

Back Donor Project No (if any): N/A
Name of your Organisation: Norwegian Church Aid
Local Partner(s): CHAM & EAM

ABOUT THE EVALUATION

Evaluation year: 2005
Conducted by: Kim Rudolph - Lund
Country: Malawi
Region: Southern Africa Region
Theme/DAC sector: Water & Sanitation Programme

SUMMARY OF THE EVALUATION

Title of Evaluation Report:

Malawi Watsan Documentation

Background:

Focus of this Evaluation is on WASHE Program that was implemented in 2002 following a pilot project on selected CHAM health units, a community and school.

Purpose/ Objective:

A pilot project with specific goal of helping to set up similar programs in other countries.

Methodology:

The consultant used different methods to collect information. Some of which was through project documents, progress reports, discussions with committee members and selected communities at selected areas, discussions with NCA, CHAM and EAM project coordinators, ICL as consultants and Site visits to selected health units.

Key Findings:

1. Composition of village committees very important and emphasis should be on more women in the committees for empowerment.
2. Position of Treasurer in the committees is best handled a woman.
3. Community based management (CBM) require much follow-up.
4. Community involvement in planning and decision making a must for ownership and sustainability.
5. Community ownership of installation still a big challenge.
6. Involvement of local Churches and communities in general is a good strategy for community activities like Water & Sanitation.
7. Lack of interest by proprietors in the Water & Sanitation Project.
8. Capacity building and transfer of skill required for CHAM / NCA to shoulder more responsibility on water issues than the Consultant.
9. Committees not very committed to practice what they learn during trainings especially on income generating activities for maintenance of installations.

Recommendations:

1. More time should be allocated for good planning, proper & thorough assessment
2. Stakeholders should work together in all stages of project management cycle with clear roles and responsibilities.
3. Issues of community ownership and sustainability should be discussed early in the programme.
4. Use of appropriate technology, participatory methods of training with aim of transfer of skills.
5. Inclusion of health centres and district structures should be involved in monitoring of activities.

Comments from Norwegian Church Aid (if any):

1. We agree with the Consultants's findings and that they are not new. We experience them all the time when we monitor the program and we are doing something about them.
2. We are already working on the Consultant's recommendations.



MEMO

TO: Anders Haaland
FROM: Kim Rudolph-Lund

COPY:
DATE: December 19, 2005
REF.:

SUBJECT.: MALAWI WATSAN DOCUMENTATION

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1 INTRODUCTION

Since its establishment in 2002, the Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) office in Lilongwe has had a focus on water, sanitation and health education (WASHE). This focus is to provide accessible potable water for both the Christian Health Association Malawi (CHAM) units and the neighbouring communities that do not have potable water. The right to water includes empowerment and ownership by institutions and communities when it comes to access maintenance and the use of the water source for further development and knowledge building in the communities.

The WASHE focus arose as a part of the NCA Malawi Country Program. This program is divided into the following six areas:

- HIV/AIDS with food security as an integrated part
- Health
- **WA**ter, **S**anitation and **H**ealth **E**ducation (WASHE)



- Community Safety and Empowerment
- Organized Development of local partner organizations
- Emergency Intervention

This document focuses mainly on the WASHE program that was implemented in 2002 and will be extended the next three to five years. This program is the largest NCA project within WATSAN. It is being conducted together with the Christian Health Association of Malawi (CHAM). COWI AS is providing technical and administrative support to the program through their local office Interconsult Ltd (ICL).

In addition, NCA has through their partnership with the Evangelical Association of Malawi (EAM), an umbrella body for the evangelical churches and organizations in Malawi, funded the implementation of a fresh water and safe sanitation program in the areas within the Mpando CCAP mission.

NCA is also working together with the Prison Fellowship of Malawi (PFM) to improve the water and sanitation conditions for the inmates at selected prisons (Mangochi, Mwanza and Mzuzu Prisons).

The NCA agreement with Living Waters Church International is a food security program and therefore not included in this documentation.

This documentation identifies lessons learned and the practical fundamentals of running programs similar to the WASHE project and EAM program. This documentation is a pilot project with the specific goal of helping to set up similar programs in other countries.

The following people were contacted from November 24 to December 2 during the visit in Malawi:

- Irene Wenaas Holte, NCA Resident Representative
- Margaret Thindwa, NCA employee responsible for WATSAN
- Joanna Kaphiri-Nkhoma, NCA finance officer
- Tomas Bøhler Torsen, COWI/ICL consulting engineer
- Chester Makhuwira, ICL water technician
- Eliza Mhango, CHAM WASHE coordinator
- Dingiswayo Jere, EAM programs officer
- Agness Kilomera, Norwegian Royal Embassy in Lilongwa
- Ruth H. Mwabdir, CHAM executive director

The following sites were visited during several field trips in the same time period:

- Mabiri Health Centre
- Endindeni Health Centre and villages
- Mzuzu prison
- Luwazi Health Centre
- Kapiri Health Centre
- Chididi Health Centre
- Thavite Health Centre
- Mpando project

The final reports for Phases 1 and 2 are under progress and were not finished before this report submission. The rough draft of this document was submitted to COWI and NCA and comments have been included in the report.

