
Integrity Issues in the WASH Sector: Rural Guatemala, Mozambique and Nepal



Rupa Mukerji
Co Head Advisory Services
HELNETAS Swiss
Intercooperation
Rupa.Mukerji@helvetas.org

Delft, 5.06.2013

- The evolution of the programme in Guatemala: From a Project to a Systemic Approach
- Key lessons and challenges
- Context analysis in Nepal and Mozambique
- On-going Interventions

The Project Setting in Guatemala

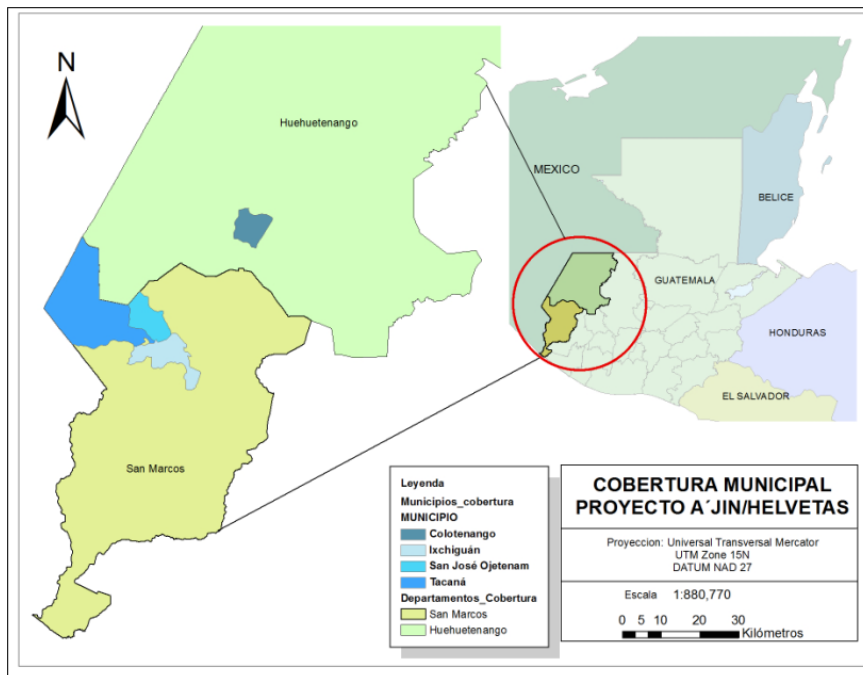


Intervention: water and sanitation in San Marcos Department (Guatemala)

Helvetas in Guatemala: since 1972, first watsan activities in 1985

1992-1996: support to social organizations, civil society

1997-2002: support to the decentralization process through building planning capacities of local governments. First experience in facilitating of a sectoral decentralization process (natural park management)



Water and Sanitation in Rural Guatemala



- 61% have access to improved sources of water in rural area (2011)
- Water disinfected only in 15% out of 38'000 water networks controlled
- 8% rural households connected to sewage networks, the majority using pit latrines
- Only 5% of waste water is treated
- Management is poor: fees do not cover O&M costs, few census and formal registration of users.
- Water networks in main towns are in a poor state
- Maintenance financed with resources that could be allocated to other key social sectors or to new watsan investments

The Project Approach



Helvetas interventions at the municipal level: small towns (5'000 inhabitants) and rural settlements.

Partners : Rural communities, more recently municipalities. Few connections with other institutional actors.

The approach has worked well in small rural communities.

Working with municipalities has long been deemed risky in the given context.



Risks of Working at the Municipal Level

- Lack of Trust: Municipalities and higher levels of governments not trusted by the population.
- High Corruption.
- High staff turnout → training efforts not sustainable.
- Users voice often unheard by authorities.



The Community Based Approach: Limits



- Scale: Watersheds (managing water resources) vs Community (managing services)
- Limited ability to enforce rules
- Limited financial means to undertake large repairs
- Does not encourage dialogues between communities and municipalities, in the backdrop of municipalities receiving increasing fiscal transfers
- Does not enable communities with rights to discuss resources allocations and monitor resources use.

- Risks of misuse of financial contributions
 - negative effect on community cohesion and future contributions

The Move towards a Systemic Approach



- Creation of municipal watsan offices
- Adoption of municipal regulations for service delivery, specifying rights and duties of both municipalities and users
- Support in management tasks: elaboration of water networks plans, users census, operations and maintenance handbooks



Some Successes:



More professional management of water facilities

- Independent Monitoring
- Relations between users and service providers based on rules rather than personal connections.
- Thanks to project follow-up, technical and administrative staff remain in office despite change of mayors after elections.
- Unity of public budget: Technical and administrative functions assumed by municipalities, costs included in municipal budgets.
- Involvement of women groups in watsan sector and general municipal planning. Shifting municipal resources from very visible public work (streets paving e.g.) to water and sanitation.



