**Acknowledgements**

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| NEPAL WATER FOR HEALTH PROJECT |
|  |
| MID TERM REVIEW |

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The authors are indebted to the staff of Nepal Water for Health and WaterAid for their openness, transparency and practical assistance in carrying out this Mid-term Review. Field staff went to great lengths to ensure that all requested information was made available, often at very short notice, and proved excellent and impartial field level facilitators.

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Short Description of the Reviewers

The MTR Team was selected by WAAus and WAN following extensive consultation. The Team Leader, Greg Whiteside, is a WASH specialist who has lived and worked in Nepal since 1991. Greg served as WaterAid’s Country Representative to Nepal between 1991 and 2000 and supported the formation of NEWAH in 1992. He has subsequently worked widely as a consultant in South Asia and the Asia Pacific regions and, since 2010, has been advising Nepal’s Ministry of Health as a member of its Nepal Health Sector Support Programme.

The MTR National Consultant, Shizu Upadhya, has a background in social and economic development. She has worked in Nepal's development sector since 1997, initially as a policy analyst affiliated with ActionAid Nepal and, since 2006, as a consultant and researcher.  In this capacity, she has worked on a variety of assignments with Government, bi-lateral and multilateral donors, INGOs and research institutes with a particular emphasis on poverty reduction.  Her research and analysis has been published both in and outside of Nepal.

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 **List of Acronyms**

CASH Comprehensive Actions on Sanitation and Hygiene.

CLBSA Community Led Basic Sanitation for All

CLTS Community Led Total Sanitation

DDC District Development Committee

DPHO District Public Health Office

DWASHCC District WASH Coordinating Committee

DWSS Department of Water Supply and Sewerage

FCHV Female Community Health Volunteer

FEDWASUN Federation of Water and Sanitation Users in Nepal

GAP Gender and Poverty

GESI Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

GoN Government of Nepal

GDP Gross Domestic Product

MDG Millennium Development Goal

MPPW Ministry of Physical Planning and Works

MTR Mid Term Review

ODF Open Defecation Free

OPD Out Patient Department

RWASHCC Regional WASH Coordinating Committee

SACOSAN South Asia Conference on Sanitation

VDC Village Development Committee

VWASHCC Village Development Committee WASH Coordinating Committee

WSUC Water and Sanitation Users Committee

1.0 Executive Summary

Rural WASH services in Nepal are important for peace building and national development. However, while progress in water coverage in Nepal over the past twenty years appears to have been good, serious concerns over the functionality of water schemes and slow progress in sanitation mean that MDG 7b (ensure access to water and sanitation) is unlikely to be met.

NEWAH is regarded as one of the WASH sector’s most experienced and effective actors. Founded in 1992, it has a long track record in service delivery having helped over 1.3 million rural citizens (4.6 % of population) gain access to basic WASH services. The organisation has developed an effective project implementation model that reflects sound development principles and supports both service delivery and social empowerment objectives.

The AusAID funded programme is managed by WaterAid which provides capacity building, technical and financial support to NEWAH. The relationship between the two organisations is longstanding and unusually proximate and provides an effective safeguard for AusAID investments. The design of the NEWAH programme has been strongly influenced by WAAus and WAN and is consistent with core strategy documents of both organisations. WaterAid’s trademark approach of balancing effective service coverage with higher level sector development and advocacy objectives is clearly evident.

Programme monitoring data indicate that the WASH coverage target of 22,400 is likely to be exceeded by around 6,500 (29%) following reinvestment of exchange rate gains in 3 additional projects. Thus 58 schemes in four districts are on track for completion. Project beneficiary data in the two districts visited indicates good results in terms of poverty targeting although more can be done to target low caste groups. NEWAH also appears adept at translating new sector thinking into practical application, particularly in the areas of poverty targeting, social inclusion, sanitation, hygiene promotion and the capacity enhancement of partners. Its “gender and poverty” approach to project implementation is particularly successful and can be regarded as a market leader in Nepal’s WASH sector.

The quality of technical work seen during field visits was generally good. However drainage problems were evident at a number of tapstands where clothes-washing had caused the ponding of waste water in surrounding areas, thereby potentially creating unsanitary conditions and the eventual undermining of foundations. This problem may be prevented through the excavation, and backfilling with gravel, of a small trench around each tapstand perimeter. Care should be taken to ensure that tapstand drainage pipes discharge effectively - preferably onto kitchen gardens.

NEWAH’s role in sanitation promotion in Mid and Far West Regions is a major programme success. Progress made under the leadership of MPPW’s Regional Director in promoting community led total sanitation approaches has led to what is locally known as a “people’s movement” for sanitation with strong potential for replication and national impact. Of particular note is NEWAH’s success in persuading VDCs to apply block grants to reward communities for obtaining ODF status. In 2010-11 45/51 VDCs in Surkhet and Doti provided a total of NRs 2,227,500 (AUD 29,000) for this purpose.

The CLTS approach appears to be having a strong multiplier effect at VDC, DDC and Regional levels partly as a result of the improved sector coordination required under MPPW’s Sanitation and Hygiene Master Plan. Several VDCs and DDCs adjacent to NEWAH project villages were reported to have taking up ODF activities without external support. In the DFID/AUSAID 2005 projects visited, householders who had not built toilets during the project period had go on to do so in order to attain ODF status which carries high social status.

Coordination successes at Regional level appear to be having a strong "ripple effect" at the centre with May 2011’s Joint Sector Review in Kathmandu calling for the replication of the Mid-West’s initiative, and roll-out of CASH across the country. Several challenges remain however including addressing the high variability of sanitation approaches seen between sector agencies. This variability creates confusion among communities and local government and can undermine successes achieved through CLTS. Streamlining around issues such as VDC and community level financing, external subsidies, community facilitation, hygiene promotion and sustainability monitoring all warrant specific attention.

Community perceptions of project improvements beyond time savings include the proper handling of waste water, improved cleanliness of hands, utensils and households and improved cleanliness and use of latrines. It is, however, too early to assess the sustainability of hygiene behaviour changes achieved in AusAID funded projects. Endline surveys for completed schemes suggest that short term changes have been achieved but these will need to be verified in the medium and longer term. As such it is recommended that NEWAH carry out formative research on hygiene behaviour approximately one year post project completion.

NEWAH’s Community Monitoring System appears to collect more information than is actually used. In particular, the Gender Auditing section provides rich information regarding relations between women and men in the community as well as poverty and inclusion issues. But it is not immediately clear how this information is being used. More generally, it will also be important to revisit the information coming out of the Well Being Ranking Exercise and Gender Audit as baseline information to determine the economic and social changes that have been brought about by the project. NEWAH’s Long Term Sustainability Monitoring of its projects should likewise monitor economic and social empowerment effects.

In addition to community based activities, NEWAH has recently supported the DHO and DWASHCC to develop hygiene indicators and run hygiene related health camps. These are important first step towards the mainstreaming of WASH into health sector programming and should be replicated across all working districts where possible.

NEWAH has been supporting NGO capacity building for WASH service delivery since 1992 and is regarded as a market leader in this area. It has provided support in Nepal to SNV, Concern, KIRDAC, CARE, ACR and to other agencies in Bangladesh, Tibet and Bhutan. It should be noted however that NEWAH has recently ceased working through local NGOs in Mid and Far West Regions, switching its support to V and DWASHCCs. It is too early to judge the relative strengths of these two approaches but it is recommended that a comparative review take place within two years with a specific focus on capacity building for long term sustainability of schemes and sector development.

NEWAH is advised to step up its inputs to sector R-, D- and V-WASH CCs to support sector coordination and harmonization including, where necessary, taking a leadership role on topics such as integrated agency planning, local WASH financing, joint capacity building for CLTS scale up, harmonizing implementation processes including community facilitation and sustainability monitoring.

Looking forward, NEWAH is advised to consider capitalizing on its expertise in NGO capacity building by marketing its services to other sector agencies and local government seeking to implement projects through local NGOs. It is further recommended that NEWAH attempt to assess its training multiplier effect by supporting DWASHCCs to track the number and type of projects subsequently implemented by partner NGOs. This could be the subject of a periodic review once every 2-3 years.

While NEWAH’s project implementation approach is sound, a number of project benefits appear to be poorly understood internally and therefore are understated in dissemination work. Both are due to shortcomings in project monitoring and evaluation which focuses primarily on log frame objectives rather than eliciting improved insights into programme effectiveness for sector learning. WaterAid is seen to have an important role to play in advising NEWAH on research methodology and the effective use of findings.

One important, though currently untracked, indicator of programme performance is that of livelihoods gains. Evidence from the DFID/AusAID funded projects visited suggests that these are considerable, notably where run-off water is used for agriculture and crops are sold at local markets. Tracking livelihood gains will clearly enhance the economic arguments in favour of WASH investments including Multiple Use Schemes.

NEWAH is further advised to continually monitor the economic and opportunity costs of household involvement in scheme construction for such families and carry out a livelihoods impact study of a selection of completed schemes including those operating Multiple Use Schemes with a particular focus on benefits to poor and excluded communities.

While NEWAH has produced a generally comprehensive range of studies and programme learning documents, the quality of a number of these is variable. Greater overall attention needs to be paid to study methodology and analysis if programme achievements are not to be understated and undersold. The quality of learning documentation may be improved through peer review, including involving WaterAid, with a view to reaching professional journal level standards.

NEWAH’s level of preparedness for a second phase of support is high. It is recommended that AusAID, in earnest, decides and communicates to WaterAid and NEWAH whether it wishes to proceed with a next phase of this program. The view of the MTR team is that further support is justifiable on the basis of results achieved.

Under any new programme, NEWAH and WaterAid are advised to expand their WASH in Health and Education activities in support of Nepal Health Sector Program 2 objectives and the School Sector Reform Plan. This should include an improved understanding of how WASH impacts on nutrition and support for preventative and rapid responses to diarrhoea related epidemics including awareness raising through schools. In this respect, NEWAH is advised to carry out formative research on hygiene behaviour approximately one year post project completion. This research might be combined with annual maintenance support visits and should reference local health post data on disease incidence including diarrhea prevalence.

NEWAH should also consider providing technical advice to DHOs and DEOs for the upgrading of toilet facilities in schools and health facilities to include the safe disposal of menstrual and medical wastes. Efforts should also be made to incorporate the hygiene education topics taught in schools into local school curricula. AusAID’s engagement as a key pool fund donor in health and education can support these initiatives including drawing SNV into these discussions.

There is a clear need for WaterAid and NEWAH to work for the coordination and harmonization of agency approaches in the WASH sector, particularly around sanitation promotion. Both agencies are advised to step up their inputs to sector coordination committees at all levels to press for the improved alignment of principles, procedures and practices. This will require taking an evidence-based, facilitative and conciliatory approach, showing technical leadership where necessary. Streamlining issues such as VDC and community level financing, external subsidies, facilitation approaches, hygiene promotion and sustainability monitoring should all be addressed.

NEWAH should also engage with D- and V- WASHCCs for the repair and rehabilitation of old schemes. NEWAH is advised to work with DDCs and VDCs to determine how their resources, including block-grants, can be better utilized for the repair, rehabilitation and maintenance of old schemes. This work should include NEWAH’s regular sanitation and hygiene promotion inputs. The potential to draw additional resources for pro-poor WASH sector activities should also be investigated.

In the interests of programme efficiency and strengthening support to R- D- and V-WASHCC’s, NEWAH should consider moving its Nepalgung Office to the Mid-West regional headquarters in Surkhet. NEWAH’s new district specific focus suggests that the Nepalgung office is of limited utility. Nepalgung staff should then be relocated to either Surkhet of Doti. There is an additional need to improve the pool of transport available at NEWAH’s offices in Mid and Far West.

WaterAid is advised to increase its community level monitoring support to NEWAH, particularly in Far West Region, and to provide specialist advice on the preparation and dissemination of programme learning products. A particular focus here should be given to capacity building of NEWAH staff, sustainability monitoring, improving operating efficiencies and programme value for money including comparative assessments with other implementing agencies.

It is further recommended that WaterAid resume its seat on NEWAH’s procurement committee and that an independent technical expert also be invited to serve on this body. Minutes from these meetings should be made available together with reports against checklists of NEWAH’s annual inspection visits to bulk material suppliers. These documents can be appended to regular six monthly progress reports. Copies of WaterAid’s annual internal and external annual audits should be made available to AusAID each year.