I wish to thank all of the persons and institutions contacted and especially Margaret, Tomas and Eliza for their help.



2 WASHE

2.1 PILOT PHASE

2.1.1 BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS

The pilot project description written in 2002 (NCA, 2002) stated that NCA Malawi was in the process of defining programme activities. Water supply and sanitation was one of three prioritised thematic programmes of NCA, the other two being health and HIV/Aids.

CHAM was selected as one of NCA's partners in Malawi. This was in accordance with NCA's general practice of working through local partners to improve implementation and success rates by utilizing any available local knowledge in addressing the most pressing local problems. This cooperation developed out of an initiative taken by CHAM executive director Ruth Mwabdir in 2002 toward Dan Church Aid (DCA) who furthered her request to the Norwegian Embassy in Lilongwe. The Embassy and NCA identified priority areas where they could support CHAM, health being one of these areas. Through the health program, water and eventually sanitation were included to form the WASHE project. CHAM is a national NGO in Malawi who runs commercially close to 40% of the health institutions in the country.

NCA proposed to support CHAM by improving WATSAN conditions in the health centres (HCs). At the time NCA had limited experience with program implementation in Malawi and proposed a pilot project of limited size and time frame. The pilot project was to give NCA an impression of partners' and contractors' capacity as well as a basis for estimation of project cost. The proposed duration of the initialisation phase was six months in the second half of 2002 and first three months of 2003.

The overall goals of the programme were to:

- Reduce the number of people in rural areas being infected by water-borne diseases
- Reduce the number of deaths at HCs due to lack of potable water, trained personnel and hygienic measures
- Reduce the infection rate of HIV
- Empower women to take part in decision making and thereby become active parts in community life
- Provide water facilities in an environmentally sustainable way

The program objectives are to develop

- Trained village committees with a gender sensitive and rights based approach on the following issues
 - Water borne diseases and general health hygiene
 - Awareness on the importance of using pit latrines
 - HIV/AIDS issues
 - Operation and maintenance skills among beneficiary communities for servicing the WATSAN facilities and equipment
 - Human rights issues related to water
- Potable water supply that suits the demand for both the HCs and adjacent villages
- Improving working conditions for staff at HCs and reduce brain drain from the HCs

The pilot phase of the WASHE program was to be performed by NCA, CHAM and ICL (subcontractor to NCA). NCA acted as a donor to CHAM, participating in the overall planning of the program together with CHAM. CHAM was to be responsible for project management, performing the day to day work on the project and coordinate the implementation. ICL was to provide technical assistance and assist CHAM in implementation of the project. A key aspect of the pilot phase was to build capacity at CHAM to run water and sanitation projects. Three health centres and one primary school were selected for the pilot phase: Alinafe, Nambuma and Kasina health centres and the



Chikololere primary school. The water supply and sanitation facilities were improved / installed with various technologies at these locations.

Although the pilot phase was deemed successful, there were many obstacles, challenges and problems (CHAM, 2003-1). This was the first WATSAN project to be implemented at CHAM with NCA as a donor. CHAM was not familiar with NCA project management and lacked qualified personnel to manage the program. The main constraint as identified by CHAM was not technical insight but rather inadequate capacity to handle the envisaged amount of work. The resource requirements for using Community Based Management (CBM) were also underestimated, even though this CBM program had been previously documented by the Ministry of Water and Development (MoWD). It was recommended that CHAM hire two additional personnel to be responsible for the WASHE programme.

It was noted in the assessment report that the NCA team showed “great experience” in CMB practices and the training conducted by NCA was deemed of good quality. NCA conducted the planning and the training without involving CHAM personnel, even though capacity building had earlier been identified as a key aspect of the pilot project. This was due to the lack of qualified personnel at CHAM, a deficiency that was to be rectified before the assessment study.

ICL carried out technical designs and specification of the individual projects and implemented the pilot phase. Their approach of consulting MoWD allowed implementation compatible with government policy and guidelines.

The pilot phase revealed that CHAM had no up to date information on WATSAN at the CHAM units. The following assessment was divided into two steps:

1. a general assessment study of all CHAM units with focus on WATSAN
2. a prioritising of the assessed CHAM units requiring intervention.

2.2 ASSESSMENT

The assessment study of the CHAM units was carried out from January to April 2003. The main aim of the assessment study was to gather information to get a reliable picture of the CHAM units (CHAM, 2003-2).

2.2.1 BASELINE INFORMATION

The assessment study involved personnel from CHAM (five), NCA (three) and ICL (one). From this group, two teams were composed: the first team was composed of two CHAM officers along with a hired consultant; the second team was composed of two hired consultants. For the purpose of the assessment study, draft questionnaires were constructed by ICL with assessment study personnel giving comments and input for improvement. After an initial test survey at two HCs and some small adjustments, the two teams performed the assessments using these questionnaires. The teams met weekly at ICL's offices in Lilongwe to review and plan the ongoing work.

