Analysing service delivery options for Cambodia

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Additional Information:

- This is a conference paper.

Metadata Record: https://dspace.lboro.ac.uk/2134/29268

Version: Published

Publisher: © WEDC, Loughborough University

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Analysing service delivery options for Cambodia

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The paper analyses service delivery by breaking it down into the wide range of different services, and the range of service delivery organisations and individuals. Breaking things down in this way can be helpful in planning service delivery and ensuring that all aspects are covered. The paper then looks at specific issues in Cambodia that may be relevant in other countries, including demand for services, community management and ownership, technology choice, organisations including the private sector, and capacity building.

From 1999 to 2001, the Government of Cambodia, through its lead agency the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD), developed a rural water drinking water supply and sanitation Policy Framework through a Policy and Capacity Building (PCB) Project. The World Bank Water and Sanitation Program’s East Asia and Pacific Regional Office, with funding from Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and Agence Francaise De Developpement (AFD), supported the Project.

For the rural water supply and sanitation sector to develop effectively, a strategy was needed to operationalise the Policy Framework. The author of this paper was hired as a consultant through WEDC to prepare a strategy guidance note on service delivery options to assist the Cambodian working group to develop this strategy. It was one of seven guidance notes, each covering a different aspect of the needs of the sector.

The Policy Framework has the following RWSS vision statement for Cambodia:

‘Every person has sustained access to safe water supply and sanitation services and lives in a hygienic environment by 2025’. (MRD, 2001a)

The Policy Framework describes the meaning of the key components of this vision statement:

“The Sustained access to RWSS services”. Services are continually provided over an indefinite period of time. The term ‘sustained’ applies to a number of sectoral components”. Services are sustained:

- environmentally when the delivery of services does not cause permanent damage to the living environment. (MRD, 2001a)

Communities are to be the decision-makers in all phases of a project, including community-level selection, planning, implementation, management and monitoring of RWSS services. (MRD, 2001a)

Definition of Service

At first sight, the term “services” appears to be easy to define. It is the water supply to and sanitation for a community. On further thought, it gets more complicated. What exactly is a water service? Is it the water coming out of a pump? Is it the construction of the tubewell and pump? Should it include the operation and maintenance to keep the pump running? It is, in fact, all these things and more. Then, how are all these things delivered? And by who?

Thus, the term “service” can be and is used to mean a range of different things. These include:

- the physical infrastructure for the delivery of water
  - technology
  - construction;
- the physical infrastructure for waste disposal, both human excreta and solid waste;
  - technology
  - construction;
- the organisational arrangement to run the water supply system;
- the maintenance and repair of the water supply system;
- the training and other methods to enable communities to manage the infrastructure;
- the support to monitor and ensure the sustainability of the physical infrastructure by its community managed organisation.

Delivery of different aspects of each of these can be done by various organisations:

- Government agencies
- Bilateral and multilateral support agencies
- International NGOs
- Local NGOs
- Representative community managed organisations
- The community itself
- Private sector
suitable.

regions within a country, different arrangements may be
variation in conditions between countries and between
deliver a particular service needs to be considered. With the

ing to the following key:

matrix in Table 1, with the different aspects coded accord-
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textbf{Service delivery issues in Cambodia}
\end{itemize}

\begin{itemize}
  \item Demand for services
\end{itemize}

Most projects and organisations have tended to work in a
supply-led way, rather than responding to demand from communities and villages. Some projects did not have a
procedure for villages to make requests. A ‘demand
responsive approach’ appropriate for the special circumstances in Cambodia needed to be developed, with special
attention to service delivery options for the poorest people.
This could include recognition that the community’s con-
tribution may be ‘in-kind’ instead of in cash, and that some
services may need to be subsidised; e.g. education, infra-
structure, and things that involve behaviour change.

Because of current preferences of people for traditional
sources of water, and the easy availability of these during much of the year, there may be a need to be a “supply
driven” promotion to create the demand for safe water.

\begin{itemize}
  \item Technology
\end{itemize}

Appropriate performance standards and design standards need to be considered for the various technologies. Such
standards have costs, but can also lead to savings. It will be
necessary to promote public awareness of standards to encourage “self-enforcement”.

\begin{itemize}
  \item The private sector and regulation
\end{itemize}

The Policy Framework proposes that the private sector has
an important role to play in the provision of water and sanitation service delivery. This should not, however, be
considered the solution to all the problems. There are a
number of issues that need to be addressed to make the
most benefit from the potential of the private sector.