Challenges Experienced



- Fee lower than what is needed to cover O&M costs
- Collection rate below 60-80%
- Lack of coordination and information flows between treasury office and watsan office
 - Fee collection is poorly managed
 - Resources available for the watsan office not systematically communicated
- Slow acceptance of fee for water and water meters

Recent steps – engaging more actors

Municipal judges and Public Ministry

→ to be trained in water and sanitation issues and be ready to support conflict resolutions between users and municipalities.

→ Ideally, they will disseminate sector laws and regulations, inform about their own responsibilities as part of the judiciary, increase their readiness to act.

Comptroller Office.

- Audits on municipal financial management made public
- Role be better understood by the population

Methodology to engage actors

With the support of SDC, HELVETAS is working with the Water Integrity Network (WIN - Transparency International).

Use of the tool designed Annotated Water Integrity Scan/AWIS

Concept:

- invite all sector actors to diagnose integrity.
- Integrity has 3 pillars: transparency, accountability and participation.
- Actors score degrees of integrity in an anonymous way
- Comment on the scores
- Agree on measures to reach identified steps forward to increase integrity in the sector.

Water integrity issues in rural Guatemala, Mozambique and Nepal



TAP
in drinking water (dw) and sanitation (s) service delivery and investment (i)

Results on which actors commented.

T: Transparency

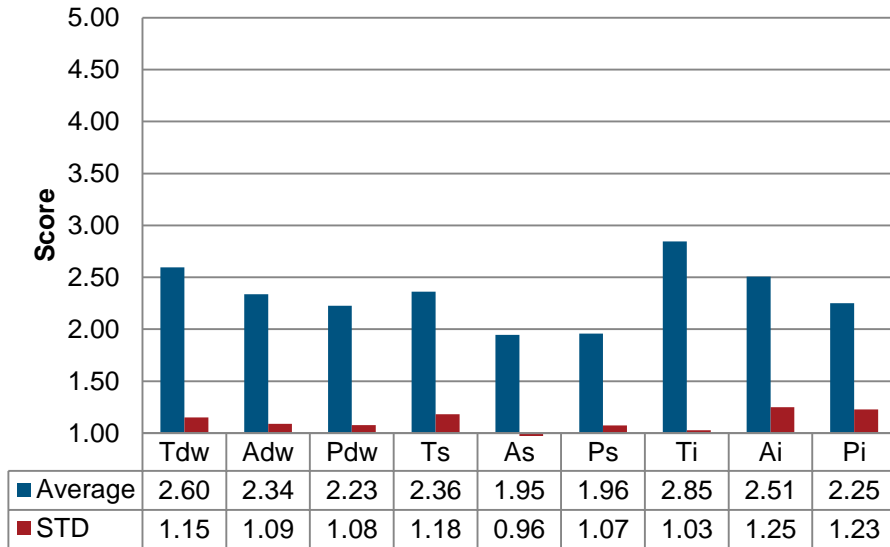
A: Accountability

P: Participation

W: Water service delivery

S: Sewage service

I: Investment in watsan



Mozambique:

- Focus on investments: both in allocation and execution
- Financial allocations follow no clear procedure or criteria
- Political influence is decisive
- Capital costs are very high – rent-seeking
- Project quality often low, or project are not completed
- Contracts are poorly supervised

Nepal:

- Focus on investments: both in allocation and execution
- Rules for investment allocation are quite detailed, but political leaders can circumvent them
- Rules not known to non government stakeholders
- Tendency to fragment investment. Many small, insufficient investments.
- Projects over-priced between 15 and 30%
- Formal compliance with supervision of contract implementation, but quality varies
- Users committees often manipulated by elites

Mozambique action plan:

- Improve planning and budgeting at decentralised levels
- Transparency in budget execution for the sector, including national level
- Strengthen procurement process at the decentralised levels
- Strengthen monitoring capacities by civil society organizations

Nepal action plan:

- Together with the Ministry in charge, work in 3 districts to improve transparency and accountability
- Greater compliance with the legal frame for investment allocation (go for the greater social benefit, select projects provided they have a cost estimation, have the projects prioritized in open assemblies at district level)
- Transparency in procurement processes, accounts rendered to the public for all steps (contractor selection, progress and final reports, audit)
- Information broadcast through local media
- Users can have their queries replied by authorities through local radios

Thank you!

For further details contact our Project Coordinator Jacques Merat at jacques.merat@helvetas.org