The baseline survey (starting first at the HCs and later extending to the villages) was intended to:

- Sensitize village leadership on the need for hygiene
- Orient the District Commissioner (DC) on the forthcoming WASHE projects

155 facilities listed in CHAM's facility directory of November 2002 were used as the basis for the assessment study.



2.2.2 SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT STUDY FINDINGS

The data collected during the assessment of CHAM's facilities served as the baseline for the consecutive project phases. This data was to serve as a guideline only. The assessment divided the CHAM facilities and arrived at the following three groups:

- Facilities with sufficient water supply
 - 32 with no record of cholera / diarrhoea
 - 35 with a record of cholera / diarrhoea
- Facilities that require minor repairs
 - 17 with no record of cholera / diarrhoea
 - 12 with a record of cholera / diarrhoea
- Facilities with no tap water
 - 24 with no record of cholera / diarrhoea
 - 21 with a record of cholera / diarrhoea

Two criteria were used in prioritising the most needy health centres:

1. Facilities with no tap water that need WATSAN installations to run a health institution.
2. Facilities which require minor repair to make their water supply work, but require a follow-up visit to give a better picture of the situation

Fifteen facilities were chosen from the priority one list and eight from the priority two list.

WATSAN in adjacent villages needs to be taken into consideration when preparing the works for successive phases of this project. Improved WATSAN conditions reduce water born diseases and relieve the pressure on the health centres. It was proposed that CHAM, with assistance from ICL, would inspect the facilities and prepare the tender documents based on a work schedule prepared by ICL.

2.3 PHASE 1

The objective of phase 1 of the WASHE program was to implement the designed water supply and sanitation installations at prioritised sites based on the findings and recommendations from the assessment study carried out by CHAM and the design works done by ICL (CHAM, 2003-3). This included design and evaluation of tender documents, contractor selection, and supervision and management of works installations using CBM and gender engenderment.

As mentioned earlier, CHAM would have the overall control and NCA would provide technical assistance for the design and supervision of the works through ICL. NCA would also provide inputs regarding training, gender and rights issues. The HCs and communities served would take ownership of and be responsible for operation and maintenance of the facilities. NCA and CHAM, assisted by MoWD, were to conduct CBM training. The contractors would carry out the works for upgrading WATSAN facilities, also using the CBM approach, to empower the HCs in operation and maintenance of the facilities. Phase 1 was opened for bids June 27, 2004 and works were carried out from September to December 2003.

2.3.1 SITE SELECTION

New sites are always selected from the prioritised first assessment list. However, new sites turn up along the way, whether they are new HCs, schools or prisons. NCA does not wish to turn their back on an obvious need in the community. As an example, Warden Lamark C. Banda at the Mzuzu prison confirmed during our visit there November 26, that the prisoners do not have even basic sanitary conditions. The prison designed for 150 inmates now holds 497 inmates. Prisoners take turns sleeping in the cramped nightly quarters where they are interned between 1530 and 0730 hours each night. No washing facilities are provided in a room where close contact due to overcrowded sleeping arrangements spreads diseases within the prisoner population. NCA hopes to



help improve the basic WATSAN conditions for the inmates at the prison during the next phase of the WASHE project.

This large range of projects presents a special challenge for the WASHE coordinators who have expressed difficulty in covering a wide range of projects. Trinity was mentioned as a case where too much was requested in too short of a time.

The WASHE Phase 1 HCs were composed of the priority lists 1 and 2 HCs. The following HCs were chosen using the process outlined in figure 1:

- Mabiri
- Mlowe
- Luwazi
- Matanda
- Lulwe
- Misomali
- Lulanga
- Saiti Masungu/Lugola
- Namalaka
- Luwalika
- Katema

In addition, CHAM contacted Christian Service Committee (CSC) to perform upgrades at the following HCs:

- Tcharo
- Zunga
- Matandani
- Mase (incl. drilling of 10 boreholes in surrounding villages.
- Kasina

Gowa, Lakeview, Ntjenje and Luwazi HCs were later added as project at Lulwe, Mabiri, Misomali and Luwalika where halted.

2.3.2 TRAINING PROGRAMS

CHAM performed training for the villages and HCs. CBM in operation and maintenance training and health education is planned for all the WATSAN facilities constructed and installed at every HC. The aim of the training is to ensure ownership of the resources/facilities to users and empower them to take responsibility of operation and maintenance of the technical installations.

The training programs are designed for six days at each HC. The issues of hygiene and sanitation, operation and care for WATSAN facilities, and prevention of water borne diseases, are highlighted. HIV/AIDS, gender and human rights are included in the training.

