak institutions and the undue influence wielded by politicians. There is a general lack of an information-based planning culture and limited capacity to deal with equity and inclusion issues.

There is currently no adequately funded and widely accepted home within the Government for sanitation and hygiene promotion. Government institutions pay little attention to equity and inclusion issues when planning projects and programmes.

Main findings relating to programme relevance

WaterAid Pakistan's response to sector challenges

Until now, WaterAid Pakistan's activities have mainly involved engagement with sector institutions at the national level and small-scale activities at the local level. The need now is to move towards a more strategic approach that engages with sector organisations at all levels and goes beyond contacts with individuals to engage with institutions as a whole. WaterAid Pakistan's ability to engage in policy dialogue and contribute to policy implementation is severely limited by its lack of access to specialist expertise.

Targeting for improved rights, equity and inclusion

WaterAid Pakistan is working in some deprived rural districts, and has responded to the needs of flood victims in the poorer parts of both Sindh and Punjab. The record of involvement with disadvantaged and minority communities is good but targeting within

communities could be better with increased focus on the needs of women and the most marginalised and poorest groups.

WaterAid Pakistan's response to rights and equity and inclusion issues would be strengthened if it worked more closely with other organisations on these issues. Processes and standard documents require modification to ensure that they place sufficient emphasis on equity and inclusion. There is a particular need to bring more women into WaterAid Pakistan's partner teams and develop formal systems for assessing rights and equity and inclusion issues.

Findings on effectiveness

WaterAid Pakistan scores well on the number of people reached by a programme. The *WaterAid 2010-11 Annual Report* gives the number of people reached through WaterAid Pakistan-supported initiatives as 330,185. This includes 266,174 people reached through relief services after the 2010 floods so the number of people reached through 'mainstream' programmes was about 64,000.

However, there are some issues with regard to the effectiveness of interventions. In particular:

- More needs to be done to ensure that community-managed solid waste collection services and Water and Sanitation Community Organisations (WASCOs) are institutionally and financially sustainable.
- Hygiene promotion approaches could be improved, taking account of lessons learnt in the field about what does and does not work.
- The quality of 'internal' infrastructure built by community groups can be poor. Community members often adopt cheap construction methods in order to reduce capital costs, which result in higher life-cycle costs.
- WaterAid Pakistan needs to do more to ensure that policies are implemented. In particular, few Government officials accept the component sharing approach and there is, as yet, no agreement on the design and construction standards to be used for 'internal' services.
- The ability of household water treatment filters and effective micro-organism (EM) sewage treatment units to remove pathogens and other harmful contaminants has not been adequately tested.

WaterAid Pakistan partner's effectiveness is constrained by lack of relevant skills and there is a need for a more formal WaterAid Pakistan approach to capacity building for field activities, which are grounded in a critical approach to ideas and approaches. Issues requiring this critical approach include the performance of technologies, the role of community organisations in facilities management and the sustainability of behaviour changes resulting from hygiene promotion activities.

In fields such as hygiene promotion and menstrual hygiene management, more needs to be done to link promotion of good practice with action to ensure that the materials and facilities needed to allow people to follow that good practice are available.

To be effective, interventions must be sustainable over time. This will require a more systematic approach to programme monitoring and a review of WaterAid Pakistan's partner agreements, most of which are only for one year and so do not guarantee the continuity required for the development of sustainable longer-term initiatives.

Given the high risk to sustainability of WASH facilities arising from disasters such as the recent floods, there is also a need to explore ways of incorporating disaster risk reduction approaches into initiatives undertaken in vulnerable areas.

Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

WaterAid Pakistan has developed and broadened its activities since 2006. It is a strong organisation with dedicated and capable team. The recommendations listed below should help WaterAid Pakistan to continue to grow and develop in future years. In general, they are consistent with proposals already contained in WaterAid Pakistan's 2011-15 *Country Strategy*, which in turn are in line with WaterAid's *Global Strategy*. They will help WaterAid Pakistan to engage with the sector issues identified above in a realistic way, recognising the constraints imposed by WaterAid Pakistan's relatively small size and limited financial resources.

Recommendations relating to WaterAid Pakistan's future focus and activities

1. WaterAid Pakistan can and should work with other organisations to ensure that approaches to policy implementation are realistic, recognising the many constraints that exist.
2. WaterAid Pakistan should consider options for expanding its range of partners to include Government organisations and the small-scale private sector. This should increase its ability to influence policy formulation and implementation.
3. WaterAid Pakistan's focus in relation to improved sector coordination should be on the links between local government and non-governmental service providers. It should act as a broker for the development of approaches and standards that are acceptable to both stakeholder groups.
4. WaterAid Pakistan initiate an early assessment of the efficacy of EM technology and point of use water filters and the long-term sustainability of rainwater harvesting, community led total sanitation (CLTS) and community management of solid waste collection services.

5. WaterAid Pakistan should adopt a more systematic approach to identifying marginalised communities and excluded persons and ensuring their meaningful participation in decision-making forums.
6. WaterAid Pakistan should carry out an early assessment of possibilities for linking with health departments, focusing particularly on the possible use of their field staff, female health visitors and female health workers for grassroots-level sanitation and hygiene promotion work.
7. WaterAid Pakistan should continue to work on budgeting issues but must seek improved links with institutions, rather than individuals.
8. WaterAid Pakistan and its partners should continue to engage with efforts to improve the community management of rural water supply and drainage systems, promoting and supporting systems that are commercially viable and hence institutionally sustainable.

Recommendations with regard to WaterAid Pakistan, its partners and their internal systems

1. The draft partnership framework should be revisited and applied. Partner selection criteria should explicitly incorporate strategic and programmatic considerations. Longer-term partner agreements should be explored where relevant.
2. WaterAid Pakistan's National Programme should be renamed and re-orientated, with an increased focus on advocacy, at the national and provincial levels, the latter in partnership with WaterAid Pakistan's provincial-level programmes.
3. WaterAid Pakistan should enhance its capacity to deal with technical issues, business planning for WASCOs and menstrual hygiene matters. This is likely to require a combination of new posts within WaterAid Pakistan and use of external specialists. Planning for a more detailed assessment of capacity needs should be started immediately. Efforts to identify needs should start immediately.
4. Both WaterAid Pakistan and its partners should seek to appoint more women in senior posts.
5. Agreements with partner organisations should be more specific about partner capacity development objectives. Outcomes relating to those objectives should be rigorously monitored.

Monitoring systems are too complex and need to be reviewed. They should provide the information that is required for decision-making without making unreasonable demands on the time of WaterAid Pakistan team members. This recommendation requires action and support from WaterAid UK.