

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Background

The WaterAid Nigeria Country Programme was evaluated for the first time in February 2002 by a team of three using WaterAid's new standard terms of reference (ToR). The Country Programme as a whole comprises:

- Oju and Obi project in Benue State (begun 1996)
- Projects in Plateau and Bauchi (begun mid 2000)
- Logo and Vandeikya projects in Benue State (begun early 2001)

The evaluation focused almost exclusively on the Oju and Obi project, although partnership development and capacity building of WaterAid's five new NGO project partners in Plateau and Bauchi States was also evaluated.

All six objectives of the standard ToR were investigated in Oju and Obi, that is - water and sanitation, hygiene promotion, sustainability (community management, financing, linkages with other programmes), monitoring, advocacy, partnership development and capacity building.

WaterAid Nigeria initially supported the Etche Committee of Friends in Cross River State. In 1996 DFID contracted WaterAid to work in Benue State in partnership with the WASU (Water & Sanitation Unit) of Oju LGA (Local Government Area) and later with Obi LGA when Oju divided into two. The DFID funding is due to finish in March 2002. In July 2000 WaterAid began working with 3 partner NGOs in Bauchi State - DEC (Development Exchange Centre), WIN (Women in Nigeria) and DWMCU (Dass Women Multipurpose Co-operative Union) - and 2 NGOs in Plateau State - POD-ECWA (People Orientated Development - Evangelical Church of West Africa) and the Plateau State Chapter of COWAN (Country Women Association of Nigeria). WaterAid also recently began working with two more LGA partners, Logo and Vandeikya, in Benue State.

### Methodology

The methodology used during the evaluation comprised a review of the documents, key participant interviews, group interviews and observation. Those interviewed included WaterAid and WASU staff, BERWASSA and UNICEF staff.

The evaluation team was divided across two locations with two team members visiting Oju and Obi for the majority of the period of the evaluation. The third team member visited Oju and Obi for two days, and spent the remainder of his time in Plateau and Bauchi. In Oju and Obi visits were made to a sample of 10 communities where meetings took place with WASCOM (village Water and Sanitation Committee) members, women beneficiaries, caretakers and technicians. The evaluation also drew upon the Obi/Oju Output to Purpose Review undertaken by DFID in October 2000 and its recommendations were followed up.

### Findings

The **general findings** were that the Oju and Obi project is an impressive achievement. It has evolved in a dynamic fashion with a clear engagement by those involved in project implementation. The WASUs have adopted a wide range of innovative approaches across a number of project components, with different methodologies having been tried and tested. The Oju and Obi project serves as a model of good practice and many valuable lessons have been learnt. There has been effective capacity building of the WASUs by WaterAid, with the result that the WASUs appear to have achieved a great degree of independence from WaterAid in respect of technical ability and work at the

community level. Commitment of WASUs and WaterAid staff has been high, in spite of a difficult context which has included an uncoordinated water sector, changes of WASU and WaterAid staff, and of LGA Chairmen. WaterAid has also facilitated the establishment of WSMCs (Water & Sanitation Management Committees) to oversee and manage the work of the WASUs. Private sector capacity has been developed with a range of local service providers, for example the six sani-centres, of which two are now financially independent of the project and supplying non project communities. Community demand for WASU intervention has clearly been created, with 100 outstanding applications for water supply in Oju at present. Impressive and appropriate project tools have been developed and used, with strong ownership by the WASUs and the WASCOMS. The project, which may once have been seen as donor driven, now appears to be fully owned by the WASUs.

The most **outstanding obstacle** in Oju and Obi currently appears to be the delayed integration of the WASUs into the LGA system, which has not yet taken place. A draft document outlining this integration process and accompanying budget is currently waiting ratification, and there is concern that integration should take place before the forthcoming local government election. Should this fail to happen the sustainability of the project is under threat with a danger that the model will be lost.

