

WATER+

IMPACT REPORT

WALKING THE TALK



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WATER+ IMPACT REPORT

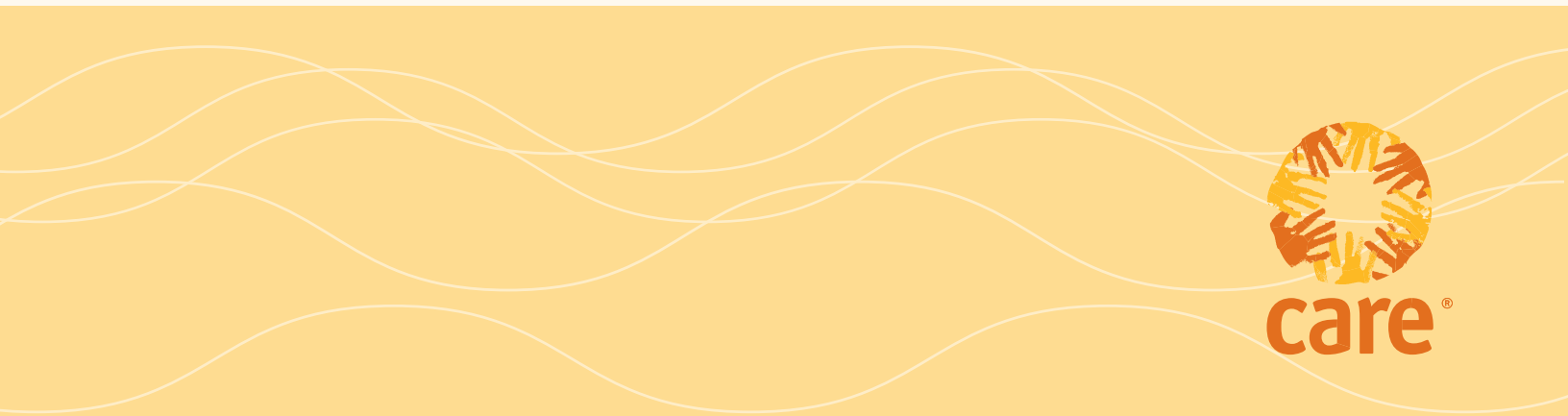


TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	VI
ACRONYMS	VIII
FOREWORD	IX
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	X
INTRODUCTION	1
METHODOLOGY	5
LIMITATIONS	5
PROGRESS AGAINST OUR THEORY OF CHANGE	7
DOMAIN 1: SECURE AND SUSTAINABLE ACCESS TO WATER+ SERVICES	7
Background	7
CARE's Impact	9
Impact Snapshots	11
Focus on Sustainability	13
DOMAIN 2: GENDER-SENSITIVE WATER+ POLICIES, INSTITUTIONS AND SOCIAL NORMS	14
Background	14
CARE's Impact	15
Impact Snapshots	17
Focus on Scale	19
DOMAIN 3: GENDER-EQUITABLE CONTROL OVER WATER+ SERVICES	21
Background	21
CARE's Impact	21
Impact Snapshots	23
Focus on Gender	25

CASE STUDIES OF IMPACT AND APPROACHES	27
EAST AFRICA	27
Kenya: Using Action-Research to Influence Government Investments in School WASH	27
ASIA	30
Vietnam: Visioning Community Watershed Management	30
WEST AFRICA	32
Niger: Wells for Peace in Niger Promote Non-Violent Resource Sharing	32
THE MIDDLE EAST	34
Egypt, Jordan, Palestine: Growing Water Governance from the Grass Roots	34
SOUTHERN AFRICA	36
Madagascar: Making Water Worth Paying for through Public-Private Partnership	36
LATIN AMERICA	38
Peru: Finding the Best Models for Government, Private, and Citizen Cooperation in WASH Service Delivery	38
GLOBAL	40
Increasing Scale and Influence through Partnerships	40
A More Studied Approach to Learning, Monitoring, and Evaluation	42
CARE USA and WASH Advocacy: Achieving Positive Impact through a Networked Approach	44
Emergency WASH: Building CARE's Capacity to be a Leading Responder	47
ASSESSING IMPACT AGAINST THE GOAL	49
CONCLUSION	50
REFERENCES	51

Executive Summary

CARE has provided water+ services to developing countries for over 55 years and is currently working on more than 180 such projects in over 40 countries. Throughout the years CARE has focused on both emergency response and long-term development; recently the organization has emphasized building the capacity of local institutions, strengthening community-led water resource management (WRM) and total sanitation, and adopting an integrated water resource management (IWRM) approach.