**2.0 Introduction**

The links in Nepal between water supply, sanitation, public health and poverty reduction are inextricable. WHO estimates that about 13,000 children die each year from diarrhoeal disease - around 35 a day[[1]](#footnote-3). In 2009, over 350 people died during a cholera outbreak in Mid-Western Region.

Nepal’s economy is still primarily agriculture-based employing 80% of the population and providing 37% of GDP and yet many districts face acute food shortages. Water supplies are necessary for both domestic use and agriculture in order to increase food production, alleviate hunger and generate livelihood benefits. They are also fundamental to peace-building – particularly in the Mid and Far West regions where Nepal’s 12 year civil war began and where its impact has been felt the hardest.

The low status of women, the poor and marginalized caste groups is a particular challenge to the sector. The Nepal Living Standards Survey (2006) showed that the richest quintile is 13 times more likely to have piped water in their homes than the poorest quintile and nearly eight times more likely to have improved sanitation. Dalit households and other marginalized groups commonly face problems accessing water from a common source due to discrimination, while the GoN notes that sanitation coverage among Dalits and other vulnerable groups is very poor[[2]](#footnote-4). Gender disparities in Nepalese society are acute. There is a wide gap in literacy rates between women and men, 70% of women workers are confined to self-employed, unpaid and low-wage informal sector work while women’s life expectancy is just 66.7 years (2009). The gendered division of labour, particularly in rural areas, ensures that women and girls are responsible for water collection so taking away time from income generating activities and school attendance. Investments in WASH are therefore fundamental to reducing poverty and inequality and increasing women’s empowerment.

According to the MDGs Progress Report 2010, there has been a substantial increase in water supply coverage in Nepal over the last decade - from 86% to 94% in urban areas and from 71% to 78% in rural areas. However, these are aggregated figures that mask significant disparities in coverage by geography, district and community. Further, the definition used for “coverage” fails to factor in service levels including water quality and journey times to collect. If the WHO criterion of a 15 minute return journey is applied, then only around one half of the rural population is covered[[3]](#footnote-5). Of particular additional concern are recent MPPW data which show that 53% of all built schemes in rural areas are non-functional[[4]](#footnote-6) and in need of major repair.

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| **Table 1: Percentage access to improved drinking water and sanitation by location[[5]](#footnote-7)** |
|  | **1990** | **2000** | **2010** |
| **Drinking Water** |  |  |  |
| Urban | 90 | 86 | 94 |
| Rural | 43 | 71 | 78 |
| National | 46 | 73 | 89 |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Sanitation** |  |  |  |
| Urban | 34 | 80 | 78 |
| Rural | 3 | 25 | 37 |
| National | 6 | 30 | 41 |

Sanitation progress has been less rapid than water with coverage in urban areas stagnant since 2000 and increasing by just 12 percentage points in rural areas. By location, sanitation coverage is lowest in the Tarai: the Nepal Labour Force Survey 2008 found that a larger proportion of households in the Tarai did not have a toilet (61.4%) compared to the Mountains (51.7%) and Hills (39.3%). The four districts targeted by the NEWAH project lie in the Eastern, Mid-Western and Far-Western regions within which percentages of households without toilets are 47.7%, 64.4% and 67.9% respectively (see Table 2). Moreover, sanitation remains a low priority in schools with only 41% having toilet facilities and only one quarter incorporating separate stalls for girls.

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| **Table 2: Percentage access to toilets by development region (2010)[[6]](#footnote-8)** |
|  | Toilet | No Toilet |
| Far Western | 32.1 | 67.9 |
| Mid Western | 35.6 | 64.4 |
| Western | 59.0 | 41.0 |
| Central | 51.1 | 48.9 |
| Eastern | 52.3 | 47.7 |
| National | 49.2 | 50.8 |

2.1 Nepal Water for Health (NEWAH)

NEWAH is the largest specialist indigenous NGO active in Nepal’s WASH sector. Founded in 1992 with the support of WaterAid, it has an extensive track record in service delivery. By 2011 it had assisted over 1.3 million rural citizens (4.6 % of population) gain access to basic WASH services. The organisation is governed by a seven person Board and registered with the District Administration Office in Kathmandu and the Social Welfare Council at national level.

NEWAH is regarded as one of the sectors most experienced and effective actors. In the ‘90s it pioneered the capacity building of local NGOs for WASH service delivery, so helping to strengthen the quality of services provided by civil society. In 2005 it piloted the Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach in Nepal which is now the dominant approach taken in the sector.

The AusAID funded programme is managed by WaterAid Nepal which provides capacity building, technical, monitoring and financial support to NEWAH. The relationship between the two organisations is longstanding and unusually proximate and is seen to provide an effective safeguard for AusAID investments. The design of the NEWAH programme has been strongly influenced by WAAus and WAN and is consistent with the core strategy documents of both organisations. WaterAid’s trademark approach of balancing effective service coverage with higher level sector development and advocacy objectives is clearly evident in the NEWAH project.

NEWAH is operational in each of Nepal’s five development regions with AusAID funds applied to four districts - Doti (Far-West), Surkhet (Mid-West), and Siraha and Udayapur (both Eastern Region). The total value of AusAID’s investment is AUD 3 million over the period May 2010 to December 2011.

AusAID funds accounted for 57% of NEWAH’s total income in 2010-11. WaterAid and nine other, mostly small, donors make up the balance of investments. The organisation employs 191 staff of whom 115 (60%) are supported by AusAID. These comprise 47 in the Far-West, based in Doti, 37 in the Mid-West, based in Nepalgunj, 27 in Eastern Region based in Biratnagar (16 partly and 11 full time) and 4 in Kathmandu at NEWAH’s Headquarters. WaterAid employs one full-time officer to support the AusAID funded programme with technical staff providing additional inputs as required.

NEWAH’s remuneration levels lie somewhat below market rates. The average monthly salary is NRs 23,770 (AUD 310) with the senior most officer earning 4.5 this level. Despite relatively modest pay, staff turnover is low reflecting generally high levels of job satisfaction and a participatory organizational culture that staff appear to appreciate.

**3. 0 Objectives**

The TOR for this assignment (see Appendix 1) were developed through joint consultation between WAAus and WAN. The two organisations jointly selected the consultants and consulted with AusAid on the MTR team composition. WAN also provided a detailed orientation on the TOR to the consultants at the outset of the review.

The MTR TOR describe the following four purposes:

1. to assess trends of progress related to project implementation against targets;
2. to assess WAN’s and NEWAH’s success in delivering outputs and the relevance of the various approaches applied.
3. to review lessons learned that can be shared.
4. to make recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the project and set out benchmarks for future programming and direction.

Within this framework progress is to be measured against the following four objectives:

1. To increase access of poor and excluded communities to a sustainable supply of safe and adequate water and to ensure sustained improvements in the households’ environmental sanitation and health status within these communities in at least 4 districts by December 2011.
2. To improve the capacity of selected NGOs and local government agencies to enable WASH services to be targeted at poor and excluded communities, delivered and monitored more effectively by December 2011.
3. To strengthen effective district level coordination mechanisms for efficient and pro-poor allocations of resources and implementation of WASH services in unserved areas by December 2011.
4. (To increase) the involvement of women, men, girls and boys in all stages of WASH service delivery to strengthen their capacity and improvement of WASH governance at local level.

Subsidiary goals include understanding the comparative advantage of the programme for scale up.

4.0 Methods

The methodology adopted involved a desk top review, consultations with WASH sector agencies and an extensive field visit. Background reading included key sector, AusAID, WAAus, WAN and NEWAH documentation including administrative, financial and procurement procedures. Meetings were held with NEWAH programme staff in Kathmandu, Nepalgunj, Surkhet and Doti and with line agencies, WASHCCs, local government and partner NGO staff in Surkhet and Doti. Additional meetings were held in Kathmandu with WaterAid’s programme team, The World Bank, UNICEF and the Department of Water Supply and Sewerage (DWSS).

AusAID’s Senior Program Manager participated in the MTR team on its visit to Far West Nepal and provided constructive inputs during interactions with WSUCs, V-WASHCCs and D-WASHCCs and sector agencies. He also advised on AusAID related development information.

The review team spent nine days in Mid and Far West Regions and visited five WASH schemes. Three of these were funded by AusAID in the current year and two by DFID/AusAid[[7]](#footnote-9) approximately five years ago. The rationale for visiting these earlier projects was to assess scheme sustainability and livelihoods benefits in similar projects. All project visits were unannounced in order to engage communities in their natural settings. Focus group discussions were held at community and VDC levels including with local Water and Sanitation User Committees.

4.1 Constraints

The principal limitation of this review is the extent to which projects visited may be regarded as representative of all projects implemented. Field visits were made to two project districts only - both in the mid-hills. Nepal’s geographic, social and cultural diversity presents a very different mix of community mobilization and technical challenges in other terrains and particularly in the Tarai. As such, the review findings should be regarded as mid-hills specific only.

5.0 Findings

## 5.1 NEWAH’s Project Approach

NEWAH is moving towards a rights based approach to project work and has developed an effective implementation model that embodies sound development principles and supports both service delivery and social empowerment objectives. Progress in these areas is known to depend on the effective formation and functioning of community level Water and Sanitation User Committees (WSUCs) and high levels of community engagement in project processes. NEWAH also provides cash and paid labour incentives to protect the poorest from economic hardships caused by participation in project work.

An important test of any WASH organization’s implementation performance is its ability to ensure the smooth integration of water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion inputs through community led processes. This requires both strong community involvement and advanced logistical capabilities so that the right inputs are made at appropriate times. Where successful, important synergies result and project timeframes can be foreshortened. NEWAH’s ability to complete projects to a high standard within an 18 month period indicates that these synergies are being achieved. There is also good evidence that NEWAH is able to translate new sector thinking into practical application, particularly in the areas of poverty targeting, social inclusion, sanitation, hygiene promotion and the capacity enhancement of partners.

While NEWAH’s project implementation approach is sound, a number of project benefits appear to be poorly understood internally and therefore are understated in dissemination work. Both appear due to shortcomings in project monitoring and evaluation which focus primarily on log frame objectives rather than eliciting improved insights into programme effectiveness for sector learning. Thus, while monitoring is wide ranging and data are appropriately disaggregated, analysis is not always rigourous nor results used to best effect. A case in point here was a comparison of hygiene behaviour data in four projects carried out during the MTR which revealed inconsistencies in template formats including differences in the classification of diarrhea, thereby making it difficult to draw comparisons across communities.

Sustainability monitoring also appears to be a stiff challenge with recent studies commissioned by NEWAH on scheme functionality and hygiene behaviour appearing methodologically weak. Failures to effectively measure impact in these core areas may limit opportunities for NEWAH to influence at sector level. WaterAid has an important role to play in advising NEWAH on research methodology and the effective use of findings.

One important, though currently untracked, indicator of programme performance is that of livelihoods gains. Evidence from the DFID/AusAID funded projects visited suggests that these are considerable, notably where run-off water is used for agriculture and crops are sold at local markets. Tracking livelihood gains will clearly enhance the economic arguments in favour of WASH investments including Multiple Use Schemes.

The following section discusses progress made against the programmes four specific objectives:

**Objective 1: To increase access of poor and excluded communities to a sustainable supply of safe and adequate water and to ensure sustained improvements in the households’ environmental sanitation and health status within these communities in at least 4 districts by December 2011.**

Coverage: Project monitoring data indicate that the project coverage target of 22,400 is likely to be exceeded by around 6,500 (29%) following reinvestment of exchange rate gains of approximately NRs 12 million in 3 additional projects. 58 schemes in four districts are now scheduled for completion. While not attributable to improved programme efficiency, this appears indicative of NEWAH’s high absorptive capacity.

NEWAH’s whole VDC approach to WASH coverage means that while per capita costs are reduced in the short term due to economies of scale, they are likely to rise over time once larger, poorer, settlements are served and smaller, scattered schemes are selected. In the interests of both efficiency and equity it will be important for NEWAH to work with DWASHCC and VWASHCC officials and communities to define the point at which a particular VDC is regarded as covered and a new underserved VDC chosen.

There is also a clear need for NEWAH to support district and VDC WASHCCs for the repair and rehabilitation of schemes having exceeded their design lives. Many of these communities will not have benefitted from sanitation and hygiene inputs indicating a need for engagement under the guidance, and possible financial support from D- and V- WASH CCs. NEWAH’s study of scheme rehabilitation in Makwanpur provides a useful starting point for this work.

