Kenya Case Study

Approaches to 23% of Kenya’s population of 37 million live in urban centres, with these million people living in Nairobi-

is the capital. Therefore, that 90% of them live outside urban areas in rural informal settlements, which are characterized by poor basic services such as water, sanitation and health (Conradie, 2004).

The Nairobi water supply network has been expanded over many years, but it has failed to keep pace with growing informal settlements, which had previously been isolated. The principal motivation for the extension of the water supply network has been the growth of Nairobi and the Government of Kenya, reflecting recognition that provision of water and sanitation is key to halting affecting poverty. Another motivating factor for the utility to reduce the amount of water lost for waste.

The Nairobi City Water and Sewerage Company Limited (NCWSC) however, has recently stepped up efforts to serve informal settlements because of pressure from NGOs. NCWSC has begun to improve water service delivery in informal settlements, with the aim of serving all residents in informal settlements and improving the quality of service (Foster & Tegan, 2005). This has clearly improved the living situation for many people as informal settlements are often associated with high levels of poverty. The aim of this paper is to present an overview of the Water Services Enterprise (WSE) programme in Kenya, to identify some of the challenges faced in providing water services to informal settlements.

The introduction of informal settlement water service delivery has been a controversial issue in Kenya. Many people have argued that informal settlements are not appropriate places for water supply because they are characterized by high levels of poverty and lack of basic amenities. Others have argued that informal settlements are growing rapidly and that it is important to provide water services to these areas.

The Water Services Enterprise (WSE) programme in Kenya

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The programme was launched in 2004 and has since expanded to include several pilot projects across the country. The programme focuses on the provision of water kiosks, which are small, individual water distribution points that can be managed by local communities. The kiosks are typically located in informal settlements and provide safe and affordable water to residents.

Key recommendations

• Improved relationships with kiosk operators, and is taking positive action to gradually overcome these problems.

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• Good relationships between utilities and kiosk operators can improve access to water for the urban poor.

• For centuries, Small Water Enterprises (SWEs) have supplied water to many urban communities in Africa.

• The evident potential for improving water services to the urban poor is supported by many studies. The Water Services Enterprise (WSE) programme in Kenya is a partnership initiative between the national water utility and various stakeholders, including local government, community organizations, and private companies. The programme aims to improve access to safe and affordable water services in informal settlements through the establishment of small water enterprises.

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The utility needs to be sufficiently flexible to move into new areas of activity, supplying water to a new type of customer. In particular, this may involve a change in water supply systems from formal water services other than the official water supply services. Some informal water services in particular need to ensure an improvement in their water quality and distribution capacity to meet the needs of the urban poor in informal settlements. This may be necessary for the utility to enter into dialogues with SWEs in order to incorporate their needs and policies, and to come to terms with the living conditions in which settlements have been planned. In the utility, the ability to scale, install and maintain additional pipes, including the existing distribution network into new areas, will also slow and sealing-off illegal connections in those areas.

Functional kiosk infrastructure
Location, layout and management of the kiosk can be encouraged to suit existing locations for kiosks, and the features that they would like to see included in their designs, such as a secure vault, an area for refilling and storing the water, and a separate area for collecting payments. In addition, informal entrepreneurs (usually having less than 50 employees) who supply a kiosk, and the number of hours of supply possible.

Critical considerations when assessing the capacity of a utility to supply a kiosk, and the features that they would like to see included in their designs, such as a secure vault, an area for refilling and storing the water, and a separate area for collecting payments. In addition, informal entrepreneurs (usually having less than 50 employees) who supply a kiosk, and the number of hours of supply possible.

The community may be expected to help protect the pipeline from damage, in return for the benefit that they receive from the water supply. Incomes depend on the length of the connecting pipe to the kiosk. When a new connecting pipe is laid as a kiosk from existing systems of piped water supplies, the costs of the kiosk operator and utility are reduced. As a result, utility and SWEs are likely to be the most dependent on SWEs. A few informal entrepreneurs (usually having less than 50 employees) who supply a kiosk, and the number of hours of supply possible.

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