PROGRESS AGAINST OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

In 2010 CARE USA's water team developed a theory of change for our work in water. Our theory of change has been used as a measure of activities leading to impact in this report; however, a theory of change is one of many guides to understanding change and we are fully aware of its limitations. This report is based on a review of 51 reports, mostly mid-term or final evaluations dated between 2006 and 2012. A scoring tool was developed to score the reports against the three domains of the water+¹ theory of change.

Domain 1: Secure and Sustainable Access to Water+ Services

Programming focused on provision of water, sanitation and access to hygiene facilities. On the whole CARE demonstrated excellent work in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), WRM and multiple uses of water; however, improvements are needed to strengthen sustainability and collaboration approaches. The most common criticism of CARE's programming was a lack of sustainability, many times caused by inattentiveness to supportive factors such as access to supply chains or qualified technicians for repair. One evaluation showed the effects of CARE's training had almost vanished 8 years after project completion.

Domain 2: Gender-Sensitive Water+ Policies, Institutions and Social Norms

CARE was scored on items such as deliberate influence of policy or policy implementation and community empowerment and capacity building. The evaluations revealed that CARE has done some strong work in strengthening community-based organizations and in working with government for increasing access to water+ programs. A major shortcoming is that these types of interventions are not consistent. Though the programs did promote behavior change and thus provided an avenue for re-shaping social norms, more could have been done to consistently analyze and evaluate existing norms and power relationships to influence and challenge social and political infrastructures to achieve change at a large scale.

Domain 3: Gender-Equitable Control over Water+ Services

Women living in traditional communities are not usually allowed to serve on public committees. Yet water committees give them a unique opportunity for leadership because water for domestic use is seen largely as the woman's domain. Several evaluations noted results favorable to women and girls, including a decreased burden of fetching water, increased attendance of girls in school, a cleaner personal appearance and women having more authority in the community. On the other hand men are often seen to have a greater say when it comes to water for productive use; for example, the land and livestock benefiting from the water are more likely to be owned by heads of households who are still predominantly male.

Few of the initiatives examined tools for analyzing social structures and power relations within communities, disaggregated benefits by gender or employed empowerment methodologies. CARE's traditional strength in community organization is evident but should be leveraged for more ambitious, socially oriented approaches driven by empowerment objectives rather than solely water+ ones.

¹ "Water" is our term for our traditional work with drinking water provision, sanitation and hygiene that also encompasses productive uses of water (such as irrigation) and ecologically sustainable water resource management.

CASE STUDIES ON IMPACT AND APPROACHES

Ten case studies from within country offices and at global level showcase CARE's efforts in making water+ services available to the poor. They demonstrate both impact and the approaches taken to reach that impact, highlighting strengths that varyingly correspond to one or more of the domains of the theory of change. For example, the case study from Madagascar documents the effective use of public-private partnerships in delivering secure and sustainable access to water+ services (domain 1), but the case study from Vietnam explores a community visioning approach to WRM that does justice to the individual and communal agency and empowerment-in-action spirit of domain 3 (gender-equitable control over water+ services). The global case studies on learning, partnership, advocacy and emergency WASH prove trickier to subject to the water+ theory of change lens, created as it was on a model of change within a country context where some element of direct implementation (domain 1) is presupposed. Nonetheless, collectively, these case studies highlight some strong achievements in a global picture.

CONCLUSION

The goal of our theory of change—Poor women and school-aged girls improve their lives—is a progressive and sweeping one. Overall, there is sufficient evidence of solid impact against the goal; however, this report presents a two-fold conclusion:

1. There is a need to re-assess programming approaches. Although there are several examples of high-quality and inventive programming, most programs chart the familiar territory of direct service provision of water, an approach that can be unsustainable if it does not address the cultural, policy and institutional environment in which these services are provided.
2. Impact against the goal is unnecessarily difficult to assess. The statements made in the first conclusion must be qualified by the limitations of assessing progress against the goal. Future efforts to do so will be helped by a more sophisticated quantification of achievements along with more deliberate efforts to use water+ programs to orchestrate change in the lives of women and girls.