Poverty Targeting The 4 project districts are districts relatively low in water and sanitation coverage and hence appropriately selected:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Water %** | **Sanitation %** |
| Doti  | 50 | 32 |
| Surkhet | 71 | 52 |
| Udayapur | 56 | 24 |
| Siraha | 74 | 19 |
| Rural Average | 78 | 37 |

Doti is the most challenging district among the four which is why it is also the largest both in terms of budget and coverage. In all of its projects, NEWAH targets groups in accordance with its Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy (2007) which prioritises:

* Poor and excluded people including women
* Poor but not excluded people
* Socially excluded but not poor
* Rest of the population

The first step in ensuring that the project benefits the targeted population is that all information is disaggregated. Beneficiaries are divided into Dalits, Disadvantaged Janajatis, Relatively Disadvantaged Janajatis, Brahmin/Chhetris and Religious Minorities/Others. Beneficiaries are also defined in terms of their economic status based on information on land holdings, food security, indebtedness and income/employment emerging from community-led well-being exercises. This results in a disaggregation by: ultra-poor, poor and medium. Where relevant, numbers of female headed households and disabled are indicated and going by VDC WASH profiles, attention is now focused also on numbers of HIV/AIDS infected persons. Beneficiaries are also divided by gender and age (men, women, boys and girls).

Since the process of identifying the target population is driven by the community, it is efficient, accurate and relevant. Since the project is implemented in accordance with the priorities, and under the leadership, of DDCs/VDCs, the selected target groups are approved by government. Strengthening government ownership of pro-poor activities has been an additional project achievement as evidenced by the distribution of sanitation block grants to poor, non-project communities, in both Surkhet and Doti. Project beneficiary data in the two districts visited indicates very good results overall in terms of poverty targeting although more can be done to target low caste groups:

|  |
| --- |
| **Households by Socio-Economic Group** |
|   | **HH** | **%** |
| Ultra Poor | 2015 | 56.07 |
| Poor | 1176 | 32.72 |
| Medium | 403 | 11.21 |
| Total | 3594 |  |
| **Households by Caste and Ethnicity** |
|  | **HH** | **%** |
| Dalit | 1097 | 30.5 |
| Disadvantaged Janajati | 545 | 15.2 |
| Rel. Dis.Janajati | 15 | 0.4 |
| Brahmin, Chhettri | 1935 | 53.8 |
| Rel. Mins/others | 2 | 0.1 |
| **Served Population by Gender** |
|  | **Number** | **%** |
| Men | 6132 | 29 |
| Women | 6128 | 29 |
| Boys | 4568 | 21 |
| Girls | 4419 | 21 |
| Total | 21247 |  |

At project level, NEWAH’s promotion of inclusion of the poor and excluded on WSUCs, community wealth ranking and financial compensation for the ultra-poor further strengthens its poverty approach. This said, there is a danger that the high levels of labour contributions needed for scheme construction, especially when pipe lines are long, may drive some “middle income” families into debilitating debt by limiting opportunities to farm or seek other income. It is important that NEWAH continues to monitor the economic and opportunity costs of household involvement in scheme construction.

Technical Design and Construction: NEWAH’s approach to technical design and construction is rational and consistent with recognized good practice. Water source yields are measured in the dry season when flows are at their lowest and a 20% reduction made to determine the safe yield. Topographical surveys are conducted using an Abney level with data entered into a customized software package to generate topographical and hydraulic profiles, pipeline and fitting schedules and bills of quantities. Scheme designs reflect good practice with an appropriate placement of vents, overflows, washouts and valves seen. The sizing of storage tanks is based on peak demand flows with an appropriate reserve provided to allow for continuity of supply during system maintenance. Three types of tapstand are available to users – two for households and one for schools. Of particular note here is the installation of ceramic tiles on tapstands to illustrate both effective hygiene practices and religious deities. This skillful linking of “cleanliness and godliness” in this way appears likely to improve overall levels of care of each waterpoint.

Although the MTR team was unable to visit projects in the tarai, we were told that NEWAH’s standard approach to water supply there is to sink a shallow tubewell using a manual well pointing technique, known locally as “sludging”. A concrete well seal and platform is then poured and a suction handpump (the Nepal No. 6) fitted. Where water tables lie below the pumping limit of a suction pump (approx. 5.8m) a lift pump (typically the India Mk III) is installed.

The quality of construction in both the AusAID and earlier DFID/AusAID schemes was seen to be good including at stream intakes – the most vulnerable component of a gravity water supply scheme. Construction materials are to Indian (ISI) or Nepal standards. Some problems were however reported with the quality of cement procured locally in some places. In this respect, NEWAH proposes to supply a list of recognized brand manufacturers to all WUSCs in order to improve the quality of local procurement.

Of some technical concern during project visits were drainage problems seen at a number of tapstands. Clothes washing was clearly causing waste water to pond in the adjacent area, so potentially creating unsanitary conditions and inviting channel formation and the eventual undermining of foundations. This problem may be prevented through the excavation, and backfilling with gravel, of a small trench around the tapstand perimeter. Care should be taken to ensure that tapstand drainage pipes discharge efficiently (preferably onto kitchen gardens) and not onto local footpaths.

While gravity flow piped water systems and shallow tubewells are able to meet the water supply needs of most communities, they are inadequate for those living in areas where, for example, water sources lie significantly below settlements. In such cases it is important that NEWAH explore the use of alternative technologies. This might include, for example, solar pumping from water sources lying below a community and further application of rainwater harvesting technologies.

An additional recommendation is to ensure that suppliers dispatch polyethylene pipe coils with protective sacking in order to prevent ultra violet induced degradation during outside storage. If this proves unrealistic, then instruction should be given to project staff to store pipes inside or under some form of cover.

Water Quality: NEWAH’s water quality testing protocols are consistent with WaterAid’s water quality procedures and are captured in its Water Quality Safety Plan which was developed with the support of Andrew McMilan and Kathryn Green from “Engineers Without Borders” from Australia in 2009/10. This document is consistent with national water quality policy and AusAID’s Safe Water Guide (2005) and, as such, provides an effective safeguard to community health.

Streams and springs for gravity schemes are tested pre and post construction for turbidity, pH, bacteriological contamination (total coliforms) and calcium. Bacteriological testing is initially carried out using a simple indicator test produced by the specialist NGO ENPHO. If a positive result is seen, a test for faecal coliforms is carried out using a portable Delagua (incubation) kit. Water quality at all tapstands is tested for total coliforms prior to commissioning. Where a continuing bacteriological risk is identified, household level Kanchan filters are installed in kitchens. These comprise a mixed media filter matrix housed within a ceramic or moulded plastic housing.

High levels of calcium in some sources can limit scheme life through calcification, and eventual blockage, of pipe lines. In order to extend the operational life of such schemes NEWAH and WaterAid are advised to intensify efforts to identify an affordable solution to excessive calcium levels.

Tubewells in the terai were reported to be tested for bacteriological contamination and, most importantly, for arsenic. The National Arsenic Steering Committee reports that 15 % of tube wells have arsenic levels above the WHO standard of 10ppb and 3 % above the Nepal standard of 50ppb. Continuing diligence in testing will be needed into the future.

Multiple Use Water Services (MUS): NEWAH’s willingness to supply additional water, where available, for productive purposes is to be welcomed, despite the nominally higher costs involved (larger pipe sizes and storage reservoirs are normally required). This is consistent with integrated water management principles which carry high potential for significant livelihoods gains. In Doti approximately half of all projects were MUS schemes with additional water supplied used for irrigation (including drip and sprinkler systems), kitchen gardening and cattle watering through communal troughs.

It was noted during the visit to Gobrekhola in Doti, that a separate rectangular stone masonry reservoir had been built immediately below the domestic water tank in order to feed irrigation lines. Such an arrangement is unnecessary since the construction of a larger ferro-cement tank will meet both purposes adequately at reduced overall costs.

Potential Livelihoods Gains through MUS

Nutrition related: In relation to MUS the review team found NEWAH’s provision of seeds and technical advice for the promotion of kitchen gardening a common livelihoods activity resulting in the production of a variety of vegetables for domestic consumption. Since it is therefore largely a household-based activity, women’s involvement therein is particularly encouraged. As a result of the project, local women, and some men, were informed about the nutritional value of fresh vegetables and its effect on family health. It was noted in the large MUS scheme in Gorbrekhola, Doti that men took a leading role where the irrigation of fields having high cash crop potential was involved. Tracking household benefits of MUS schemes should feature as an important objective in any new program.

Micro-finance related: User group financial management processes also appear to have been developed in an equitable way ensuring that no one gets left out (as a part of the “total” VDC coverage) resulting also in resources generation activities – in the form, for example, of savings and credit activities. In this respect, 5 savings and credit programmes are currently ongoing in 5 sub-projects in the 2 Western districts: 2 in Surkhet (registered with the District Cooperative Office) and 3 in Doti (in the process of being registered). It was noted in Doti that advice on income generation, primarily for cash cropping and animal husbandry, was available through local savings and credit organisations and cooperatives.

Sanitation: NEWAH’s role in sanitation promotion in Mid and Far West Regions is a major programme success. Progress made under the leadership of MPPW’s Regional Director in promoting community led total sanitation approaches has led to what is locally known as a “people’s movement” for sanitation having strong potential for national impact. NEWAH played a pivotal role in piloting and rolling-out in 2005 the Community Led Total Sanitation[[8]](#footnote-10) approach and has run a number of training of trainers courses for other agencies. The CLTS approach represents a major paradigm shift in the sector by switching the emphasis from a social welfare (subsidy) approach to a socially responsible and incentivized approach that rewards whole communities for attaining Open Defecation Free (ODF) status. To date 54/58 AusAID funded projects have reached ODF status with the remainder on track to reach this goal within the project period. The CLTS approach makes provision for school toilets in all schools with separate stalls for girls and boys and hand washing facilities included as standard. Toilet designs for physically impaired and young children have also been prepared and are in widespread use.

Under its CLTS approach NEWAH promotes also promotes domestic and broader environmental sanitation through the construction of hand washing facilities, plate drying racks and compost pits. These were seen at all households visited suggesting high levels of take up which were supported by community monitoring data. NEWAH also promotes the use of fuel efficient stoves and biogas plants but does not make the means available to construct these. NEWAH could usefully provide links to agencies able to provide technical support and guidance in this area.

Of particular note is NEWAH’s success in persuading VDCs to apply block grants to reward communities for obtaining ODF status. In 2010-11 45/51 VDCs in Surkhet and Doti provided a total of NRs 2,227,500 (AUD 29,000) for this purpose. These funds are used at the discretion of WSUCs to upgrade latrines to toilets through the provision of ceramic pans, cement and other materials. V-WASH CCs monitor the use of funds during regular meetings which are normally attended by a representative from each benefitting WSUC.

Rates of latrine usage in project communities appear high with no open defecation observed during any community visit. A 2009 NEWAH study on sanitation conducted before the introduction of CLTS found that 82% of villagers in completed NEWAH schemes used latrines but that the very old and very young continued to defecate in the open. During our visit to Gobbrekhola in Doti, the WSUC reported that it had taken around 3 months to convince older members to use toilets but now all did and that infant and child faeces were always disposed of in toilets. The WSUC went on to stress the importance of community health facilitators and volunteers in facilitating behavioural change.

The CLTS approach appears to be having a strong multiplier effect at VDC, DDC and Regional levels partly as a result of the improved sector coordination required under MPPW’s Sanitation and Hygiene Master Plan. Several VDCs and DDCs adjacent to NEWAH project villages were reported to have taking up ODF activities without external support. In the DFID/AUSAID 2005 projects visited, householders who had not built toilets during the project period had go on to do so in order to attain ODF status which carries high social status.

The approach also appears to be stimulating the private sector through increased demand for sanitation hardware. This potentially provides an opportunity for NEWAH to work closely with local suppliers to strengthen supply chains, especially in remote areas, possibly through the introduction of social marketing.

Several challenges remain however including addressing the high variability of sanitation approaches seen between sector agencies. This variability creates confusion among communities and local government and can undermine successes achieved through CLTS. Streamlining around issues such as VDC and community level financing, external subsidies, community facilitation approaches, hygiene promotion and sustainability monitoring all warrant specific attention.