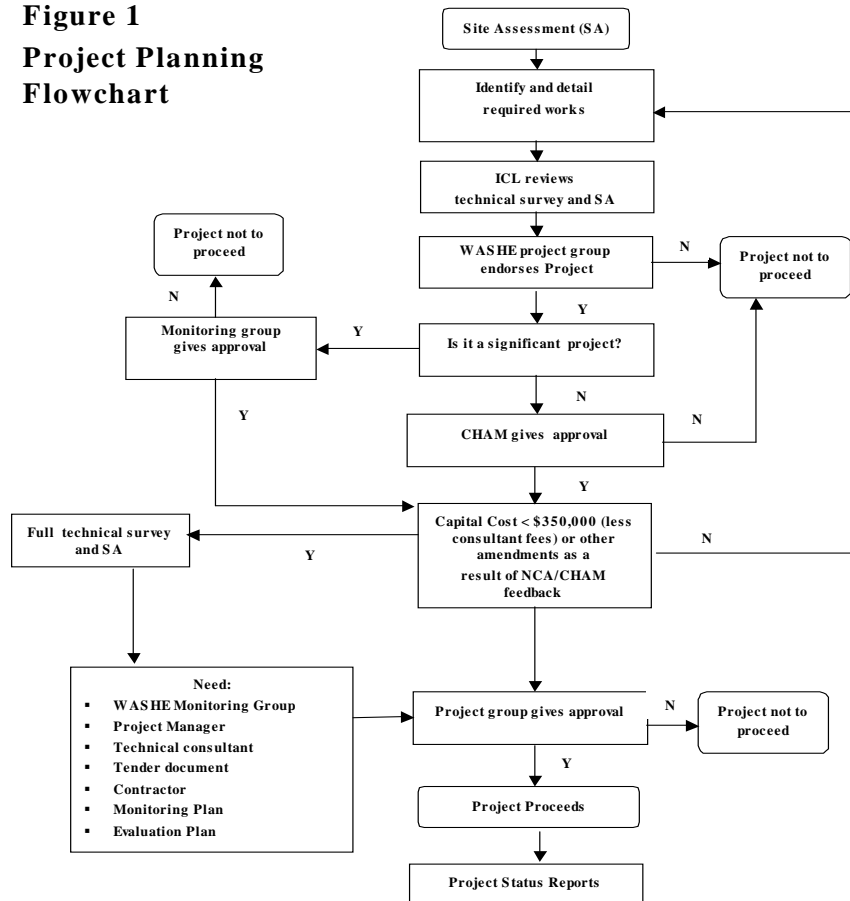
The ministries had their responsibilities during the training courses:

- Ministry of Health – hygiene
- Ministry of Water Development – technical via the District Water Office
- Ministry of Commercial Development – Community Based Management (CBM), human rights and HIV/AIDS

The training design targets Water Point Committees who were formed at the target institutions to take care of the WATSAN facilities. These were trained on CBM of WATSAN facilities. Personnel from the ministries of Health, Gender and Community Services and Water Development at the district were earmarked as facilitators at the training sessions.



Figure 1
Project Planning
Flowchart



The specific training objectives were:

- To enlighten the community on the roles of gender and human rights on development activities
- To increase community awareness on HIV/AIDS
- To equip the community members with knowledge on domestic hygiene and sanitation to help them prevent water borne diseases
- To impart knowledge on basic borehole maintenance skills to the community members
- To instill a spirit of ownership in the community members of the WATSAN facilities

The training sessions were organized in the form of workshops with committee members present. Village chiefs were also invited to attend the training sessions. The facilitators used:

- Group discussions and plenary
- Role playing
- Demonstrations
- Lectures
- Questions and answers
- Story telling



Sets of norms and guidelines were applied to the training sessions. Participants were urged to:

- Be punctual
- Start and close each day with a prayer
- Sobriety at each session
- Respect each other
- Speak clearly (English or the local language)
- No smoking

The composition of participants on the training session were recommended to be

- At least 10 members
- At least 60% female
- Female chairperson (or alternating female/male in terms of years)

Village committees are often gathered together at one location for the training program, as was the case at the Endindemi HC where 14 villages were covered by the HC.

2.4 PHASES 2 AND 3

The Phases 2 and 3 had the same goals and objectives as Phase 1. Each new phase builds on the experience from preceding Phases and a continuous re-assessment by CHAM and ICL. This includes the actual WATSAN installation works, which are being tendered out and their implementation using a CBA. In this way emphasis is placed on community and stakeholder involvement including gender issues in the implementation of the works.

In Phase 2, thirty seven HCs were selected along with their proposed works. Fourteen centres were carried over from phase 1 and twenty three new HCs were included in the phase 2 project. Phase 2 was opened for bids July 5, 2004 and works were carried out from September to December 2004.

In Phase 3, nine HCs and villages were selected along with their proposed works. Phase 3 was opened for bids June 27, 2005 and works carried out from September to December 2005

The new site selection processes were the same as detailed in section 2.3.1.

3 THE EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION OF MALAWI

3.1 BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS

The Evangelical Association of Malawi (EAM), an umbrella body for the evangelical churches and organizations in Malawi with funding from NCA Malawi, is implementing safe water and orphan care programs in the areas within Mpando CCAP Mission covering four Transitional Authorities of Kabudula, Kalolo, Maliri and Njewa. The program is being implemented in conjunction with Mpando CCAP congregation who is a member of EAM, and ICL who are the engineers contracted by NCA to drill the boreholes.