The main findings relating to **water and sanitation** were that most project water sources comprise of boreholes with hand pumps in Oju and a mixture of hand dug wells, rainwater harvesting tanks and a small number of boreholes in Obi. Project objectives have been met and exceeded with the construction of 91 fully functioning community managed water supplies and 986 latrines. WASU staff still felt disappointed at the decrease in demand for latrines which had occurred due to an increase in the price of slab materials, and communities not viewing latrines as a priority. The project is the main provider of water and sanitation facilities in Oju and Obi LGAs. The private sector liaises with WASCOM members and a differential subsidy system has been implemented, both within and between communities.

The *recommendations* include:-

- the need for WASUs to actively follow up the older projects.
- for WASUs to ensure consistency of training for community artisans and follow them up, especially for pump mechanics.
- for WASUs to collaborate with BERWASSA on training for water quality control and for information exchange.
- to fully utilise roof catchment areas in order to maximise rainwater collection.
- to equip rainwater harvesting jars with washout and overflow.
- for WaterAid to help link Oju and Obi project with new donors.
- to attempt to re-motivate communities to undertake latrine construction.
- for WASCOMS to follow up on the implementation of relevant community bye-laws.
- for WASCOMS to provide WASUs with clear information on pit latrine coverage.

The main findings relating to **hygiene promotion** were that a new hygiene promotion strategy has redirected the project to take a broader approach. Voluntary hygiene promoters based in the communities are starting to be included in the programme and to collaborate with government health staff and religious groups. Visits to the communities by the evaluation team revealed that the key hygiene behaviours targeted were appropriate and knowledge of them appeared to be high among WASCOMS and other community members. Behaviours which both groups found hard to influence were identified. However, the full impact of the project is as yet unknown.

There has been good use of PRA tools throughout the life of the project, however in spite of the WASCOMS undertaking hygiene promotion enthusiastically and regularly, they appear to be using quite didactic teaching methodologies and would benefit from the increasing use of participatory

methods. Hygiene promotional materials, although developed by the project, have not yet been printed and distributed to WASCOMs. Base-line data had not been collected from the selected 8 pilot villages on a formal basis in a way which could be effectively analysed. None of the collected data had been analysed or written up. Targets to measure impact do not appear to have been set and it was therefore difficult to ascertain whether the OPR objectives relating to hygiene promotion were met. Monitoring of hygiene promotion needs improving and there is no community self-monitoring taking place.

The school hygiene programme appears to be going well in 4 pilot schools, although child-to-child materials are not being used.

The *recommendations* include:-

- to undertake an impact assessment in Oju and Obi using an external and local/regional consultant.
- to print and distribute the existing hygiene tools to WASCOMs to help facilitate more participatory teaching.
- to ensure that the focus of the hygiene promotion interventions includes key hygiene behaviours in addition to those connected with latrine building and use, as well as continuing to promote knowledge on the faecal-oral routes and knowledge of the relationship between dirty water and health.
- to re-focus on collection and analysis of base-line data in the 8 pilot villages and in particular to set clear targets to measure impact so as to accurately assess hygiene behaviour change.
- to be cautious about recruiting too many new volunteer hygiene promoters to the project as recommended in the new hygiene strategy, and bear in mind the demand on resources for their follow-up and support.
- for WASUs to follow-up on latrine building in the pilot schools and provide encouragement to complete construction.
- to develop and adapt child-to-child materials suitable for use in schools, and encourage more exchange visits between teachers in different schools.
- for WASUs to consider fully funding the cost of slabs for schools.

Investigation of the **community management** of facilities showed that the WASCOMs were all functioning, but with noticeably different levels of activity, and in general they reported that they were able to carry out their responsibilities. These included mobilising the community to provide the labour for the installation of wells and latrines, the management of water distribution, raising money for the installation and maintenance of boreholes, operation and maintenance, hygiene promotion and in some cases the monitoring of hygiene behaviour. However, when project water sources ran dry, communities became reluctant to participate and the WASCOMs felt their credibility was in question. WASCOMs appeared to have too many responsibilities and the new cadre of volunteer hygiene promoters will help to address this problem. WASCOMs had good recall of topics they were trained in, but had not received formal follow-up training other than discussions held during their quarterly meetings with the WASUs. This was in part due to the large number of communities versus the few WASU staff. Most community members interviewed appeared to be happy with the work of their WASCOMs and felt that they represented their communities. Some WASCOMs reported that it took a long time to raise money to install the water supplies and latrines and they expressed difficulties in mobilising communities to pay their contribution for the latrine slabs.