Acronyms

ACF	WSUP's African Cities for the Future Program
CBO	Community-based organizations
EMPOWERS	European Union-funded regional partnership in the Middle East
EPIILAS	Pilot School for Accreditation in Water and Sanitation
GWI	Global Water Initiative
IWRM	Integrated water resource management
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MWA	Millennium Water Alliance
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCSAS	Community organizations that manage WASH
PHAST	Participatory hygiene and sanitation transformation
PPP	Public-private partnership
PRONASAR	The government of Mozambique's rural WASH program
PROPILAS	CARE's WASH capacity building project in Peru
SANTOLIC	Community-led total sanitation in Mozambique
SHOUHARDO	Program in Bangladesh to improve child nutrition
SIRAS	On-line platform for managing water systems in Peru
SWASH+	Sustaining and Scaling School Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Plus Community Impact
WA	Women's associations
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WMC	Water management committee
WRM	Water resource management
WSUP	Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor

Foreword

Impact evaluation, like most things, becomes better with repeated practice. But the process can seem daunting at first. Aggregation of results across countries is stymied by lack of common indicators. Imperfect knowledge management systems frustrate the process of retrieving reports. Much as we strive to be objective and rigorous in our assessments, the true story is cast according to the unique interpretation of individuals. Perhaps, most frustratingly, although monitoring and evaluation of programs and projects is routine, it often focuses on the output level, measuring what activities have been completed rather than what differences these activities made in behaviors and quality of life and how change unfolds over time in the lives of individuals, communities and societies as a result of a specific set of activities.

Indeed, when taken as a result of a given action (for our purposes, a CARE-initiated one), impact can be unpredictable and diffuse because social change is complex. Several other factors can influence results, making it difficult to attribute causality, and our project and program timeframes often do not allow enough time to measure long-term effects. Still such reasons should not be taken as deterrents for not measuring impact.

In fact we are compelled to measure impact for many reasons. For one, measurement tells us whether we have kept our promises to make a positive difference, be they to poor people contributing their labor, time, and money, to partners bringing their networks and contextual knowledge to bear, or to donors joining their strategies with ours. Within a large organization such as CARE, the process of conducting a meta-evaluation also helps to broadcast achievements and lessons learned that may be relatively unknown beyond the countries or regions in which they occurred. Finally, a meta-evaluation spurs us to think big; to see how our approaches for localized change measure up within a global movement to end poverty and achieve broader development goals. For example if we are to end water poverty, global data (echoed by CARE's data) pointing to the high rate of failure of water points, require that we question our models for promoting sustainable water management.

We must continue to look back in order to inform the future. We need to be better at creating well-informed theories of change, asking the right questions, picking results-focused indicators, surfacing and challenging our underlying assumptions, and going back long after the last donor report has been written to understand whether changes that seemed so promising during the project have endured.

As a result of the process of putting together this impact report, CARE has recognized the need to be more serious about standardizing how we report impact in water+, even when it is difficult to separate attribution from contribution, over the course of the next 5 years. We have started to develop and will continue creating common tools and indicators for water+ programs.² When these start to be more universally applied by CARE and our partners, we will be able to carry out a more comparative and rigorous evaluation of our collective work. This report, then, is but part of a longer journey that started in 1957 when Mary Elmendorf managed the first water+ project supported by CARE in Mexico. (A case study based on that project was submitted to President Kennedy as he considered launching the Peace Corps.)

As we continue the journey I invite you to join us in exploring whether we have been able to walk the talk of impact over the last 6 years.



Peter Lochery

CARE USA Water Team Director

² To follow our progress and access these tools, visit <http://water.care2share.wikispaces.net/Measuring+Impact>.

Acknowledgements

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To our country office colleagues, we hope we have done a decent job of accurately and critically examining your work and welcome feedback at any time. Finally, we would like to thank the Osprey Foundation, whose generous support and commitment to funding learning made this report possible. This report does not represent the views or policies of the Osprey Foundation.





INTRODUCTION

CARE has carried out water, sanitation and hygiene and WRM (hereafter referred to collectively as water+) work for over 55 years and is currently managing approximately 181 projects in both emergency response and long-term development in over 40 countries. In fiscal year 2012 (July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012) over 1.5 million people benefited directly from CARE’s developmental work in water+ and over 9 million from its humanitarian (emergency) water+ work. During the 1960s CARE focused on water hardware installations in poor rural communities in the developing world. Over the next 30 years as its experience grew, CARE tackled other water-related components such as sanitation, watershed protection, and health and hygiene education. Although projects supported by CARE have been predominantly rural, CARE has undertaken an increasing number of urban projects since the early 1990s. These include water supply, drainage, on-site sanitation and sewer construction, and solid waste management. Most recently the emphasis has been on building the capacity of local institutions (through working in partnerships with local non-government organizations [NGOs], local governments and the private sector), strengthening community-led WRM and total sanitation, and establishing a multi-stakeholder approach to IWRM with stronger emphasis on sustainability and the need to climate-proof services and promote innovations such as payment for environmental services.