Hygiene Promotion: Hygiene promotion activities focus on reproductive and family health, child health and nutrition within which the safe management of faeces and hand washing are key targeted behaviours. Both the CLTS model as well as hygiene education and promotion activities start at the tole level – which means they are accessible to all parts of the community.

Women are particularly encouraged to become Health and Sanitation Facilitators (paid project staff) and are also involved in monitoring activities – often with the additional support of locally stationed FCHVs (see Box 2). However most Health and Sanitation Facilitators are currently men suggesting a need to prioritise the recruitment of women. Overall, hygiene promotion activities proceed in innovative and participatory ways such as through songs, dance competition, wall paintings, role play exercises and street dramas and as a result, a basic level of hygiene awareness has been attained across project sites. This includes food hygiene with food and water storage monitored and the cleaning of kitchen utensils

The project operates a proactive approach towards children and the disabled. It has either formed or reactivated 66 child clubs across project communities (both school and out of school-based) in Surkhet and Doti. As a result, some 597 children, about a half of which are girls, have been actively involved in project activities in one way or another. Furthermore, sanitation facilities have been made available in 29 schools in child and disability-friendly forms. Child hygiene education classes are provided in schools (see Box 1) with the support of local Health and Sanitation Facilitators and as agreed with the DEO.

**Box 1: Topics taught during a 4 day School Hygiene Education**

* importance of hygiene education in school
* personal hygiene
* cleanliness of household and school environment
* latrine usage and how they can be constructed
* basic knowledge about germs and contagious diseases
* problem identification and its preventive measures
* role of education and the role of children in the community

Source: CLTS – NEWAH’s experience of piloting the approach in Nepal, 2005

In addition to community based activities, NEWAH has recently supported the DHO and DWASHCC to develop hygiene indicators and run hygiene related health camps. These are important first step towards the mainstreaming of WASH into health sector programming and should be replicated across all working districts if possible.

**Box 2: Free Health Camps for All**

A two day health camp on disease caused by unsafe water and lack of sanitation was organized at Mannakapadi sub-health post in Doti district jointly by District Health Office Doti, NEWAH and Mannakapadi sub-health post Doti from 22-23 March 2011. 443 people including women, men, children and the elderly benefitted from the camp services. A doctor, a health assistant, a staff nurse, a lab assistance, and auxiliary health assistance and NEWAH staff were part of the team providing the services. Two OPDs, registration, dispensary cabins and lab testing space was managed in the camp. The DDC provided various medicines including paracetamol, jeevan jal, iron and digene tablets and medicine costing around Rs 20,000 was locally purchased. The sub-health post also provided some medicines. The patients were provided health facilities according to the schedule of a mobile camp. The diseases identified during the free health camp were mainly related to water-borne diseases and due to unhygienic behaviour practices.

Source: NEWAH Update April 2011

Monitoring of project impact is community managed against the following indicators:

* Water source including year round availability
* Water quality including treatment
* Water collection (journey time and gender divisions of labour)
* Hand washing practices
* Latrine access including reasons for constructing and associated costs
* Child defecation practices
* Household and environmental sanitation practices including water storage, solid waste management and animal husbandry.
* Disease prevalence including diarrhoea incidence and seasonal variations.

A 2009 Impact study of 14 NEWAH projects in 13 districts showed that the average journey time to collect water had fallen from 91 to 11 minutes per household per day and journey time for defecation had fallen from 25 to 7 minutes per person per day. Time savings are used for other domestic tasks, improved care of children and, in the case of girls, improved attendance at schools.

Permanent toilets were in use and hand washing practices had substantially improved. Reduced days lost to sickness had let to an increase in the number of productive days in the year. This was judged to have increased annual income in 75% of households. Annual household expenditure on medical treatment was reported to have reduced by one third from NRs 2,903 (AUD 38) to 1,101 (AUD 14) while an increase in girl enrolment in schools was reported - attributed largely to the availability of sanitary toilets in schools. Reductions were reported in Diarrhoea incidence (88% reduction), Skin diseases (81% reduction) and eye diseases (74% reduction).

Perceptions of project improvements included the proper handling of waste water, improved cleanliness of hands, utensils and households and improved cleanliness and use of latrines. It is, however, too early to assess the sustainability of hygiene behaviour changes achieved. Endline surveys for completed schemes suggest that short term changes have been achieved but these will need to be verified in the medium and longer term. As such it is recommended that NEWAH carry out formative research on hygiene behaviour approximately one year post project completion. Such a study might be usefully combined with annual follow up visits and reference local health post data on disease incidence including diarrhea prevalence.

**Objective 2: To improve the capacity of selected NGOs and local government agencies to enable WASH services to be targeted at poor and excluded communities, delivered and monitored more effectively by December 2011.**

As noted above, NGOs in Nepal play a central role in the delivery of WASH services in rural areas. Building NGO capacity is therefore important on the grounds of both sector performance and broader national development, particularly in the absence of effective local government. In this regard, AusAID’s support to both NEWAH and, under a separate agreement, SNV for NGO capacity enhancement potentially marks an important contribution to WASH sector development.

NEWAH has been supporting NGO capacity building for WASH service delivery since 1992 and is regarded as a market leader in this area. It has provided support in Nepal to SNV, Concern, KIRDAC, CARE, ACR and to other agencies in Bangladesh, Tibet and Bhutan. It should be noted however that NEWAH has recently ceased working through local NGOs in Mid and Far West Regions, switching its support instead to V and DWASHCCs. As explained by senior NEWAH staff, this was on the grounds that the capacity building of V and D-WASHCCs is potentially of greater strategic importance to the sector – particularly in relation to increasing government accountability for WASH. NEWAH also believes that its own staff are better able to support WSUCs for scheme construction and at reduced overall costs. It is too early to judge the relative strengths of these two approaches but it is recommended that a comparative review take place within two years with a specific focus on capacity building for long term sustainability.

Under the AusAID funded programme, 10 NGOs have been selected by DWASHCCs in Surkhet (5) and Doti (5) following criteria jointly developed with NEWAH. A further 2 NGOs in Udayapur and 2 in Siraha are being supported by WaterAid through NEWAH. The involvement of DWASHCCs in partner selection is strategically important, helping to strengthen their planning and coordination functions. These NGOs report directly to VWASH CCs and the DWASH CCs where the normally sit as members. Encouragingly, it was noted that gender and caste appear to have been a strong factors in NGO partner selection to the benefit of pro-poor project selection indicators.

The process taken to partner capacity building involves a two day NGO-specific capacity assessment to understand each organisation’s capability to implement WASH schemes. A customized plan and package of support is then designed within which the core components are:

* Water resource management principles and practice,
* WASH technologies
* Water quality
* Community based sanitation and locally appropriate hygiene promotion
* WASH project management including community mobilization and training
* Gender and social inclusion
* Leadership
* Financial management
* Project application and report writing
* Exposure visits to ongoing and completed WASH schemes

In addition to training support, NEWAH provides some funds for organizational strengthening and on-site technical support for partners implementing WASH projects. In this respect it was noted that NGOs trained by NEWAH appear able to find funding support for project implementation notably, in Surkhet, from the Fund Board and SNV. It was also noted that partner NGOs appear to be playing an important “multiplier” role in promoting the CLTS approach in their project work.

NEWAH’s support to the community level WASH users network FEDWASUN warrants special mention. FEDWASUN is widely viewed as an effective vehicle for capturing the “voice” of scheme users and unserved populations. Part of its mandate is to help WSUCs register as the legal users of community water sources at district level and to fulfill a social auditing role. The potential for FEDWASUN to influence local and national sector priorities is high, particularly given their constructive mode of engagement with government. Accordingly, it is recommended that both NEWAH and WaterAid explore additional ways to strengthen the network possibly through the provision of financial support for the implementation of strategic plans which should highlight FEDWASUN’s involvement in sector planning and review processes.

Looking forward, NEWAH is advised to consider capitalizing on its expertise in NGO capacity building by marketing its services to other sector agencies and local government seeking to implement projects through local NGOs. It is further recommended that NEWAH attempt to assess its training multiplier effect by supporting DWASHCCs to track the number and type of projects subsequently implemented by partner NGOs. This could be the subject of a periodic review once every 2-3 years.

NEWAH’s experience of capacity enhancement of local government is relatively recent although, arguably, of greater strategic importance than its support to NGOs. Importantly, NEWAH’s efforts here are guided by the roles described for WASH coordinating committees in MPPW’s Sanitation and Hygiene Master Plan. Support to RWASHCCs and DWASHCCs focuses primarily on capacity building for pro-poor sector planning and coordination and encouraging VDCs and municipalities to develop needs based WASH master plans. In Surkhet, the RWASHCC had organised a seminal regional sanitation symposium and worked with donors and implementing agencies to assign them to particular working districts. In Doti NEWAH facilitated the DWASHCC to prepare a pro-poor district master plan supported by key line agencies including Health, Education and Local Development. Decisions on which projects NEWAH should undertake are taken by the appropriate DWASHCCs and VWASHCCs.

To date NEWAH has supported the reactivation or formation of 19 VWASHCCs and provided them with technical support and advice to prepare coverage profiles and coverage plans that give priority to the poorest and most marginalized communities. Of important note here were the CLTS orientation sessions held with VDC Secretaries in Surkhet and Doti which were seen to trigger the release of block grant budgets for sanitation promotion. The potential to draw additional local government resources to support pro-poor WASH sector activities appears good and should be seen as another important sector “multiplier” indicator and a key objective for any future programme.

At community level, NEWAH field staff have followed well-developed procedures to train 58 WSUCs on project planning and management, community mobilisation, GESI, CLTS, hygiene promotion and scheme operation and maintenance. Community social maps and master plans have been prepared and household level wealth ranking carried out with data used to identify the poorest for financial and employment incentives. Although we were unable to observe a WSUC training session, WSUC members met displayed high levels of knowledge on, and ownership of, project processes.

## Objective 3: To strengthen effective district level coordination mechanisms for efficient and pro-poor allocations of resources and implementation of WASH services in unserved areas by December 2011

MPPW's Sanitation and Hygiene Master Plan 2010 provides appropriate guidelines and structure for the effective coordination of WASH activities at VDC, DDC, Regional and National Levels. NEWAH and WaterAid were proactively involved in the formulation of this document which was endorsed by 44 agencies from several sectors including Local Development, Health, Education, Women’s Development, Local Infrastructure Development and Roads.

At the regional level strong MPPW leadership in the Mid-West has galvanised agencies for effective coordination, notably around community led total sanitation – known as the CASH (Comprehensive Action on Sanitation and Hygiene) approach. December 2010’s “Alignment for Action” Symposium in Nepalgunj proved instrumental in this regard. NEWAH is acknowledged by MPPW’s Regional Director to have made a significant contribution to this success by serving on the preparation committee and facilitating sessions on community led total sanitation. NEWAH was further described as strong technical lead and respected implementing agency.

Coordination successes at Regional level appear to be having a strong "ripple effect" at the centre with May 2011’s Joint Sector Review in Kathmandu calling for the replication of the Mid-West’s initiative, and roll-out of CASH across the country. The major challenge identified is fragmentation of various approaches taken by agencies across the sector.

At district level, there is clear evidence that NEWAH has been instrumental in reviving and strengthening DWASHCCs in Doti, Surkhet and Udayapur through effective facilitation and the provision of training support. In Doti and Surkhet, NEWAH was viewed as a close ally and supporter. All NEWAH projects were selected by DWASHCCs and, importantly, are included in DDC “Red Book” annual plans. This is in sharp contrast to most NGOs in the sector who tend to work in parallel to, rather than in complement with, local government.

Support to DWASHCCs has improved sector coordination and created opportunities for cross sector WASH initiatives including joint programming with DPHO for hygiene promotion through health camps. In addition district hygiene monitoring indicators have been developed and adopted.

NEWAH’s district level office presence in Doti appears to have increased its responsiveness to, and influence over, DWASHCC members as compared with Surkhet where activities are managed from Nepalgunj. This has implications for NEWAH’s Regional Office in the Mid-West which should consider relocating to Surkhet with Nepalgung staff transferred to either Doti or Surkhet as appropriate.