Water tariffs varied between communities and sometimes changed throughout the year, the most vulnerable were given free access. In the main, tariffs were collected only for bore hole and pump maintenance. Tariffs were collected in different ways, some before a pump breakdown and others in response to it. The WASCOMs appeared to effectively manage the subsidy system for latrine building

by allocating vouchers according to the vulnerability of beneficiaries. The project linked up with other organisations both at community level and at the LGA level. WaterAid and UNICEF are about enter into a new contract together.

The *recommendations* include:-

- for WASCOMs to receive follow-up training.
- for WASCOMs to receive more support in the difficult area of latrine uptake.
- for WASUs to monitor how WASCOMs manage water funds.

**Monitoring** has taken a back seat to project implementation, in particular at community level. Regular reporting has been undertaken by WASUs to WaterAid. However at the community level although WASUs have undertaken follow-up on an informal and adhoc basis, it is only recently that a community monitoring format and a school monitoring format have been finalised. It is intended that monitoring will be undertaken by using external community monitors. The monitoring format could be improved to make analysis easier. There are currently no plans for communities to undertake monitoring themselves. The range of indicators used to monitor the project is not broad enough to include all project components and targets have not been set.

Main *recommendations* include:-

- that the draft community monitoring format is finalised and implemented in the near future.
- to ensure that all objectives in the new hygiene promotion strategy are also included in the monitoring format.
- to ensure that monitoring results feed back into planning to inform decision making.
- to encourage the community to monitor behaviour change themselves.
- the range of indicators used should be broadened in order to monitor all components of projects including management, community participation, financial aspects, gender and mobilisation and partnership development and capacity.
- clear targets should be set for all project components.

**Partnership development and capacity building** of Oju and Obi LGAs (Benue State) and 5 NGOs in Plateau and Bauchi States were evaluated. During its 5 year relationship with them, WaterAid has made a considerable, and successful, investment in Oju and Obi LGAs. The skills and capabilities of the WASUs have increased significantly; and 'ownership' of the project by the LGA markedly improved, assisted by the introduction of Water and Sanitation Management Committees (WSMCs) to act as intermediaries between WASU, LGA Chairmen and LGCs (Local Government Councils). Full integration of WASUs into the LGA system has, however, yet to be achieved. Being still in the early stages of partnership with the NGOs in Plateau and Bauchi, WaterAid has focused on building their capacity to implement water and sanitation projects, and develop organisationally. Links between them, the LGC, and the State are in the process of being strengthened.

*Recommendations* include:

- WaterAid's support for WASUs work to continue in the future where possible as they is a danger of project activities coming to a halt if integration does not take place soon.
- Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) should be reviewed and finalised in order to sharpen the focus of both WaterAid and its partners on their specific roles and responsibilities. This is an essential pre-requisite for effective partnership.
- partners to be assisted to develop their own strategic plans, which in turn will provide the basis for the annual, quarterly and other operational plans.
- WaterAid to continue its capacity building activities with partners, especially NGO partners in Bauchi and Plateau States, while organising refresher training Obi and Oju WASU & WASCOMs.
- WaterAid to increase staff numbers so as to adequately support existing and new partners in Benue, Bauchi and Plateau States.

The **advocacy component** of the project was developing well, with the identification of priorities followed by the recent production of four information sheets on key issues. The process leading to their production has been very participatory involving WaterAid's partners in Oju and Obi. WaterAid Nigeria intends to expand its work in advocacy in the near future, and although a small player in the sector, appears an influential, vocal and respected one. WaterAid is increasingly being sought by donors anxious to capture the experiences and lessons learned from Oju and Obi. WaterAid is keen to attempt to influence all levels of the sector and to assist in the operationalisation of the new national water policy.

