

Water supply service delivery in urban and small towns

What did WSSSRP II achieve?



The Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Reform Programme Phase II concluded in May 2017, but what progress was made since it began in 2013?

Four legacy factsheets summarise what the Programme was designed to do, what it did, and what it leaves behind. Number three looks at the third WSSSRP II objective: *to support urban and small towns water institutions in the six states to deliver sustainable water supply services.*

”The Programme has made it possible for thousands of Nigerians to have improved access to water”

Alfred Obeten – WSSSRP II Water & Sanitation Expert, Cross River

WSSSRP II was the successor programme to WSSSRP I. Whereas the first phase had delivered better water supply and sanitation through its own structures, the second phase was designed to deliver the same WASH improvements but this time working within state agencies such as the ministries of water resources, the urban water boards and small town water authorities. WSSSRP II had four objectives, its third objective was to “support urban and small towns water institutions in the six focal states deliver a sustainable water supply service”. This third component was designed to prove that the state-level institutional reforms undertaken as part of objective 2 would bear fruit if supported financially and technically by the EU, Federal government and the states themselves.

Lessons from WSSSRP I had demonstrated that a second phase needed to address these issues to be relevant:

- ▶ Procurement of the works contracts had a major negative impact on the community management, financial sustainability, M&E and overall sustainability of the project.
- ▶ The legislative framework for the nation’s water resources needed completion with the active participation of, and in consultation with, stakeholders across the country.
- ▶ Continued advocacy was required to support stronger political buy-in and understanding of the needs for institutional reforms in the water sector.
- ▶ Enormous efforts are required to improve water service delivery in urban areas requiring major investments and serious changes to the way the ‘water business’ is managed in Nigeria.
- ▶ Community-based management should be integrated into the whole life of a WATSAN project. Significant training is needed for WCAs from project design through to operation.

How WSSSRP II helped develop Policy and State Institutions



Key achievements 2013 – 2017

In all six states and for all Programme LGAs:

a. Improved management and financial viability of urban water

- ▶ Baseline surveys conducted
- ▶ Inventories established of water supply and sanitation facilities
- ▶ WSS technology options selection for chosen small towns carried out
- ▶ Strategies and Guidelines for community involvement in urban water supplies developed
- ▶ States ODF Roadmaps supported

b. Urban water works are rehabilitated and improved

- ▶ CLTS Triggering for ODF compliance carried out in urban and small towns
- ▶ TAT supported training on improving billing and revenue collection
- ▶ TAT facilitated and supported design for new and rehabilitated schemes
- ▶ Tender dossiers for works contracts in all six States completed. Works contracts for small towns awarded in Anambra and Osun States

c. Small town water schemes rehabilitated or built

- ▶ WCAs established in small towns and trained on community management and basic operation and maintenance of scheme operation
- ▶ PIA, LGA WASH, WCAs and VHPs trained on construction, monitoring and O&M
- ▶ PIA supported to develop supervision strategy for the works contracts

d. Community management strategy for small town water supply facilities developed and implemented

- ▶ Guidelines developed for WCAs Coalitions at State, LGA and Zonal Levels
- ▶ WCAs' Coalition Constitution templates produced
- ▶ Community Management Field Manual finalised and being used to train WCAs
- ▶ PSP models piloted and strategies developed
- ▶ VHPs, EHCs and State Task Group on Sanitation (STGS) formed. Environmental Impact Assessments and Asset inventories are being prepared in some States
- ▶ WCAs across the six states are functional, active and performing very well
- ▶ The WCA system of community involvement and responsibility for operation and maintenance of small town water schemes now the standard for all six participating States and is being replicated extensively across the sector with significant success wherever it is used.

”Our WCA is having to grow to meet the pressure new households are putting on the water supply”

Gambo Natajo — Chair, Water Consumers Association, Birnin-Kudu

Has WSSSRP II made a lasting difference?

One test of the legacy of a Programme is the extent to which initiatives are taken up outside its immediate realm of activity; where there’s emulation, it’s an indication that change has taken hold. The scope of WSSSRP II was actually quite limited: it worked in just six states out of a total of 36, and in each of those it was active in just two LGAs. But during the lifetime of the project, these focal states started to replicate WSSSRP II initiatives in their other LGAs. This suggests that the organisational changes are starting to pay off, and that reform is becoming the new normal.

By bringing the operation of water facilities closer to users, WSSSRP II was also able to unlock the latent potential in communities to look after their own water supply and sanitation. Under WSSSRP II, each community was required to raise 5% of the total cost before works started. The success of raising the necessary counterpart funding from communities was a sign they were committed to O&M after construction. Because local “ownership” was already mobilised through Water Consumer Associations, this makes the long term prospects for water supply and sanitation more assured.

At the same time, WSSSRP II was able to influence how some states looked at their service delivery outside the programme LGAs: some dysfunctional water schemes in small towns were rehabilitated in small towns using the states’ own resources. And, although it took some considerable time, by the end of the Programme, all states had been able to identify the 30% necessary to unlock the €20 million that the EU had made available for works.

Yet, to bring a *sustainable* reliable and safe water supply to urban areas and small towns still remains a challenge. Ultimately a secure water supply depends on making sure revenue from tariffs matches supply costs. But in an environment where subventions from the state budgets are unpredictable this means that State Water Boards and Small Town Agencies need the freedom to make sure they can operate on cost recovery principles. In other words consumers need to pay directly for the service they receive. But accepting the economics of water still remains politically sensitive since no-one likes to pay higher bills, and the impact on the poor can be harsh.

To find out more about how WSSSRP II has contributed to better water, sanitation and hygiene service delivery for Nigeria, and to download Factsheets 1, 2 and 4 visit:

- ▶ wsssrp.org
- ▶ europa.eu/capacity4dev/wsssrp-2/

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