Regulation is needed to ensure accountability, transpar-
ency, and quality control. An important aspect of this is the
procedures for selection, award and administration of contracts with the private sector. Overall regulation of the
sector is necessary to ensure co-ordination between differ-
ent organisations, integration of the different components, and acceptance of minimum standards of procedures and performance. Regulatory procedures have to be enforced.

\begin{itemize}
  \item Capacity building
\end{itemize}

The capacity of all organisations to provide the various
parts of service delivery at the rate that will be needed to
reach the Vision does not exist at present. Within this, the
private sector to provide water supply and sanitation construction, operation or maintenance services, and NGOs
to provide community organisation, capacity building and training services, are not available in all parts of the country
does not exist in all parts of the country. Various factors
inhibit the participation of the private sector, including lack
technical and business management skills. Some of the
more remote and less populated areas may need special
attention to develop the ability of small entrepreneurs to
carry out small-scale construction of wells, rain-water jars,
latrine components, provision of replacement parts for
pump, etc. Thus, there is a need to foster as well as regulate
the private sector, including developing ideas for financing and incentives.

Implementation by government organisations such as the
Central Drilling Base and provincial level drilling units of
MRD inhibits the development of a competitive private
sector giving best value-for-money. These operations
should be transformed so that they operate under the same
competitive tendering conditions as the rest of the private
sector. Subsidised operations by NGOs also inhibit devel-

opment of a competitive private sector.

Expansion of service delivery must be geared to the
component that requires most time, which is the develop-
ment of the capacity of communities to manage their own
services. The expansion of service delivery must not be driven by the
technical implementation capacity. Otherwise services will
not be sustainable in the long-term.

Systems to support to community organisations in man-
gement of operation and maintenance are essential for
## Table 1. Matrix of service delivery options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of organisation</th>
<th>Government agencies</th>
<th>Bilateral and multilateral support agencies</th>
<th>International NGOs</th>
<th>Local NGOs</th>
<th>Representative community managed organisation</th>
<th>Community and households</th>
<th>Private sector</th>
<th>Public enterprise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical infrastructure for the delivery of water</td>
<td>$ F T R (C)</td>
<td>$ F T I (C) A</td>
<td>$ F T (C)</td>
<td>$ F (C)</td>
<td>M $</td>
<td>$ C</td>
<td>C (T)</td>
<td>C T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical infrastructure for waste disposal, both human excreta and solid waste</td>
<td>$ F T R</td>
<td>$ F T A</td>
<td>$ F T I (C) A</td>
<td>$ F (C)</td>
<td>(C)</td>
<td>C (T)</td>
<td>C (T)</td>
<td>C T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational arrangement to run the water supply system</td>
<td>F S</td>
<td>F S</td>
<td>F S</td>
<td>$ M</td>
<td>$ M</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance and repair of the water supply system</td>
<td>S M&amp;E</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training and other methods to enable communities to manage the infrastructure</td>
<td>F P</td>
<td>P F</td>
<td>P F</td>
<td>P F</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support to community managed organisation to ensure sustainability of physical infrastructure</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>M &amp; E A</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>M &amp; E A</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>M &amp; E</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>M &amp; E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
sustainability of physical infrastructure. Support does not mean taking over the functions of the community management – rather it means providing technical and management advice and training to enable communities to function better. An essential part of this is to monitor whether communities are successfully managing their systems and to take action in cases where there are problems. In many places and projects, these support systems have not been established, or funding is not allocated to run them adequately. As the number of water supplies increases, this component of the sector will become a major function. It will be necessary to increase the capacity of the organisations selected to run the support services at the same rate as new systems are constructed.

Strategy development
Key sector players in Cambodia have used the strategy guidance notes in a series of sector workshops to develop a first draft strategy with objectives and indicators for each thematic area. This was presented to key sector policy makers and planners from the concerned ministries and agencies in June 2001. (MRD, 2001b)

Conclusion
This analysis of service delivery shows all the different aspects that need to be planned and co-ordinated and the range of organisations and individuals available to provide the services. The process of breaking a subject down into its component parts in order to strategize or plan was certainly helpful for the author, and hopefully for the Cambodian working group.

References
Most of this paper is based on the unpublished Strategy Guidance Note for Second Workshop: Service Delivery Options, prepared by the author for the RWSS PCB Project, Cambodia, with some modifications.
MRD, 2001a, Rural Water Supply And Sanitation Sector Policy Framework, Ministry of Rural Development, Phnom Penh