*Recommendations* include:

- for WaterAid to continue to focus on the development of its advocacy work and in particular to assist with the production of guidelines for operationalising the new national policy, as well as promoting models which are community-based and provide a good level of accountability.
- to formally include an advocacy component in the new country strategy with a view to developing an advocacy policy, strategy and plan with SMART objectives.
- to continue to produce information sheets in a participatory fashion as the opportunity arises.
- to create a full time advocacy post to develop the programme and respond to the increasing demands for information and examples of best practice. For the budget to adequately reflect this new post and advocacy activities. For WaterAid to take note of the pitfalls of not having enough capacity within the team to respond adequately.
- to continue to encourage WaterAid staff and project partners to share their experiences both within Nigeria and WaterAid internationally, including using the email forum WaterAid Exchange. For WaterAid London to assist WaterAid Nigeria to take part in international conferences for information sharing.
- for WaterAid London to raise the profile of WaterAid Nigeria internationally in order to share the valuable lessons learned.

Lessons learned for **project replication** relate to the importance of the integration of WASU into the LGA at the inception of the project. This can be achieved by securing the full commitment of the LGA in respect to counterpart funding, human resource allocation and agreement on the roles and responsibilities of the LGA, WaterAid, project partners and the WSMCs (where these have been introduced).

*Recommendations* to be considered when replicating the Oju and Obi model are:

- for the integration of WASUs into the LGA to be undertaken at the onset of project implementation with full initial commitment of the LGA.
- that a memorandum of understanding is signed at the initial stages of the project between WaterAid and its new partner and, where relevant, between WaterAid and the LGA/State as a matter of priority.
- to tailor the existing vulnerability assessment so as to make it shorter and more easily applicable.
- for WaterAid to continue to promote a warm relationship with the State implementing agencies and share information where possible.
- to replicate the effective model for working with the private sector Associate Partners.
- That sanitation should, where possible, be initiated before the hardware for water facilities.
- that latrine subsidies from project implementers remain the same as those used in Obi and Oju in order to maximise the ownership of the project.

The report also includes suggestions to reduce the costs of future new projects.

WaterAid and UNICEF are currently planning to **collaborate** although partnership contracts have not yet been formalised. It is envisaged that WaterAid will act as an adviser to UNICEF for the software component of its water and sanitation programmes.

*Recommendations* include:-

- for WaterAid to avoid overstretching itself in the new forthcoming programme of work and to increase its staff base accordingly.
- to draw on the skills of the WASU staff in Oju and Obi where possible, and time permits, ensuring their existing workload is not neglected.
- to draw on the skills of other WaterAid country programme human resources in the region where possible.
- regarding the new UNICEF-WaterAid contract, for WaterAid to consider having a longer initial consultancy input (e.g. 6 months), followed by shorter follow-up visits, in order to effectively kick start the project.
- for WaterAid to continue to support Oju and Obi where possible, in particular to ensure that this model project can be drawn upon and does not collapse.

The application of the new **standard terms of reference** is also discussed in the report and *recommendations* for future evaluations include:-

- in country programmes with projects spread out over different geographical areas to consider carefully which projects need to be evaluated as a matter of priority given that the standard terms of reference have six objectives and a limited time period allocated. Also to consider the pitfalls of splitting up the team during the duration of the evaluation.
- to ensure that all 6 objectives are equally divided between the team members.
- where evaluation team members are WaterAid project partners or staff from other Country Programmes, for the WaterAid Country Representative who is organising the evaluation to liaise directly with his/her counterpart regarding the issuing of contracts and payment of fees.
- for Country Representatives to be aware that they will need to liaise closely with the team leader prior to the evaluation to help him/her plan.
- for Country Representatives to compile a list of relevant country programme documents held in country and to circulate to all evaluation team members.
- to clarify the role and involvement of the WaterAid London staff in the evaluation e.g. issuing of contracts for UK based consultants, assessing visa requirements, sending of briefing materials to evaluation team members.