The project has clearly opened a way for WSUCs governed by poor and marginalized people to represent community interests to local level authorities by means in particular of the V- and D-WASH CCs. The strategic significance of women’s leadership roles in WSUCs has thereby increased greatly (See Box 3). This has meant that issues of poverty and exclusion as well as women’s status are being raised and discussed in decision-making circles, thereby contributing to the achievement of all 4 of the Project’s Objectives.

**Box 3: Bimala Leads the Way**

Just 26 years old, Bimala Tamata has an air of maturity about her that is apparent right away. An Intermediate graduate, she was unanimously elected as the Chair of the WSUC here in Gobrekhola, Doti, making her the only woman chairperson in this 4 district-project: she is also a Dalit. So far, she has successfully led the 46 households in the area in an ODF drive and 7 taps now serve a community that used to walk for hours to fetch water. “Some of us died along the way: women and children carried away by the river in the monsoon. But those are just memories now”, she explains. Bimala likes to ask others for advice before making decisions and is good at building consensus. This may explain why in addition to her duties as a member of the V-WASH CC, she has now also been invited to join the local School Management Committee. She also wants to work with youth groups in future, and activate the Child Development Centres that lie derelict. “I am a social worker, and will do my best to bring about change in my community”, she says. Source: MTR May 2011

Major challenges at district and VDC level include increasing cross-sectoral collaboration for WASH including preventative measures linked to cholera epidemics. There is also a strong need to harmonise approaches between agencies, particularly in relation to incentivizing sanitation and promoting hygiene behavior. This is likely to be best addressed through agreeing core principles with a view to harmonising implementation norms and approaches.

NEWAH is further advised to work with DWASHCCs to attract additional funds for WASH from DDCs. DDC funds appear likely to increase under Nepal’s proposed new federal structure and could prove indispensible for the repair and rehabilitation of old schemes. A major challenge facing all VWASHCCs is how to engage with WUSCs to rehabilitate these derelict schemes.

**Objective 4: (To increase) the involvement of women, men, girls and boys in all stages of WASH service delivery to strengthen their capacity and improvement of WASH governance at local level.**

According to NEWAH, it has pursued a Gender and Poverty (GAP) approach in all its projects aiming in particular for:

* equal access to improved water and sanitation facilities
* a reduction of burden on women for water collection due to the sharing of work by other household members
* greater use of kitchen gardens, due to the combination of increased water supply and livelihood supporting activities.

Activities aimed at gender and poverty are included in all 4 Project Objectives as well as Result Areas. Thus while Objective 1 aims to increase women and poor people’s access to water and sanitation supplies, Objectives 2 and 3 are supportive thereof. However, the project is particularly innovative in including Objective 4, stated as:

*“The involvement of women, men, girls and boys in all stages of WASH service delivery to strengthen their capacity and improvement of WASH governance at local levels”.*

In this regard, the project document specifically mentions:

* affirmative action in access to employment
* gender awareness trainings
* technical trainings for women
* the formation of gender-balanced Water and Sanitation User Committees.

Results up to December 2010 (in all 4 districts) look impressive as listed below:

|  |
| --- |
| **Gender, Economic and Caste/Ethnicity Composition in WSUC** |
|  | **Number** | **%** |
| Male | 68 | 55.0 |
| Female | 55 | 45.0 |
| Ultra Poor | 28 | 23.0 |
| Poor | 56 | 46.0 |
| Medium | 39 | 32.0 |
| Dalit | 23 | 18.7 |
| Disadvantaged. Janajati | 52 | 42.3 |
| Brahmin, Chettri | 48 | 39.0 |
| Total | 123 | 100.0 |

The Percentage of Women in Leadership Positions in WSUCs is 49%

|  |
| --- |
| **Sanitation Mason Training by Gender, Poverty and Caste/Ethnicity** |
|  | **Number** | **%** |
| Male | 27 | 56.3 |
| Female | 21 | 43.8 |
| Ultra Poor | 23 | 47.8 |
| Poor | 18 | 37.5 |
| Medium | 7 | 14.6 |
| Dalit | 21 | 43.8 |
| Disadvantaged Janajati | 17 | 35.4 |
| Brahmin Chhetri | 10 | 20.8 |
| Total | 48 | 100.0 |

|  |
| --- |
| **Caretakers Trained by Gender, Poverty and Caste/Ethnicity** |
|  | **Number** | **%** |
| Male | 19 | 55.9 |
| Female | 15 | 44.1 |
| Ultra Poor | 10 | 29.4 |
| Poor | 14 | 41.2 |
| Medium | 10 | 29.4 |
| Dalit | 5 | 14.7 |
| Disadvantaged Janajati | 21 | 61.8 |
| Brahmin Chhetri | 8 | 23.5 |
| Total | 34 | 100.0 |

|  |
| --- |
| **Community Health Volunteers by Gender, Poverty and Caste/ Ethnicity** |
|  | **Number** | **%** |
| Male | 61 | 34.7 |
| Female | 115 | 65.3 |
| Ultra Poor | 57 | 32.4 |
| Poor | 81 | 46.0 |
| Medium | 38 | 21.6 |
| Dalit | 49 | 27.8 |
| Disadvantaged Janajati | 59 | 33.5 |
| Brahmin and Chhetri | 68 | 38.7 |
| Total | 176 | 100.0 |

Number of Gender Trainings provided**:** 1755 project beneficiaries including 921 women

The outputs and outcomes for women and the poor thereby include:

* Women and poor people have a say in determining the needs of users and in governing tap stands through their involvement in the WSUCs
* Access to caretaker and sanitation mason as well as health trainings ensure salaried work for some (Rs 200-1000 a month as a caretaker; Rs 400-500 a day as a sanitation worker; Rs 7,000 a month as a Health and Sanitation Facilitator and Rs 3,500 as a project promoter – there only 4 women in this position so far).
* The community rethinks relations between men and women as a result of gender trainings and behavioural change is facilitated (see Box 4)
* Women and poor people engage with government bodies at VDC and DDC levels as a result of their ownership of project activities

**Box 4: Transformation through Training**

I am more conscious now; and my behaviour and perception has changed for the better says 40 year old Chandra Bahadur of Surkhet districts Dasrathpur VDC 1, referring to the effect that the gender and health/hygiene education trainings had on him. The trainings were conducted in his community as an integral component of the AusAID-funded WASH project. Prior to this Chandra never laid a hand on the household chores but now he says that he helps to cook, wash the dishes, look after his daughters and keeps the front yard clean. “I will now educate my two girls and provide them with opportunities that anyone would give a son, so that they can stand on their feet”, he says. This village with 98 households is also ODF.

Source: NEWAH Case Study, January 2011

Unintended results: empowerment and livelihood improvements OR debt due to high levels of labour contribution?

The issue of unintended results will need to be assessed using the 'community-based monitoring tools' including wellbeing ranking as a part of the final programme evaluation. This will need to investigate household income and expenditure decisions across all wealth quintiles. During the MTR several community members queried project payment practices but they also mentioned that they didn’t mind assuming some short term debt given the scale of the long term project benefits. Indeed, a number of communities actually increased their support to the ultra-poor by waiving payments and allowing members to take loans from WSUC funds.

 Is utilization commensurate to access across all target groups?

The disaggregation of the target populations shows that 80% of beneficiaries are poor while the gender ratio is equal. This suggests the project is enabling both access and utilization to those for whom the project is intended. Rates of WASH utilization in South Asia commonly vary between caste and ethnic groups but there is no evidence of this in monitoring data. If anything, project processes appear to be breaking down caste barriers by ensuring equal access.

Perception of the targeted community on matters other than access to improved WASH.

The principal benefits perceived among beneficiaries were “time to do other things”; “the nutritional value of vegetable production”; “improved stoves”; “children more healthy and clean and remaining in schools for longer especially girls and the disabled”; “changed thinking on gender and caste relations”; “access to savings opportunities as a result of the project”; “greater access to government health services through health camps”; “improved access to VDC and village planning processes”; “more dignity and self-reliance”; “more social inclusion and cohesion” and “a sense that the Government has not entirely forgotten them...”

The above evidence suggests that NEWAH’s gender and poverty approach to project implementation is particularly successful and can be regarded as a market leader in Nepal’s WASH sector.

**6.0 Comparative Advantage for Scale Up**

In this section we discuss the distinctive contributions made by AusAID, WaterAid and NEWAH in the design, management and implementation of the programme. The purpose here is to provide some useful pointers for gauging potential for further improvements and scaling up of project activities. This section also covers efficiency gains under the programme and addresses issues of compliance and fiduciary risk management.

AusAID: The principal reference used to assess AusAID’s comparative advantage in the programme is the DFID/AusAID funded programme of support to Mid and Far West Regions that ran between 1999 and 2008 which was also implemented by NEWAH. Here the gains discussed relate to the inherent design of the programme approved by AusAID.

An analysis of average walking time between the nearest road head to project communities in the rainy season (regarded as a fair proxy for degree of remoteness and poverty) shows that DFID/AusAID funded projects are 4.63 hrs distant (n=38) while AusAID funded projects are 4.9 hours away (n=46). This suggests that AusAID projects are comparable in terms of degree of remoteness to those of the DFID/AusAID programme.

AusAID programme per capita costs in 2010-11 are NRs 4,980 compared with the DFID/AUSAID cost in 2007-8 of NRs 4,504 per head, an increase of 11% in 3 years. Factoring in adjustments for inflation (note that the cost of steel pipes in 2010 rose 20% on 2009 figures) and the greater range of activities included under AusAID funded projects, clear efficiencies have been achieved. These additional activities include specialized responses to HIV AIDS and WASH, child rights and WASH, disability provisions, an improved pro-poor focus in project selection, improved WASH governance and the introduction of multiple use systems (MUS) having high potential livelihoods benefits.

Further gains are evident through the clustering of projects in selected VDCs resulting in eased logistics, notably around material and staff transportation. In responding to DWASHCC requests to work in selected VDCs, NEWAH has also increased its positioning and influence with district officials and been able to contribute meaningfully to district planning, coordination, capacity building and harmonisation efforts.

Links with the health sector have also been strengthened through collaboration with District Health Offices in developing local hygiene indicators and running WASH health camps. These activities open the possibility of NEWAH developing a WASH in Health approach consistent with Nepal Health Sector Program 2 objectives. AusAID’s involvement as a key pool fund donor in health and education SWAps can help facilitate this approach and bring about improved alignments in AusAID’s Nepal programme portfolio. It will be important to bring SNV into discussions in this regard. Improved integration with government programmes is also apparent through the District Education Office particularly around school sanitation including both infrastructure designs and hygiene promotion in schools. These inroads would have been difficult to achieve had NEWAH continued with its dispersed regional approach to project implementation.

AusAID’s draft WASH M&E framework has provided the basis for NEWAH’s programme monitoring. Base line data collection is comprehensive with 15 separate tools used to gather key information on each project community. End-line data is collected against 7 of these indicators with results fed into a robust Project Management Information System and Financial Monitoring Package.

Compliance with the AusAID Funding Order, Head Agreement and various policies is good. This includes alignment with AusAID’s Code of Conduct of the Australian Council for International Development, the NGO PI and policies related to child protection, anti-corruption, gender and poverty, disability, environmental protection, fraud and procurement including procurement threshold limits. WAAus’s orientation and training inputs during the project start-up workshop in Bangladesh in July 2010, and its ongoing technical support, appear to have been important factors in ensuring this high level of compliance.

AusAID visibility in programme documentation appears appropriate even if the number of learning documents is relatively low at this early stage of the programme. The AusAID logo is prominently displayed on the NEWAH/AusAID/WaterAid calendar for 2010-11 and appears on the signboard erected at each project. Unfortunately the reproduction quality of the logo on the signs was often poor. This may be resolved by preparing a stencil for distribution to NEWAH’s regional offices and overseeing the production of all project sign boards by a recognized hording artist.

Awareness of AusAID’s role in supporting the WASH sector is high at National, Regional and District levels in Surkhet and Doti although generally low at VDC level. WAN and WAAus have played an important role in promoting a distinctive Australian identity for AusAID’s WASH sector investments at national level with AusAID now recognized as an important and discerning sector player.

WaterAid: AusAID funding represents around 45% of WaterAid’s annual budget of GBP 1.5 million (AUD 2.28 million). WaterAid Nepal's systems and partnership arrangements (esp. planning, monitoring, reporting, procurement etc) have provided an effective safeguard for donor investments through NEWAH since its establishment. In particular WaterAid’s very tight financial monitoring, audit and reporting requirements reduce fiduciary risk to very low levels.