Over time our water+ activities have become increasingly and deliberately cross-sectoral, recognizing that water is inherently multi-purposed—there is no food security without soil moisture management, no nutritional improvements without safe water to drink and to cook food with, no stable ecosystems without vibrant watersheds, and no healthy schools without access to safe water and hygiene and sanitation facilities.

These diverse and sprawling activities call for a unifying goal and programming principles. To this end, in 2010, CARE USA’s water team developed a theory of change. It has theoretical underpinnings in CARE’s women’s empowerment and governance frameworks and theory of change for alleviating poverty. To be consistent with CARE’s emphasis on women’s and girls’ empowerment, the water+ theory of change identifies poor women and school-aged girls as its ultimate impact population. It also identifies domains of change necessary for the goal to be achieved.

Expressed as a simple mathematical formula, the theory of change shows that the interaction of the domains of change is important for impact (see Figure 1). CARE’s efforts to deliver basic services in water, sanitation and hygiene to poor communities fall within the first domain of secure and sustainable access to water+ services (domain 1). However, unless prevailing belief systems, policies and institutions are challenged and influenced, the changes brought about by such services are likely to be fleeting—hence the coupling of the first domain of change with the second on gender-sensitive water+ policies, institutions and social norms. The third domain, gender-equitable control over water+ services, speaks to the agency of the individual in availing of new resources and of an environment permissive of positive change. As a multiplier domain, it accords the highest premium to the willingness of individuals to change their own lives. Projects and programs can and should include empowerment approaches that help men and women, boys and girls gain a new sense of possibility along with the skills and creative thinking to overcome entrenched socio-economic issues and help others do the same.



Figure 1: The Water+ Theory of Change



The theory of change's focus on poor women and school-aged girls is purposeful, given both their relative disadvantage as far as water+ services and their vested interest and potentially more influential role, as compared to men and boys, in promoting these services. It is necessary to correct the inequities that disfavor women and girls in water+ programs and disaggregate the impact data to better understand the effects on women and girls; however, there is a danger of applying this positive discrimination in a way that ignores the impact on men and boys.

Also the theory of change is based on a project or program-based approach to addressing change that presupposes that all three domains are necessary, or at least ideal, for impact to occur. Although we generally believe this to be true and have applied this belief throughout the evaluation, we acknowledge that there are contexts in which it is not necessary for CARE to act in all three areas for meaningful impact to occur, particularly when other actors are advancing work in other domains or when working outside a traditional community-based project or program mode. An example of the latter is an advocacy initiative where the objective is not to focus on the welfare of a relatively small number of communities but rather to influence national-level policies through such methods as coalition building or research.

Lastly the assumptions behind the theory of change as a construct popular in current development practice warrant examination. Rosalind Eyben of the Institute of Development Studies warns against the homogenizing potential of static theories of change and instead suggests that a theory outlining desired change can be useful "provided we recognize that any explanation is partial, contingent on context and needing to be regularly checked against reality, as experienced from diverse perspectives."ⁱ In a "Review of the Use of 'Theory of Change' in International Development" commissioned by the United Kingdom Department of International Development, Isabel Vogel offers

a similar view, arguing that theory of change thinking “can create a strong organizing framework to improve programme design, implementation, evaluation and learning,” and suggests conditions under which this is the case, including the following:

1. Theory of change thinking is used to explain rationales and how things are intended to work, but also to explore new possibilities through critical thinking, discussion and challenging of dominant narratives for the benefit of stakeholders.
2. A number of theories of change are identified as relevant ‘pathways’ to impact for any given initiative, rather than a single pathway, with acknowledgement of the non-linearity and emergent nature of these.ⁱⁱ

Although water+ projects may not seem like the most likely vessels for explicitly empowerment-focused activities, our theory of change posits that they are and should be. In “A Threefold Theory of Social Change,” Doug Reeler argues that the primary purpose of development practitioners is “to help people to more consciously free themselves of hindrances to their own development, to take increasing and willing responsibility for the course of their own lives.”ⁱⁱⁱ Such a facilitative and supportive, rather than didactic posture, would therefore provide the elasticity and self-awareness that theory-of-change thinking demands.