The purpose of the program is two-fold:

- to provide safe water to the households around Mpando mission within reasonable walking distance and reduce vulnerability to waterborne diseases caused by the use of unprotected water



- to provide hope to the orphans through education, counselling and supply of physical and material needs

Among the activities the program is carrying out are the following:

- community mobilization
- awareness meetings
- selection of water sanitation committees
- drilling boreholes
- training the communities in WATSAN and health
- training the communities in proper borehole operation and maintenance to empower them in ensuring sustainability of a safe water supply
- training of the volunteers caring for the orphans
- training the communities in conservation farming
- training the chiefs and Anankungwi in HIV/AIDS messages and programs

3.2 TRAINING PROGRAMS

Training in WATSAN has involved all the community members (men, women and youth). This included fundraising methods to enable the communities to gather money for spare parts for maintenance of the boreholes rather than being dependant on others to solve the problem for them. This enhances the transfer of ownership for the WATSAN facilities.

All of these trainings incorporated issues of gender and human rights. This was supported by the participation of women in the discussions as well as in their actual involvement of the whole work. A deliberate effort was made to have a balanced number of men, women and youth in the water committees. This was done by having four men, four women, two boys and two girls forming a committee of twelve people.

3.3 ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROPOSED CHANGES

Women involvement in the project was reported to be very encouraging. The provision of safe water has reduced the prevalence of waterborne diseases in the area and has also eased the long distance women have to walk to draw water. In all the health centres women have been in the forefront participating in the drilling of the boreholes and caring for the orphans. The positive statements from the village headmen indicate that the women's work is being appreciated. This indicates that once women are empowered, they can do a lot in the area of community development. NCA has an important responsibility to monitor the involvement of the women in the villages to ensure the continued validity of EAMs statements.

Intensified construction of backyard gardens remains imperative on the borehole sites. The gardens will hopefully generate income to be used for maintenance of the boreholes.

Irrigation needs to be explored as a constant water source. Irrigation farming can improve nutrition and food security and be an income generating source for the community.

4 PROJECT PLANNING

4.1 PROJECT RESPONSIBILITIES

ICL has been engaged to perform consulting services on the WASHE project in Malawi. According to the contract written by NCA, ICL is to report to the CHAM project manager who is to be

responsible for the overall planning, management and coordination of project work, and for assignment of tasks and management of the project team. The CHAM project manager is to be responsible for planning, work coordination, final editing and quality assurance of the report and formal documents to be produced by the project team.

NCA is to be responsible for overall monitoring of the project, including the performance of the ICL personnel. This **monitoring unit** is composed of:

- Irene Wenaas Holte, Country Representative, NCA
- Margaret Thindwa, WATSAN Coordinator, NCA
- Ruth H. Mwandira, Director, CHAM
- Eliza Mhango, Project manager, CHAM

ICL is responsible for the tasks outlined in the individual agreements that are made during the course of the project and works as a project team member under the supervision and guidance of the CHAM project manager. The first ICL consultant on the WASHE project was Sverre Olav Gjerlow in 2002, who was later replaced in 2004 by the current ICL water engineer Tomas Bøhler Torsen.

The current WASHE **project team** and their duties are as follows:

- Eliza Mhango, Project manager - WASHE, CHAM – Overall planning and management, link between ICL and CHAM admin. Responsible for CBM training and CHAM monitoring
- Lawrence Yobe, WASHE coordinator, CHAM – CBM training, monitoring, and planning.
- Margaret Thindwa, WATSAN coordinator, NCA – village assessments and project monitoring. Link between ICL and NCA administration.
- Tomas Bøhler Torsen, Technical Consultant, ICL - all of the technical planning, field assessments, project and financial reporting, in-charge of supervising contractors in the field

Other people working on the project:

- Chester Makhwira, ICL Technician, Field supervising and assessment. Full time.
- ICL Water Engineer (used to be Zifa Ng'oma) planning and consulting for WASHE part time. (ICL is employing a new water engineer from January who will be available for WASHE).

4.2 FINANCIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

4.2.1 BUDGETING PROCESS

The annual budgets for NCA's WATSAN activities in Malawi since 2002 are summarized in the following table:

Table 1: Yearly summaries of NCA WATSAN budgets (million NOK).
Source: NCA financial reports, Head office, Malawi

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005
CHAM	0.500	3.000	2.600	2.100
ICL			1.100	1.100
EAM			0.072	0.250
ELDS			0.143	0.160
PFM			0.075	0.130
NCA	00.25	0.831*	0.510	0.560
Other partners		0.121		
Other projects		0.038		
*includes assessment cost of 181KNOK				
Total	0.750	4.000	4.500	4.300



ICL reviews the budget continuously and reports to NCA. Unallocated funds due to the unsure outcome of the drilling or changes to the site priority list, are reallocated towards the year end in order to include other prioritised sites in the current list of works. The reallocation of funds, it was noted, often caused a good deal of stress for the WASHE project group as they needed to plan for new site assessments, tender documents, etc. However, funds needed to be reallocated in order to maintain the same funding level for Malawi from NCA from year to year.