NEWAH’s financial returns are monitored by WaterAid on a monthly basis and inspected during periodic visits by finance staff to regional offices. WaterAid conducts internal and external audits each year while NEWAH’s accounts are audited annually as a condition of its renewal of registration with the Social Welfare Council. The fiduciary role played by WAN and WAAus is seen to be an appropriate and important programme governance safeguard.

WaterAid’s oversight of NEWAH’s procurement has eased in recent years. WaterAid formerly sat as a member of NEWAH’s procurement committee which manages all calls for tenders, bid opening, scrutiny of bids and the award of contracts for construction materials. In the interests of full transparency, it is recommended that this practice be revived and that an independent technical expert also be invited to serve on the committee.

While due diligence on financial and progress reporting is seen, the trend observed among EDPs towards tighter governance measures can be expected to lead to still tighter controls in the future. In the interests of honouring the spirit of partnership, it will be important for WaterAid and NEWAH to jointly negotiate any new controls and safeguards needed. Maintaining equality in power relations should remain at the heart of the relationship.

There is some encouraging evidence of effective synergies between WaterAid and NEWAH in translating project learning into sector influencing and advocacy, particularly around sanitation. WaterAid’s seat on the national WASH sector stakeholder group is of considerable importance here. Success in advocacy work is seen to depend on developing improved evidence able to show that new approaches e.g. improved sector coordination, lead to substantial gains over current practices. WaterAid’s guidance on research or study methods combined with NEWAH’s on-the-ground experience potentially provides a compelling combination able to drive forward evidence based policy development at national level. It is noted that the 2013 SACOSAN conference provides a rare opportunity to communicate programme learning for improved policy development at both national and regional levels. This should be a major focus for both agencies.

The provision of technical guidance to NEWAH for design, budgeting and reporting has been adequate although field level monitoring, notably in Doti, has been less than expected. The risk here is that monitoring and evaluation fails to verify progress on the ground and misses opportunities for process related programme learning. Accordingly, WaterAid is advised to step up its community level monitoring and support visits.

Some important WaterAid technical inputs are evident notably in the areas of sector analysis, scaling up, NGO capacity building, governance and accountability (including links to FEDWASUN and the NGO Forum), equity and inclusion, child rights and HIV and the disabled in WASH. These inputs add important stimulus and value to NEWAH’s programme of work.

Of important added value to the programme are WAN and WAAus’s extensive regional knowledge management networks. NEWAH staff at different levels are invited to attend national and regional WaterAid meetings and share experiences with other WaterAid country and partner staff. WaterAid also enjoys strong links to various media outlets which has served the programme well including feature articles in national daily newspapers.

The main challenges for WaterAid are seen to include:

* Improving community and district level monitoring and support to NEWAH
* Providing technical support to help NEWAH measure project and programme outcomes rather than outputs alone.
* Supporting national and regional levels efforts to reduce disparities seen between sector agencies implementing WASH projects.
* Playing a more prominent role in Regional level advocacy initiatives including, for example, Sanitation Symposia

Nepal Water for Health: NEWAH has demonstrated its ability to both scale-up and further develop its programme approach. Growth has been managed effectively with no reported decline in the quality of its non-AusAID funded work. Its district and VDC level focus appears readily scalable. As noted, NEWAH’s project design procedures are well developed with budgeting carried out to an appropriate level of detail. Predictability of spend is therefore good. Community in-kind contributions in project work in the hills typically account for 40% of total inputs, thereby allowing programme funds to go further. Average per capita costs are NRs 4,980 (including all overhead costs), a figure that compares favourably with the sector indicative target figure of NRs 5,000 per head.

In the hills, around 45% of project budgets are allocated to construction materials. Procurement is therefore a major programme activity. NEWAH’s procurement procedures have been developed over time in association with WaterAid and currently comprise:

* centralised procurement of bulk stock items e.g. pipes and fittings (60% of total),
* regional procurement of fabricated items e.g. manhole covers (24% of total), and
* community procurement of non-durable items e.g. cement (16% of total)

Technical specifications are to Indian (ISI) or Nepali (NS) technical standards so increasing the probability quality build and scheme sustainability. Annual market surveys are carried out including comparisons of prices paid by other WASH agencies. Direct invitations to bid are sent to leading material suppliers in order to prevent cartelling. Bids received are opened by a procurement committee having membership of NEWAH’s technical staff, Director, Senior Management Team members and a Board member. This committee then negotiates with the winning bidder in order to reduce the costs of any items costed above market prices.

All construction materials are delivered direct to site by suppliers, so avoiding the need for stores, and are received on site by a NEWAH socio-technician. Rejected items are returned to suppliers at their own cost. Since procurement contracts stipulate on-site delivery to trigger payment, insurance cover is not required. Upon acceptance of materials on site they become the property of the WSUC. In order to check the supply chain, NEWAH regional staff report making annual visits to all factories supplying bulk items to verify production standards using NEWAH procedures developed in consultation with WaterAid.

While procurement procedures are comprehensive and detailed, further thought should be given to increasing the percentage of total procurement carried out at regional and local levels. This can potentially reduce material and transportation costs while maintaining technical quality. A review of the merits of centralized vs. regional procurement focusing on economies of scale and supply lead times, appears warranted.

While NEWAH has produced a generally comprehensive range of studies and programme learning documents, the quality of a number of these is variable. Greater overall attention needs to be paid to study methodology and analysis if programme achievements are not to be understated and undersold. The quality of learning documentation may be improved through peer review, including involving WaterAid, with a view to reaching professional journal level standards.

NEWAH’s engagement with the media appears focused and routine with recent interactions involving an orientation programme on CLTS for the Federation of Nepalese Journalists in Dhangadi and a public essay competition. Several case studies have also been published together with a 2011 article on ODF which appeared on front page of the Kantipur national daily.

NEWAH’s level of preparedness for a second phase of support is high. The organisation proposes to continue its work in Surkhet and Doti and extend to one more relatively under-served district. Pre-feasibility studies have been carried out in 36 projects in Doti and 22 projects in Surkhet. This new programme will require all new funds. Exchange rate gains accrued in this programme having already been reinvested in additional projects and beneficiaries.

In addition to undertaking more new schemes, NEWAH proposes to work with D and V WASH CCs to support the repair and rehabilitation of old schemes and develop improved linkages with the health and education sectors. In order to move ahead with these plans a decision on phase two funding will be needed by July 2011. This will allow contract project staff to be retained and a smooth transition achieved.

The major challenges facing NEWAH are seen to be:

* working at district level to support a WASH in Health Sector approach. NEWAH is also well positioned to provide technical advice to DHOs on sanitation in public health facilities.
* Addressing social divisions across VDCs including working with VWASHCCs to engage non-project committees on WASH promotion including CLTS.
* Working with the DEO and DHO on sanitation in schools.
* Collaborating with WaterAid and others to press for the formal approval of MPPW’s Sanitation and Hygiene Master Plan (2010).
* Supporting efforts of MPPW’s Regional Director in Mid-West Region to communicate sanitation successes at the centre in order to replicate the approach across the country.

7.0 Recommendations

AusAID: It is recommended that AusAID, in earnest, decides and communicates to WaterAid and NEWAH whether it wishes to proceed with a next phase of this program. The view of the MTR team is that further support is justifiable on the basis of results achieved.

AusAID’s visibility in Nepal’s WASH sector may be strengthened by improving the quality and number of NEWAH learning documents and dissemination events in the sector. At the project level, NEWAH is advised to improve the reproduction quality of the AusAID logo appearing on project sign boards through the preparation of a quality stencil to be used by established local artists. Additional efforts should be made to increase AusAID visibility at VDC level primarily by regularly acknowledging the support provided and including the AusAID logo on all project documentation.

Scope of Activities: NEWAH and WaterAid are advised to expand their WASH in Health and Education activities in support of Nepal Health Sector Program 2 objectives and the School Sector Reform Plan. This should include an improved understanding of how WASH impacts on nutrition and support for preventative and rapid responses to diarrhoea related epidemics including awareness raising through schools. In this respect, NEWAH is advised to carry out formative research on hygiene behaviour approximately one year post project completion. This research might be combined with annual maintenance support visits and should reference local health post data on disease incidence including diarrhea prevalence.

NEWAH should also consider providing technical advice to DHOs and DEOs for the upgrading of toilet facilities in schools and health facilities to include the safe disposal of menstrual and medical wastes. Efforts should also be made to incorporate the hygiene education topics taught in schools into local school curricula. AusAID’s engagement as a key pool fund donor in health and education can support these initiatives including drawing SNV into these discussions.

There is a clear need for WaterAid and NEWAH to work for the coordination and harmonization of agency approaches in the WASH sector, particularly around sanitation promotion. Both agencies are advised to step up their inputs to sector coordination committees at all levels to press for the improved alignment of principles, procedures and practices. This will require taking an evidence-based, facilitative and conciliatory approach, showing technical leadership where necessary. Streamlining issues such as VDC and community level financing, external subsidies, facilitation approaches, hygiene promotion and sustainability monitoring should all be addressed.

In this regard, NEWAH and WaterAid are advised to press for formal endorsement of MPPW’s Sanitation and Hygiene Master Plan and create opportunities for MPPW’s Regional Director in the Mid-West to communicate sanitation successes widely with a view to replicating the CLTS/CASH approach across the country.

Under any new program, NEWAH should engage with D- and V- WASHCCs for the repair and rehabilitation of old schemes having exceeded their design lives. NEWAH is advised to work with DDCs and VDCs to determine how their resources, including block-grants, can be better utilized for the repair, rehabilitation and maintenance of old schemes. This work should include NEWAH’s regular sanitation and hygiene promotion inputs. The potential to draw additional resources for pro-poor WASH sector activities should also be investigated.

In the interests of long term sector development it is recommended that NEWAH and WaterAid identify additional ways to strengthen the FEDWASUN network. This might include support for the implementation of district and regional level plans and identifying further opportunities for their high level involvement in sector planning and review. Any future programme would benefit from having a “voice and accountability” indicator linked to the activities of FEDWASUN.

Programme Learning: NEWAH is advised to improve the quality of studies commissioned to track programme impact and learning. WaterAid can play an important role here in reviewing study methodologies and promoting peer review of papers to include external technical specialists. NEWAH should aim to publish findings in national and regional journals. AusAID may wish to support these efforts by placing a Monitoring and Evaluation intern within NEWAH and supporting selected studies such as:

* Advancing WASH in Nepal’s Health and Education Sectors;
* The contribution of NEWAH WASH service delivery to local peace building;
* NGO capacity building as a contribution to WASH sector development;
* Livelihoods benefits of MUS schemes;

Programme Support: In the interests of programme efficiency and strengthening support to R- D- and V-WASHCC’s, NEWAH should consider moving its Nepalgung Office to the Mid-West regional headquarters in Surkhet. NEWAH’s district specific focus suggests that the Nepalgung office is of limited utility. Nepalgung staff should then be relocated to either Surkhet of Doti. There is an additional need to improve the pool of transport available at NEWAH’s offices in Mid and Far West. The supply of two Indian 4 wheel drive vehicles would appear to be appropriate.

WaterAid is advised to increase its community level monitoring support to NEWAH, particularly in Far West Region, and to provide specialist advice on the preparation and dissemination of programme learning products. A particular focus here should be given to capacity building of NEWAH staff, sustainability monitoring, improving operating efficiencies and programme value for money including comparative assessments with other implementing agencies.

It is further recommended that, as suggested by NEWAH, WaterAid resume its seat on NEWAH’s procurement committee and that an independent technical expert be invited to serve on this body. Minutes from these meetings should be made available together with reports against checklists of NEWAH’s annual inspection visits to bulk material suppliers. These documents can be appended to regular six monthly progress reports. Copies of WaterAid’s annual internal and external annual audits should be made available to AusAID each year.

Objective 1: In the interests of efficiency and equity NEWAH is advised to work with DWASHCC and VWASHCC officials to define the point at which a VDC should be deemed covered and a new VDC selected.