The challenge, therefore, for those applying the water+ theory of change to measure impact or design programs, is to appreciate the insights that applying this type of thinking can bring, while remembering that it is one of many guides to understanding change and being wary of simplistic roadmaps towards the results we seek. Though it serves as the measure for activities leading to impact in this report and provides a helpful way of elevating the discussion beyond laundry lists of activities, we are fully aware of its limitations. We have tried to reflect on the usefulness, or otherwise, of the theory of change throughout the report and invite you to do the same.

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Methodology

The basis for this report is a review of project evaluations, final reports, case studies, and other reports describing results. A total of 51 documents (most of which were mid-term or final evaluations) were collected from countries where CARE operates in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East, and Europe. A scoring tool was developed based on the water+ theory of change, and four staff within the evaluation team scored each report using this tool, which included providing an individual score for each domain. The scores were later aggregated per domain to provide a general reading of progress. To be included in the review, reports had to be dated between 2006 and 2012, which in some cases meant that the program being reviewed had concluded prior to 2006.

Other parts of this document, including the impact snapshots and longer programmatic highlights, were based on a broader set of sources that also included briefs, lessons learned compilations, research reports and websites. In addition, key informant interviews were conducted with five individuals for the global highlights.

Limitations

It is important to note that when we measured health behaviors and improved access to resources and services, these evaluations relied heavily on self-reported data. Knowing that self-reported data is subject to social desirability bias (among other biases), these results must be interpreted with caution. For example, in a study done in Bangladesh in 2010, researchers found that 47 percent of caregivers reported washing their hands with soap and water after defecation while only 33 percent were actually observed doing so during structured observations.^{iv} In addition to this limitation of bias, the ability to obtain and compare impact-level data was greatly inhibited by the following factors.

- 1. Limited baseline tests, comparison groups, goals or a combination thereof.** Many of the evaluations reported numbers of people (households, families, villages) reached but several failed to report how that compared to a baseline evaluation, a control group or previously set goals. Therefore the number tells us very little.
- 2. Lack of definition and standardization of indicators.** Where possible it is helpful to have standardized definitions so when data is compiled across multiple evaluations, it is understood that everyone has measured the same thing (e.g. proper hand washing is defined by frequency, timing and use of soap; if all three are not present, proper hand washing has not occurred).
- 3. Diverse units of measurement. Indicators were often mismatched in units of measurements.** For example, out of the 23 evaluations that reported increased water access, 3 (13 percent) reported in terms of number of people, 7 (30 percent) reported number of households, and 11 (nearly 50 percent) had no unit of measurement reported at all. This made it impossible to compile the information into one statistical average.

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4. Ambiguity around proxy indicators. It was common in these evaluations to measure something as a proxy for behavior (i.e. presence of soap or an educational program) and then report it as behavior change. It is important to remember that a proxy is only a proxy and our assumptions are limited. If presence of soap next to latrines is being measured, it cannot definitively be reported that X number of people are washing their hands.

Despite the above limitations relating to quantitative data, many evaluations were very strong qualitatively and conceptually. Furthermore the resources are not always at hand to carry out the gold-standard, and compromises have to be made. In addition, there are often multiple organizations and partners within a given program, each with their own set of desired indicators, as well as those mandated by donors, complicating the task of universal measurement even further. A few basic common indicators may be all that can be realistically achieved. Nevertheless we hope that this report will encourage more effective data analysis and, in particular, a more consistent approach to addressing the four general limitations outlined above.

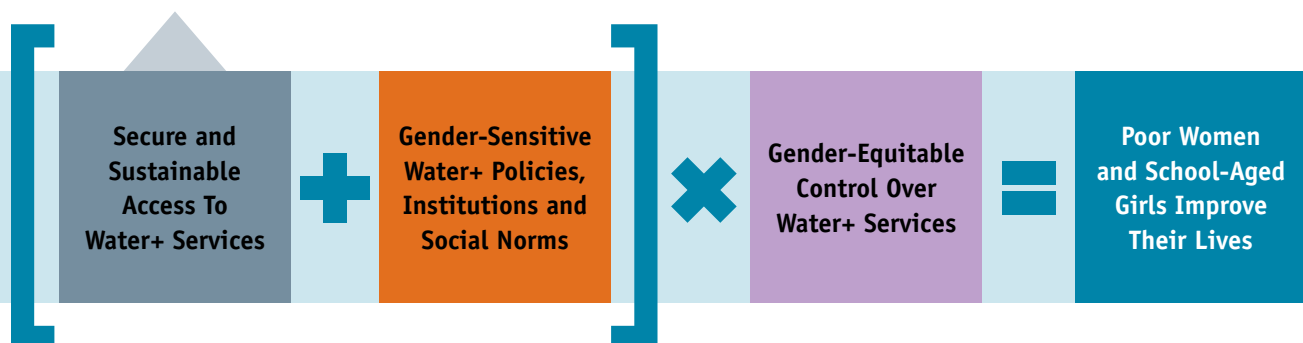




PROGRESS AGAINST OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

Using the theory of change as an evaluative framework, this section starts with a contextual summary and then examines CARE's progress in each domain of the theory of change. Short program snapshots provide examples of success in each domain.