The planning phase for new budgets begins during the end of the financial year. ICL constructs the priority site lists from year to year, often with little involvement of CHAM. It was suggested that CHAM become more involved early on in the planning process.

4.2.2 DAILY OPERATIONS

The payment to contractors is controlled during each bi-weekly progress meeting. Contractors notify ICL that they will present a payment claim at the next meeting, giving ICL time to prepare a field inspection. Once the claim is received, it can therefore be scrutinised and approved within a few days time, and a payment certificate can be issued to the contractor. The certificate is corrected for any errors and ICL then deducts for the corrections, the deduction for advance payment and deduction for retention (to be kept for the defects liability period). The payment certificate is then sent to CHAM which issues the check to the contractor. The time-limit for the transaction is 14 days from the invoice is received. Sometimes it can take ICL a few days to prepare the payment certificate which leaves fewer days for CHAM to process the payments. Usually it takes CHAM at least one week to process payments and often more. Now improved routines are helping to reduce the processing time for CHAM. However it can still take more than the two weeks because it has to go through the bureaucracy at CHAM.

Another problem is that the cash flow among Malawian contractors often is very unpredictable and the 14 day time-limit may halt the project. This is not the responsibility of CHAM but is still a big problem. Even when contractors have all the required documentation in order they may still experience a liquidity crisis.

During the two first year of the project ICL used a "Malawian-Indian" contractor. They had a healthy cash-flow and the delayed payments were never a problem even if they were up to one month late. Cash flow problems among the contractors can therefore be avoided by using the big contractors only, at the expense of the small Malawian companies. This strategy is not desirable for CHAM.

5 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 WASHE PROJECT GROUP

The project group is of a general agreement that project implementation is currently working well, with each project team member performing the duties mentioned above.

CHAM is responsible for the implementation of the WASHE project. This includes

- Tendering documents for the entrepreneurs

ICL has prepared the tendering documents and provided the technical evaluation of the contractors. After evaluation, ICL reviews the documents with CHAM.

The quality of the contractors has varied since the beginning of the WASHE project:

- Christian Service Committee (CSC) was chosen because they are a sister organisation of CHAM. They have been able to perform some small projects but are unable to perform larger jobs (two contracts were cancelled this year) and have cash flow problems.



- Chitsime Drilling (CDCL) was appointed as the main contractor for Phase I and II. They are delivered well administered and high quality projects with no cash flow problems.
- Kangawa Construction Building Contractor was chosen for first step of the Manchili Gravity Scheme at Luwazi HC. They performed the first step well but were terminated during the next more complicated step.
- Mzimbamubi Building Contractor has delivered very good quality works on time. Cooperation is very good. They are slightly more expensive than their competitors but cheaper in the long run. They are now in negotiation for completion of the Manchili gravity Scheme project.

In 2003 there were eight contractors who attempted to fill out the tender documents, with one finally being judged as qualified by ICL. This was the same result in 2004.

A new approach to working with the contractors was adopted in 2005. ICL conducted training courses for the contractors. The point of this training was to give the interested contractors the same level of knowledge in dealing with project administration. The contractors who attended the courses showed an improved project management skill level which directly benefited the WASHE project by reducing errors and misunderstandings during the contract period. This gave ICL more time to constructively work on new projects.

5.1.1 OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE CONSIDERATIONS

As part of the CBM training at the villages, a spirit of ownership is instilled in the community members of the WATSAN facilities. While this has been successful in some villages, most notably at the EAM project at Mpando, it is not working at others.

The Mpando project is successful because the training used more time on mobilization and forming of the committees (one more day). The project is also close to ICL, EAM and NCA offices allowing for more follow-up. The project involves more participation from the communities as they do most of the work themselves. Drilling, civil works etc. supervised by EAM/ICL)

ICL is using its personnel to follow up the contractors at ongoing works. When it is practical they also try to check up on the completed works. This is also important in order to solve problems that occur within the one year guarantee period for the contractors. Responsible contractors are also essential to reduce the need for maintenance of the WATSAN facilities. ICL approves contractors and includes the one year guarantee period in all contracts.

5.1.2 PURCHASING STRATEGY

ICL has been responsible for preparing tender offers and choosing the best contractor. Their experiences with Malawian contractors have shown:

- Incomplete bidding documents with arithmetic errors indicate unserious contractors. A good company profile, work program and work schedule are necessary.
- Check the companies' financial status.
- Always check references from other projects/clients.
- During contract negotiations check if they understand the contract!
- Physically check if they have the equipment they claim to have
- Price is less important, but don't choose the most expensive one uncritically.
- Training of contractors could be a very good move if the contractors are committed!