Regarding technical challenges, NEWAH is advised and explore the use of alternative WASH technologies including solar pumping from low lying water sources and the scaling up of household level rainwater harvesting systems. NEWAH is further advised to improve drainage around tapstands and to ensure that waste water is used, wherever possible, for productive purposes. NEWAH should also ensure that polyethylene pipe is supplied in protective sacking in order to prevent ultra violet degradation during outside storage. Where this is not possible, instructions should be given to store pipes inside or under a protective shade. In order to extend the operational life of gravity schemes supplying water with high calcium content, NEWAH and WaterAid should intensify efforts to identify an affordable solution to pipe calcification. This should include a desk top review, to include WELL-WEDC documents and, possibly, operational research possibly led by a local or international post graduate student.

In relation to MUS schemes, any additional water storage required should be incorporated within the main supply reservoir, thereby avoiding the need for a separate structure.

NEWAH’s promotion of fuel efficient stoves and biogas plants is laudable but should be supported by the provision of links to agencies able to help construct them. NEWAH is also advised to work with local hardware suppliers to strengthen sanitation supply chains, particularly in remote areas, including introduction of social marketing.

In order to more accurately track the sustainability of scheme benefits NEWAH should consider carrying out formative research on hygiene behaviour approximately one year post project completion. Such a study might usefully be combined with NEWAH’s annual maintenance visits and should include reference to local health post data on disease incidence including diarrhea prevalence and practicing sustained food hygiene, animal and child excreta disposal and hand washing.

In order to further stimulate the private sector for the supply of sanitation hardware, NEWAH is advised to work closely with local suppliers to strengthen supply chains, especially in remote areas, including, possibly, through the introduction of social marketing initiatives.

Objective 2: NEWAH is advised to capitalize on its expertise in NGO capacity building by marketing these services to other sector agencies seeking to implement projects through local NGOs. It is further recommended that NEWAH assess its capacity building “multiplier” effect by tracking projects subsequently implemented by these NGOs once every 2-3 years.

NEWAH should review whether its direct implementation approach with support to VWASHCCs represents a net gain over its earlier NGO partnership project in terms of sector capacity development. Such a review should take place within two years.

Objective 3: NEWAH is advised to step up its inputs to sector R-, D- and V-WASH CCs to support sector coordination and harmonization including, where necessary, taking a leadership role on topics such as integrated agency planning, local WASH financing, joint capacity building for CLTS scale up, harmonizing implementation processes including community facilitation and sustainability monitoring.

The further strengthening of local coordination committees should be a priority. This should go beyond orientation, training and monitoring inputs to include direct collaboration in areas such as district WASH planning and budgeting processes, rehabilitating old schemes, exposure visits to projects implemented by different agencies and strengthening district WASH MIS systems.

NEWAH is advised to also work with D- and V- WASHCC’s to address social divisions across VDCs including working to engage non-project communities in WASH promotion activities – possibly funded by local government block grants. Engaging local elites will be an important component of this.

NEWAH is recommended to work through DWASHCC to support DHOs and DEOs for the provision of sanitation in schools and health facilities. This should also include hygiene promotion activities including health camps and school education classes.

Objective 4: With respect to Objective 4, it is possible to fine-tune ongoing efforts with a view to raising the chances of sustaining the achievements that will have been made by December 2011 as follows:

* In order to maximize the impact of project investment, review the achievements of the gender trainings conducted by the project to date and plan for follow-up activities in consultation with the training recipients. For example ‘light’ action plans could be developed (led by the trainees themselves). Behavioural change is a long, sometimes uphill process that is best monitored and supported.
* More generally, review the extent to which skills and knowledge have been transferred in training activities provided by the project. Going by the information provided in ‘Project Completion Forms’, the emphasis appears to be only on numbers of trainings held and numbers of men and women participants. Skills and knowledge monitoring of this kind will allow for the planning of follow-up activities for trainees (if necessary) and allow for the adjustment of training modules for implementation in future projects. It will also ensure that funds invested on training activities generate real impact.
* Arrange for one interaction among the women in leadership roles in WSUCs before December 2011 – perhaps in partnership with FEDWASUN and the Government. This could be across VDCs, even across districts. Allow the women to discuss their experiences and encourage them to nominate ‘champions’ (in government and outside) to take up the cause of women’s governance in water and sanitation beyond the life of the project. If a large gathering like this is difficult to arrange, consider smaller meetings – perhaps one per district. This seems to be an effective way of celebrating Result Area 4.

**Box 5: Gender Auditing**

* Gender Division of Labor

- Reproductive

- Productive

- Community

- Political

* Access and Control
* Family Level
* Community Level
* Political Level

Source: NEWAH Community Monitoring Systems

* The Community Monitoring Systems implemented by the project appear to collect more information than is actually used. In particular, the Gender Auditing section (see Box 5) provides rich information regarding relations between women and men in the community as well as poverty and inclusion issues. But it is not immediately clear how this information is being used (one way would be to use it as a tool in gender trainings). More generally, it will also be important to revisit the information coming out of the Well Being Ranking Exercise in addition to the Gender Audit during the Final Evaluation as baseline information to determine the economic and social changes that have been brought about by the project. NEWAH’s Long Term Sustainability Monitoring of its projects should likewise monitor economic and social empowerment effects using this information during the ‘post project phase’ and document this information as evidence of impact.

* Evaluate ongoing experiences of saving and credit groups which appear to be pilot activities with likely results to emerge in the coming six months. The findings will help in the design of future NEWAH projects and may be shared with other stakeholders keen on incorporating a livelihoods dimension to WASH activities.
* Provide WSUCs with information on going women- and poverty-related work of partner NGOs (involved in the capacity development part of this project as well as others) and the Government with the idea being that by December 2011, project beneficiaries are left better ‘connected’ to information and resources. In particular, linking people with opportunities for non-formal education, micro-loans, cooperatives, market access, improved cooking stoves could be relevant.
* NEWAH is advised to continually monitor the economic and opportunity costs of household involvement in scheme construction for such families and carry out a livelihoods impact study of a selection of completed schemes including those operating Multiple Use Schemes with a particular focus on benefits to poor and excluded communities.

APPENDIX 1

Consultancy Terms of Reference for Nepal Water for Health Program

Mid Term Review

Location: East, Mid and Far Western Regions of Nepal

Period: 25th April to 8th May 2011

Contact: WaterAid Nepal (WAN)

1. **Background**

WaterAid (WA) is an international, development organization with a mission of supporting the poorest and most vulnerable people to achieve better WASH and wellbeing in their efforts. WaterAid believes that WASH is a fundamental human right, and that provision of an inclusive WASH service is essential to its realisation. WaterAid seeks to enable the poorest and most marginalized people, excluded from access to WASH services, to realise their right to WASH and to improve their health and well-being through advocacy and local capacity building to deliver inclusive and sustainable WASH services.

WAN was established in 1987 during the UN Water and Sanitation Decade of 1981-1990. It aims to provide support for the provision of water and sanitation services in rural Nepal. In 1992, WAN helped set up Nepal Water for Health (NEWAH), through which WAN started working on water and sanitation projects in rural areas.

AusAID has granted the fund of AU$3m to **WaterAid Australia** to implement the ‘Nepal Water for Health Programme’ commencing from May 2010 in order to improve sustainable access and governance in rural WASH in four districts of Nepal namely Doti, Surkhet, Udaypur and Siraha. This program will be completed in December 2011. WaterAid Nepal has been managing this programme through its rural programme partner in Nepal, NEWAH.

The Nepal Water for Health programme aims to increase WASH services in four districts across three regions of Nepal through a number of targeted interventions. This includes working with local civil society organizations; NGO and government partners to provide water services, as well as undertaking awareness and education programs focused on achieving improved WASH services and sustained sanitation and hygiene behavior practices. This project will directly benefit 22,4001 poor people of targeted rural villages of targeted districts.

1*This beneficiary number is based on preliminary information and reflected in project documents. This beneficiary number has increased to 25,916 during a detailed survey of proposed projects.*

1. **Objectives of the Programme**

The Nepal Water for Health programme began in April 2010 and is scheduled to run until December 2011. The key objectives and anticipated results areas are outlined below:

**Objective - 1:** To increase access of poor and excluded communities to a sustainable supply of safe and adequate water, and to ensure sustained improvements in the households/community environmental sanitation and health status within these communities in at least 4 districts by December 2011

**Result Area: Change in Access & Rights to WASH services for the un-served**

**Objective - 2:** To improve the capacity of selected NGOs and Local Government Agencies (LGAs) to enable WaSH services to be targeted at poor and excluded communities, delivered and monitored more effectively by December 2011

**Result Area: Changes in Sector Capacity to achieve WASH**

**Objective - 3:** To strengthen effective district level coordination mechanisms for efficient and pro-poor allocation of resources and implementation of WaSH services in unserved areas by December 2011

**Result Area: Changes in the Governance in relation to WaSH Sector**

**Objective -4:** Involvement of women, men, girls and boys in all stages of WASH service delivery to strengthen their capacity and improvement of WASH governance at local level.

**Result 4: Gender involvement in the provision of WaSH services**

1. **Purpose of mid-term review:**

With funds received from AusAID to WaterAid Australia, WaterAid Nepal is managing ‘*Nepal Water for Health Programme’* through its partner NEWAH in four districts of Nepal.

The main purpose of this consultancy is to conduct a Mid-Term Review to assess trends of progress to-date of the project implementation against the targets set in the project plan; to assess WAN’s and NEWAH success in delivering outputs and the relevance and effectiveness of the approaches/ strategies applied; to review lessons that can be learned, to share lessons from other WA projects, to use evidence to make recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the project in the remaining timeframe of the project’s life and to set out the benchmark for the future programme planning and direction.

While the review team will formulate its own guidelines against the project plan and achievement in consultation with WAN rural programme team and NEWAH and finalize review guidelines looking into certain pertinent issues in present context of Nepal. The team reviews in following area and report to WAN management with constructive suggestions and recommendations:

1. **Objective of Mid Term Review**:

To review of the Nepal Water for Health Programme implemented for improve sustainable access and governance in rural WASH in four districts of Nepal.

**Specific objectives**:

* To review the progress towards the increased access to sustainable and safe water supply for poor and excluded communities and also to ensure sustained improvements in environmental sanitation and hygiene awareness.
* To review the progress towards the improvement of capacity of selected NGOs and Local Government Agencies (LGAs) to enable WaSH services to be targeted at poor and excluded communities, delivered and monitored more effectively.
* To review the progress towards strengthening effective district level coordination mechanisms for efficient and pro-poor allocation of resources and implementation of WaSH services in unserved areas.
* To review the progress towards the involvement of women, men, girls and boys in all stages of WASH service delivery to strengthen their capacity and improvement of WASH governance at local level.
* To assess the relevance and effectiveness of the approaches/ strategies and links to national sector strategies.
* To assess the programmes comparative advantage for scale up or limitations for AusAID, WAN and NEWAH to further support WASH specific services in Nepal.
* To review efficiency gains in the present project implementation modality.
* To review alignment of programme M&E with AusAID’s Draft WASH Performance Framework.

**4.0 Framework:**

The review team will develop a framework and methodology for the review based on the above specific objectives and within the below framework of areas of focus:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Framework** | **Areas of focus for review** |
| Effect of the project | Changes met |
|  | Target groups |
|  | Sustainability |
| Project implementation | Progress against planned activities |
|  | Processes and approaches |
|  | Gender, Equity and Inclusion |
|  | Donor visibility |
|  | Donor policies |
|  | Management and monitoring |
|  | Constraints faced |
| Wider potential of the project | Lessons to be learnt |
|  | Influencing potential |
| Future direction  |  |

Questions to be answered:

**4.1 Effect of the Project**

*4.1.1 Changes met*

1. What is Water Aid’s and NEWAH’s added value to tackling the issue of access to water, sanitation and hygiene?
2. What evidence is there that the outputs will lead to the fulfillment of the project objectives and cross-cutting themes? Does this project sufficiently address the rights including child protection, gender equality, equity,peace building and inclusions perspective of WaterAid and Donor?
3. Are there any unforeseen consequences of the project, whether positive or negative?
4. What evidence is there that the outputs of the project will lead to improvement in practicing safe sanitation and hygienic health behaviors?

*4.1.2 Target groups*

1. To what extent are targeted users benefiting from the project, for example considering equity & inclusion, gender and socio-economic group, does this project help to address the poverty through WASH? Is present delivery mechanism/modality helping to reach to poor and historically excluded groups?