DOMAIN 1: SECURE AND SUSTAINABLE ACCESS TO WATER+ SERVICES



Background

The global picture regarding secure and sustainable access to water+ services gives cause for both alarm and celebration (see Figure 2). In 2012 World Health Organization and United Nations Children's Fund reported that the Millennium Development Goal on water had been met, thanks to concerted global efforts to address the problem; however, they warned against complacency given that over 780 million people have no access to any type of improved source of drinking water.^v In addition with a worrying percentage of water-point projects falling into disuse over time, a rolling back of progress is a real threat. The sanitation target, meanwhile, was reported as being significantly off track. About 2.5 billion people—half the developing world—were estimated to lack

even a simple improved latrine. Figure 3 disaggregates the data by region.

But there is much more at stake than providing universal access to safe water and sanitation. Food security and livelihoods are also severely constrained by shortages of water for productive use. Seasonal and annual changes in rainfall can produce floods or droughts, and climate change has exacerbated these natural fluxes in recent decades. Water resources are likewise strained by population growth, industrialization, and urbanization, which have exacerbated the competing demands for water to grow food, provide hydroelectric energy, and produce goods and services, a compounding stress that has depleted aquifers and degraded water basins.^{vi} The prognosis for the future is worrying as evidenced by the following statistics.^{vii}

- Agriculture is by far the biggest user of water, accounting for almost 70 percent of withdrawals and up to 95 percent in developing countries.^{viii}
- Between 2000 and 2050, the world’s population is expected to grow from 6 to 9 billion, which will significantly increase the demand for food and other goods.^{ix}
- The Food and Agricultural Organization estimates that the world’s growing population will require about 50 percent more food by 2030 compared to 1998. In the past 30 years food production has increased by more than 100 percent.^x
- 777 million people in developing countries do not have access to sufficient and adequate food.^{xi}

These concerns over global water scarcity have necessitated a new approach to managing water. Although historically, water resources management has been highly sectoral, current best-practice models in water management follow the philosophical and methodological approach of IWRM. IWRM is a paradigm and process that “promotes the coordinated development and management of water, land and related resources in order to maximize economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems and the environment.”^{xii} IWRM advocates a multi-level approach to water management by promoting institutions at the national level that support policy innovation and change while establishing decentralized water-management strategies at the local level, such as water-user associations, to promote sustainable use.^{xiii} It stresses using participatory approaches that include a strong emphasis on gender mainstreaming.^{xiv} In so doing, IWRM recognizes the foundational role that water plays in development and poverty reduction (see Figure 4).