5.1.3 PHASE OUT AND HAND OVER STRATEGIES



Part of CBM is the training of the communities in proper borehole operation and maintenance to empower them in ensuring sustainability of a safe water supply. This includes fundraising methods for the village committees to gather money for spare parts for maintenance of the boreholes. This enhances the transfer of ownership for the WATSAN facilities and gives the village independence in solving their own problems.

After one year, there is currently no strategy for following-up completed works. However, work has begun on a maintenance manual that will be distributed to all HCs and guide the owners of the installations in how to follow maintenance and failures that occur after the one year guarantee period. The WASHE project group is following up requests from the HCs and have assisted several HC. However, the goal is to transfer responsibility to the owners.

There are currently no hand-over ceremonies or other official events. One hand over ceremony is planned for the Manchili Gravity Scheme to honor all the people who where digging trenches etc are honoured.

5.1.4 PRACTICAL RESOURCE ALLOCATION

All members of the WASHE project group have individual offices in their respective headquarters. There was general consensus that the office space was sufficient for the project.

It was noted by ICL that they are renting a car for WASHE project work. Current plans are for ICL to buy their own vehicle in January that should be used at a lower rate on the project.

5.1.5 MAIN CHALLENGES

There is a general consensus in the WASHE project group that from the beginning during the site visits, the challenges begin. The site assessments are not always accurate as the health personnel are reluctant to give full information to the assessment team, as was the case at Kapiri HC. This requires a constant update of the site assessments in terms of resource allocation and personnel needs for the works.

CHAM reports there is also a general resistance to change of the traditional use of WATSAN under the health education campaigns.

ICL has had a constant challenge with finding qualified contractors and has even gone to the means of training the contractors to give them the basic tools for performing tendered works.

Sustainable development for the villages is a key concept when it comes to WATSAN. In order to increase the chance that the villages will continue to have improved water and sanitation facilities, it is important to follow-up the work in the villages with periodic visits to see if the villages have taken ownership of the works. Some of the village requested further training related to WATSAN. This could be performed yearly to give the villages an increased sense of ownership. Budget considerations would need to be taken to provide funds for this type of follow-up.

6 PROJECT MONITORING AND EVALUATION

6.1.1 MONITORING

The current monitoring of completed projects is performed haphazardly during the field work performed by the WASHE project group. If any of the members are in the vicinity of completed



works, they try to contact the HC's if time permits. No funds or time is usually set aside for monitoring, as this is not a part of the standard budgeting process. These monitoring visits, when they do occur, are recorded in the minutes of the meetings with the contractors.

Monitoring of ongoing and especially completed works is important to force the contractor to finish works or make changes within the one year guarantee period for all site works. ICL monitors projects up to completion (also during guarantee period) and handover according to contract description.

NCA suggested that the status of projects under work should be presented in a visual form so that project coordinators could see the current status of the sites. This is something CHAM could be responsible for, supervised by ICL, as part of the project management role, so that the technical consultant (ICL) could devote more of his time to following up the contractors.

6.1.2 PROJECT MEETINGS

Meetings are held regularly to ensure the timely distribution of information in the WASHE project:

- Progress meetings are held every two weeks with the main contractor (every three weeks for Manchili project). This includes NCA, CHAM, ICL and the contractor. ICL always records the minutes of each meeting which are distributed soon after the meetings and are also presented to the group at the next successive meeting for approval. The purpose of this meeting is to review completed works and agree on payments or changes that need to be performed prior to project completion.
- NCA has monthly meetings with CHAM to discuss their entire work program, including the WASHE project.

Discussions with the WASHE project team indicated that some problems within CHAM that were discussed during the meetings were never resolved. The WASHE project team suggested that after CHAM management received the information, no action was taken. One example is the problem with the contractor CSC. Even with repeated delays and problems this contractor was permitted to continue with substandard performance. CHAMs desire to use CSC resulted in both time delays and monetary losses for the program.

7 LESSONS LEARNED

1. Assessments, monitoring and follow-ups take time and should not be performed hastily. The first assessment performed by CHAM had a time frame of 9 weeks. More time used in the beginning will save time in the long run. (At our site visit on Nov. 25 to Mabiri there was overheard some complaints about the well being contaminated. The man in question, it turned out, was not sick from the water, but had a chronic stomach problem.)
2. Community based management (CBM) requires much follow-up after the well installation. (For example the Afridev well at the Thavite HC has required repeated follow-up calls and is still not working properly. On the other hand the Mpando project has received more follow-up and is a success). While villages should take ownership of their new WATSAN facilities and not be dependant upon outside help, regional meetings with additional training for multiple villages would help for sustainable development.
3. Capacity building takes time thru training, uncertain HCs in the rural communities have high turnover and the trainees are soon gone. Who follows up this brain drain? It is important to give the HCs good WATSAN facilities (clean water is important) to keep their employees.