*4.1.3 Sustainability*

 Considering the technical financial, institutional, environmental and socio-cultural aspects of sustainability:

1. Given current relationships and implementation progress, what is the likelihood of the project having a sustainable impact in the longer-term? What are community and main stakeholders (water users committee, VDC, DDC) engagement in project implementation and decision making, what are community benefits from the project?
2. Are there any recommendations for improved sustainable approaches when funding ends?
3. For ownership, good governance and sustainability of WASH programme, the programme is providing capacity building support to local organizations and local authorities of programme areas; to what extent does this initiative help beneficiary’s institutions to develop and enhance their capacity in WASH sectors and contribute to sustainability of this programme?

**4.2 Project Implementation**

*4.2.1 Progress against planned activities*

1. To what extent has the project delivered the planned WASH activities?
2. To what extent are the project activities reaching the target groups?
3. Was the project delivering other activities not originally planned?
4. With reference to the indicators, and the contribution of the activities, what progress has been made towards the planned project outcomes?
5. Is the project likely to achieve its planned outcomes by the end? If not, what changes should be made to accelerate the implementation?
	* 1. *Processes and approaches*
6. Was the project organized in a way that ensures optimal (i) participation and (ii) ownership of (a) the local partners (i.e. line ministries, District Development Committee (DDC), and (b) the local/target population, users and their representatives?
7. Assess the relevance and effectiveness of the relationship between Nepal Water for Health and local authority at district level. How could the relationships be made more effective in the remainder of the project?
8. Assess the extent to which the project has contributed to strengthening the capacity of communities and local authority.
9. Have other partnerships, other than those originally planned, been developed?
10. How effective is the co-operation between NEWAH and other agencies in the project area, both Government and non-Government?
11. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the approaches adopted to implement the project and any recommendations for improvement? How suitable are the technologies and approaches used in the service delivery?
12. Is the service delivery of sufficient quality? What steps have been considerations to ensure the quality of work?

*4.2.3 Gender and equity & inclusion*

1. To what extent have (i) gender and (iii) equity & inclusion issues been considered and applied during planning and implementation? How project areas are identified?

Does this address the WASH need of poor and marginalized? Are the local communities involved in planning? What percentage of total users from poor and marginalized group? Are the project structure developed in child and disabled friendly manner in community and institutions? Are the women given priority in decision making position in users committee, community level training such as mason, community health volunteers?

1. How effective are the approaches used to engage and involve poor, marginalized, vulnerable and excluded groups?
	* 1. *Visibility*
2. What steps have been taken to ensure the recognition of AusAID support? Has AusAID’s support only been recognised in circumstances where:
* It is culturally or socially appropriate
* It is not detrimental to the achieving the desired outcomes of a project/program
* It does not compromise the safety and security of staff

Are programme kick-off workshop/sharing conducted in programme districts and national level?

*4.2.5 Policies*

1. To what extent AusAID ‘key policies’ are followed?

 (Key policies to be considered are: *Anti corruption, Disaster risk reduction, Child protection, Gender, environment, Safe water, and Fraud and procurement policies, Climate Change*)

*4.2.6 Management and monitoring*

1. Is the staffing and management structure appropriate to fulfill the project outcomes and outputs?
2. Is implementation systematically monitored and recorded? Are monitoring and evaluation practices sufficient and how could they be strengthened?
3. How is the data being used to inform decision-making?
4. Are the indicators appropriate for measuring the project outputs and outcomes? If not, and in discussion with project staff, what indicators would be more appropriate?
5. Are inputs and resources being used to their maximum potential? Is there efficiency gain in the present project administrative arrangement to implement this project? Or, how can this project achieve more results (in access and coverage) with less input of resources?

*4.2.7 Constraints*

1. Are the opportunities and risks originally identified in the project design still valid? Have any significant new opportunities or risks arisen during the project?
2. Any evidence that government policy is supporting or constraining project implementation?
3. What internal factors help or hinder the project?
4. What about the project fiduciary area’s (procurement and delivery of materials and management of project finance) management?
5. What has been the project’s approach to mitigate these external and internal constraints?
6. Have there been any other constraints to implementation?

**4.3 Wider Potential**

*4.3.1 Lessons to be learnt*

1. What approaches taken by the project can be regarded as innovative or as appropriate adaptations of good practice? (particular reference should be made to known cultural and socio-political appropriateness of the approaches)
2. What lessons learned could be used beyond the project area: (i) within Nepal; (ii) within WaterAid (e.g. management, administration); (iii) in similar situations worldwide?

*4.3.2 Influencing potential*

1. Which particular aspects of the project, if any, could be used to influence WASH Sector: (i) within Nepal; (ii) internationally?

**4.4 Future**

1. Any recommendations on an appropriate direction for NEWAH’s future work in this project area?

**5. Methodology**

The use of appropriate participatory approaches is essential. Methods to be used should include:

* 1. Review of Project Documents, these will be sent in advance to the review team members;
	2. Review of project financial and administrative records and procedures and interview with project staff;
	3. Discussion and consultation with the WAN, NEWAH, AusAID and other donors (WB,ADB ,UNICEF and Finnish) in WASH in Nepal
	4. A walk-through of project areas of at least two programme districts areas, does this project appropriately address the equity, inclusion, gender equality, community participation and sustainability aspects?
	5. Focus group discussion (FGD) with inclusive disaggregated groups of users, Water users committee, and local authority;
	6. Technical assessment of water supply schemes addressing functionality and sustainability of systems
	7. Discussions with department of water supply and Sanitation, VDC/DDC authority, district level line ministries and users communities;

This methodology is provisional. A detailed methodology will further be reviewed and developed by the Review Team in consultation with AusAID.

**6. Background reading**

* NEWAH policy/strategies
* Relevant WA policies such as Gender, E&I and Child Protection
* AusAID compliances documents
* WaterAid Nepal country policies/strategies
* Project proposal
* First quarter report
* Six months progress updates (July-December 2010)
* Project-wise baseline survey report
* Project plan and budget
* AusAID’s Draft WASH Performance Framework

**7. Profile of the review team**

This is a participatory review process where the review team will consist of two independent consultants (one national and one international). Valuing the independent nature of this review one representative of AusAID Nepal will participate*.* WA Nepal staff will assist the evaluation team with relevant documents.

The reviewers have the following skills/experiences:

* Tertiary Qualifications in an appropriate discipline
* A minimum of 5 Years of experiences of WASH program/project planning, monitoring and evaluation preferably having experience in integrated program;
* Experience of project Implementation, M&E in post-conflict situations and difficult environment;
* Some experience/ knowledge of health/sanitation challenges in a poor resource setting;
* Experience/ skill of facilitating participatory and qualitative project evaluation
* Experience of evaluation reporting to donor/WAN standards

**8. Schedule**

The review is planned to take place from 25th April to 15th of May 2011. The fieldwork and draft report writing will take place over six days in the project area (three days in one district) whereas preparation, report sharing and finalisation will take place over 10 days in Kathmandu. The remaining four days have been provided for travel and final editing.

Tentative Schedule

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date | Activities |
| 25-27 April | Review of programme documents, meeting with key staffs of WAN and NEWAH. |
| 28 April | Travel to Surkhet  |
| 29 April- 1 May | Field visits and stakeholder meeting in Surkhet |
| 2 May | Drive to Doti |
| 3-5 May | Field visits and stakeholder meeting in Doti |
| 6 May | Fly back to Kathmandu |
| 7-8 May | Desk work and draft report compilation |
| 9 May | Debriefing and sharing draft report to WAN AusAID and NEWAH |
| 10-13 May | Feedback incorporation and report finalisation |
| 14-15 May | Final report submission to WAN |

**9. Report**

A draft report will be provided to AusAID for review and comments on 8 May. A version will also be provided to WAN for any factual corrections. Following receipt of comments, this will be finalised over two days at the end of May following receipt of comments.

*Final Report*

The final report should be a maximum of 30 pages, excluding annexes, and written in English. It should contain an executive summary of a maximum 2 pages. The report should follow the following format:

* Title page
* Short description of reviewers
* List of contents
* Acronym list
* Executive Summary
* Introduction/context
* Objectives
* Methods
* Constraints
* Findings
* Conclusions
* Recommendations
* Annexes (may include detailed methodology, list of people consulted and photos)

The report may include quotes, photos, graphs, case studies and It should be shared in hard and digital copies.

The report will be circulated back by the Country representative of WAN, copied to the, Rural Programme Manager, 2 weeks after the completion of the review exercise.

**10. Budget**

TBC

Any final feedback at this stage only needs to be provided by WAN, NEWAH and AusAID Nepal.A final report will then be returned to the above staff within 1 week of receiving this feedback.

Any queries should be sent to:

Country Representative, WaterAid, Nepal

Annex 1

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Objective** | **Indicators** |
| To increase access of poor and excluded communities to a sustainable supply of safe and adequate water, and to ensure sustained improvements in the environmental sanitation and health status within these communities in at least 4 districts by December 2011 | * 22,400 people in 55 targeted communities have access to safe and adequate drinking water
* VDC and communities operation and support mechanisms are in place to ensure water scheme remain functional
* 80% of beneficiaries are from poor & excluded groups
* 22,400 people have access to and use hygienic and appropriate sanitation services in targeted VDCs
* 100% of the targeted communities within VDCs reach and sustain No Open Defecation
* 80% of beneficiaries are from poor & excluded groups.
* 80% targeted communities have in place a community management system to maintain a healthy environment
* 70% of the beneficiaries adopted sustain improved hygiene behavior practices in at least in three key hygiene indicators (hand-washing, management of human excreta, water & food hygiene) in targeted VDCs.
* Reduction in point prevalence rate of diarrhea by 20% respectively in targeted VDCs
 |
| To improve the capacity of selected NGOs and Local Government Agencies (LGAs) to enable WaSH services to be targeted at poor and excluded communities, delivered and monitored more effectively by December 2011 | * NEWAH increase their knowledge on water quality mitigation, water resource management, climate change adaptation technologies and approaches
* NEWAH provide technical support on the delivery of drinking water and water resource management to local NGOs & LGAs beyond the focus VDCs in 4 districts
* Community based sanitation models are understood and promoted by all sector actors in 4 districts
* NEWAH provide technical support on sanitation promotion to VDCs, other local NGOs and LGAs beyond the focus VDCs in 4 districts
* NEWAH's Hygiene Promotion Team develops locally appropriate hygiene promotion programme addressing the specific needs of the targeted communities
* NEWAH provide technical support on hygiene promotion to CBOs, other local NGOs and LGAs in focus districts
 |
| To strengthen effective district level coordination mechanisms for efficient and pro-poor allocation of resources and implementation of WaSH services in unserved areas by December 2011 | * Sector coordination committees are established and functioning, addressing water resources in 4 focus districts by end of 2011
* District plans are developed and annually reviewed addressing drinking water issues for poor and un-served areas and improve local water governance
* Establishment of WASH coordination committee with defined roles and responsibilities on sanitation promotion in 4 focus districts
* WASH coordination committee influences district level inclusive planning processes and facilitates sectors monitoring towards sanitation targets
* WASH and Health Sector actors have planned joint District or VDC level activities to address key hygiene behavior changes in at least 3 of the targeted districts
* WASH and Health Sector actors have agreed indicators for monitoring adoption of hygiene practices in at least 3 of the targeted districts and jointly undertake a study on hygiene behavior practices in at least 1 district
 |
| Involvement of women, men, girls and boys in all stages of WASH service delivery to strengthen their capacity and improvement of WASH governance at local level | * Gender and poverty (GAP) approach will be used at the programme and organizational level to address the exclusion of women and the poor in decision-making , training and other project-related benefits
* NEWAH will be utilizing the GAP approach throughout all its projects and organization, which includes interventions such as disaggregated data by sex, caste and ethnicity; affirmative action; gender awareness training; technical training for women; gender balanced water and sanitation users committees (WSUCs)
 |

1. See Ockelford 2007 “Review of DFID’s Future Engagement in the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Sector in Nepal” [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
2. SACOSAN-2 2006 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
3. WaterAid, 2006 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
4. Sector Efficiency Improvement Joint Sector Review, 2011 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
5. MDGs Progress Report, GoN, 2010 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
6. Op cit. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
7. AusAID provided funding to this project through a delegated arrangement with DfID. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
8. Previously known within NEWAH as the Community Led Basic Sanitation for All (CLBSA) approach. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)