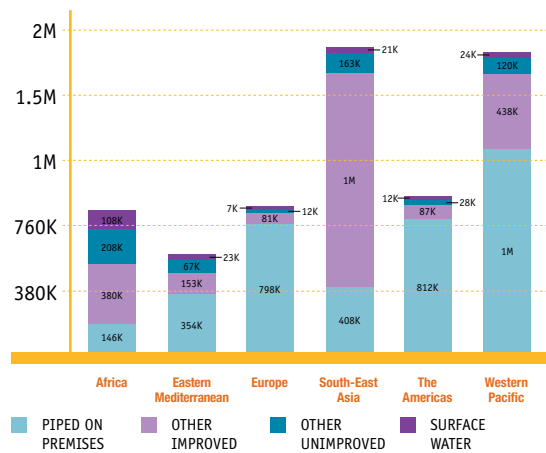


Figure 2: Population with Access to Drinking Water in 2010

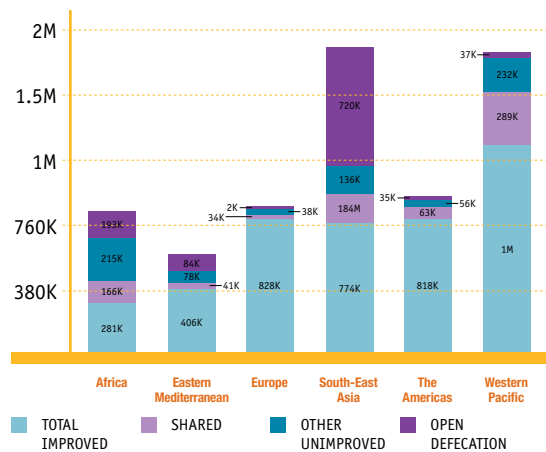


Figure 3: Population with Access to Sanitation in 2010



Figure 4: The Multi-Dimensional Nature of Water

CARE's Impact

CARE's diverse programs³ enable secure and sustainable access to water+ services. Most programs reviewed for this document primarily focused on this first domain of the theory of change through working directly with communities to improve their access. Programs were often primarily focused on the provision of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) access (90 percent), though many others had WASH or WRM components integrated in food security (27 percent), livelihoods (33 percent), and nutrition (16 percent) programs.

The service provision was typically rural and community centered and often involved working through existing, or encouraging the formation of new, community-based organizations (CBOs) to be involved in the planning of the infrastructure and overall execution of the programs. This process usually took place through water committees that ensured management of the new or rehabilitated infrastructure and orchestrated fee collection for ongoing maintenance and eventual repairs. CARE often trained community members in basic repair.

Common hygiene and sanitation approaches included cultivating select community members as hygiene promoters and holding educational sessions or campaigns about personal and environmental hygiene and sanitation, often using participatory methodologies such as participatory hygiene and sanitation transformation. Sanitation promotion additionally involved, in several programs, subsidies for, or direct provision of, building materials for the concrete slabs over latrine pits or for the latrine superstructures. The community-led total sanitation approach was increasingly being used in some settings, focusing on galvanizing the entire community to solve its sanitation problem using low-cost and locally available sanitation options, thereby achieving open defecation-free status.⁴

In emergencies the approach often involved the distribution of hygiene kits and water purification supplies and technology in addition to water and sanitation hardware installations.

There were, of course, several exceptions to the dominant water+ service provision approach, which included work in peri-urban areas, strengthening links between communities and public and private water-service providers and work on water financing to help communities pay for large infrastructure projects and installation. There was also WRM work including water conservation, catchment area protection, and community and local government water governance activities.

Overall, the most common indicators used for water access included:

1. Percent or number of households with improved access to safe water
2. Percent or number of households with proper water storage
3. Changes in time taken or distance to collect water
4. Reductions in prevalence of water-borne diseases
5. Improved ability to engage in work
6. Increase in water used

Indicators for changes in hygiene and sanitation behaviors were percent or number of people:

- Practicing proper hand washing
- Practicing proper household sanitation

³ The term "programs" is used here and in later references to refer to both projects and programs.

⁴ Initial efforts at sanitation marketing were beginning to take shape at CARE during the period under review although this did not appear in any of the reports.

- Practicing improved hygiene behaviors
- Practicing improved health behaviors
- Having access to and using latrines
- Having awareness of and using safe hygiene, waste storage and sanitation practices.

Indicators for water-resource management include percent or number of:

- Participants that adopted improved soil and water management practices
- Producers that received training in natural resource management practices
- Areas of micro-watersheds that are under appropriate management

These indicators track results at different levels—output,⁵ outcome or impact.

To score CARE's work in the first domain of change the factors that were used included how effective the program was in improving access to WASH services, whether the program additionally addressed multiple uses of water (such as adaptations to enable livestock watering or household wastewater reuse), and whether the program adopted a WRM approach (such as raising awareness on watershed protection or promoting participatory decision-making around management of a watershed). The sustainability prospects of the intervention also influenced the score.

The overall score given for CARE's impact in the first domain of change was 6 out of 10. The evaluations reviewed scored CARE's work well in the area of service provision. CARE was often praised for its high standards of technical implementation and, in most cases, met, came very close, exceeded or was on track to meeting its delivery goals at the time of evaluation in terms of water access, improvements in hygiene behaviors, and knowledge and installation of sanitary facilities. Evaluators also awarded high marks (though less frequently) for facilitative activities such as training and forming groups for water management. Beneficiaries, too, appeared generally pleased with CARE's work and gave high ratings.

One fairly recurrent criticism of CARE's work was sustainability. Sometimes this was due to inadequate coordination with, and support (such as training) for, local government authorities who would help to ensure that CARE's work was aligned with district and national-level plans and continue to monitor progress after the project end date. Another barrier to longevity was in the area of repairs, where there was a lack of attention to supply chains or qualified repair technicians. Yet another was the absence of exit strategies. These and other issues pose a serious threat to the long-term viability of even successful program results. Soberingly, an evaluation from Jordan conducted 8 years after the close of the project showed that effects of CARE's training had almost vanished over time.