4. Instilled ownership evaporates when problems arise. If the villages experience unforeseen problems (money mismanagement, theft, etc.) they will quickly shift the responsibility over to the HC's. Who's well is it when there are no resources available to fix the well. The water district people from the government say they will try to do their best. Communities themselves need be constantly encouraged to solve their own problem.
5. The composition of the village committees is important. The treasurer position in the committees must be a woman. She sees the importance of a properly working well. It eases her already heavy burden. She feels ownership of the WATSAN works.
6. CCMP has proven to be successful at the village projects. The involvement of the local churches is an important factor.
7. Local involvement, whether it be for WATSAN or other activities at the villages or prisons, is important. Mr Louis Chiogoro took a local initiative at the Mzuzu prison and is provided bee hives to encourage the inmates to take responsibility for their own food and provide an income generating scheme for the future.
8. CHAM still needs more training to shoulder their responsibilities in the WASHE project. Either time has to be set aside or courses need to be arranged to teach CHAM project management (financial and resource).
9. Proprietors do not always show interest in the WATSAN projects. Community ownership should also look upwards in the hierarchy as well as to the villages. Proprietors need to be involved in the planning process and be shown the benefits of improved WATSAN for *their* villages.

8 TOP FIVE SUCCESS CRITERIA

The Mpando site was used as a successful example of a WATSAN project. The village performed a lot of the works themselves, and they also received a lot of on site training.

The following success criteria were gathered from the visits to the selected sites named in the beginning of this document as well as from discussions with WATSAN workers:

1. Use the necessary time to do a thorough first assessment. This will spare additional trips and help to estimate required resources for the projects during the planning phase. It is better to delay projects rather than do poor assessments.
2. Involve the village committees (with the necessary gender, age and disability mixture) and the village chiefs from the assessment phase of the project. Legends are told about the powers of the village chiefs to stop water flowing and destroy wells. Whether true or not, it shows the respect and fear of the village chief still held by the villagers.
3. Empower the women in the training programs as they will "own" the project to a much higher degree than the men. However, do not exclude the men in the process. Tasks should be assigned to give dignity to both parties. Women can perform all of the tasks necessary to maintain and fix the wells. Men traditionally perform heavy work like digging and brick making, and can be used for building the dome plates.
4. Give the village committees' proper training. This includes operation and maintenance of the technical facilities (wells and boreholes) as well as income generating schemes to pay for new parts or services for the WATSAN facilities.



5. Monitoring and evaluation of works to ensure sustainable development. This is also important during the first year guarantee period for the contractor.

9 TOP FIVE PROBLEM AREAS

The overall impression of the WATSAN projects run by NCA and ICL is positive. Problem areas arise often due to factors outside the control of the WATSAN personnel. Problems also arise due to inexperience or well-meaning gestures that turn sour. The following problem areas mentioned are chosen for having the possibility to significantly impact the success of WATSAN projects:

1. WATSAN is not being considered systematically in the neighbouring villages to the health centres. This puts additional strain on the health personnel and by no means reduces the basic disease problems in the encatchments.
2. Construction of backyard gardens at the water stations is relatively seldom used in the villages. Emphasis should be given during the training with diagrams and pictures showing the benefits for the village.
3. Professionalism needs to be maintained when dealing with contractors. The choice of contractor should be based on those qualities that increase the success rate of the projects (i.e. quality of work, deliverables, and cash flow) in the context of the program goals. Upon the discovery of malfeasance from the contractor, more consideration should be given to terminating the contract. While this is often hard to do where a limited number of contractors are available, the lost time and money should be considered. It is therefore important to have good contracts in place with the contractor from the start, specifying benchmarks and conditions for voiding the contracts.
4. NCA's local partner has needed and still needs training to perform their responsibilities that are outlined in their contract with NCA. Financial and technical reporting is still being performed by ICL.
5. There is no systematic use of phase out, hand over, and follow-up strategies for the WATSAN projects. Without a coherent strategy the sustainable development of the WATSAN projects in the villages is less likely to be a success.

10 REPORTING MECHANISMS AND FORMATS

The WASHE project group works together in a good atmosphere of cooperation with free flow of information between all members. All reports, however, need to be chronologically archived in a central register by the program manager, in this case CHAM. Reports are to provide gender-segregated data on all figures. Emphasis is on assessment of results related to a rights based approach. This includes paper copies as well as a digital register. The reporting mechanisms:

- Each party shall report all their field activities and distribute reports to each stakeholder.
- All minutes from the project meetings and monthly meetings related to WATSAN are to be distributed to all stakeholders to increase ownership in the program. The minutes are to be used to give feedback to the project group members.
- Assessment reports, project descriptions and final reports should be collected and archived by the program manager.
- Communications with contractors (technical documentation, instructions, variations, etc) are to be archived and copies are to be sent to the stakeholders.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the projects shall be distributed to all project members.



The WASHE program has been well organized; this model that can be applied to other geographic areas:

- Small scale pilot projects give experience and information in planning subsequent WATSAN projects.
- Assessment studies are constantly updated to reflect the works done within the different phases of the project.
- New phases include planning, installation and operation of the technical installations. Tender documents describe technical procedures. Maintenance manuals will show how the technical installations are functioning.

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