As far as WRM, some criticisms included that CARE focused on protection of the water source but not wider basin management. In two instances, watershed management activities had been planned, as indicated in program design documents, but were not implemented in the case of one and only partially implemented in the case of the other.

Another regular criticism was that program benefits could be greatly augmented by increasing links with other organizations working to improve food security. Although several programs reviewed were multi-sectoral, linking water with food security, livelihoods or health, the evaluations suggested that many more links could and should have been made. In addition although the issue of scale (or seeking to leverage program results for more widespread influence) was barely mentioned by the evaluations and is not a primary focus of this domain of change, it deserved more frequent mention as a crucial consideration for all projects.

⁵ Output is loosely defined as the accomplishment of an activity itself, rather than the changes brought about by the activity.

In summary CARE's water+ activities in this domain of change demonstrated excellence in program execution, with high compliance to set goals, a fair amount of integration with other factors and attention to a wide range of interventions that demonstrated solid work in WASH, WRM and multiple uses of water. The shortcomings in this domain of change were in program design. Programs rarely took on issues of water conservation or re-use and

IMPACT SNAPSHOTS

EL SALVADOR : CREATIVE FINANCING HELPS COMMUNITIES PAY FOR WATER

CARE facilitated the financing of water and sanitation services in three rural municipalities in El Salvador by establishing an innovative *fideicomiso* (credit fund) in partnership with the Association of Municipalities of the Republic of El Salvador. This progressive model provides an answer to the lack of public investment and donor financing that often limits remote populations' access to potable water. Municipalities were able to leverage the loan received through the *fideicomiso* to attract other investors and implement larger-scale projects, providing safe water to more than 11,000 people in rural El Salvador. In addition, by successfully paying back their loans with interest, these marginalized communities demonstrated their capacity for payment and the sustainability of this innovative approach. However though the model remains active, funds have only grown marginally over time.



EGYPT: PROMOTING WATER ACCESS AND ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

From April 2010 to May 2012 the Drinking and Environmental Education Project aimed to empower poor communities in the Upper Egyptian governorate of Beni Suef to improve access to potable water services and to educate community youth and households on hygiene



and environment issues. Working with local community development associations that sought services and support from the water company, the project led to the installation of 1,501 water connections in four villages in Beni Suef. Thirty-three volunteers—all women from the local community—were trained to conduct needs assessments and educate households in their communities on proper water usage, hygiene and environmental awareness. In addition the project held environmental awareness sessions for 4,500 household members and 6,000 students across 12 schools. The project also trained 150 teachers from 100 public schools on environmental issues using a training manual that has been disseminated for use in public schools throughout the governorate of Beni Suef. This led to a renewed interest among students in environmental issues.

YEMEN: PUTTING WOMEN IN CHARGE OF MANAGING WATER

Beginning in 2005 CARE Yemen implemented the Hajja Governorate Food Security and Women's Empowerment Project. The project aimed to address development issues within the Hajja governorate, forming 28 local women's associations and training them to plan and implement project activities while seeking to empower their members as women in a male-dominated society. Equipped with these skills

watershed protection. In addition sustainability was a consistent concern with most evaluations casting doubt on the permanence of changes once CARE left. Noticeably the issue of leveraging changes at scale was barely mentioned. The following section further expounds on the issue of sustainability and highlights some of CARE's efforts to address it.

and a firm mandate, the associations facilitated multiple uses of water, including improving 17 drinking-water-supply systems and two irrigation- water-supply systems and making water available for kitchen gardens. Beneficiary contributions were used to construct 24 additional water systems for drinking or irrigation, using different sources such as spring catchment, rainfall and shallow groundwater. Sustainability was well addressed in this project; ownership of drinking-water systems was transferred to the local women's associations, providing a mechanism for future water systems management independent of CARE. Furthermore the improved water-supply systems using springs and rainwater harvesting require little maintenance, giving a promise of functionality over a long period.

KENYA, TANZANIA, UGANDA, ETHIOPIA: PROMOTING MULTIPLE USES OF WATER AND WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

In Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and Ethiopia, the Global Water Initiative (GWI) East Africa, funded by The Howard G. Buffett Foundation, aimed to reduce the vulnerability of poor rural communities to water-related shocks and improve quality of life through IWRM. CARE led this consortium in East Africa, which also comprised Action Against Hunger, Oxfam, International Union for the Conservation of Nature, and Catholic Relief Services. Using a combination of technologies and with a strong emphasis on building community governance and district-level support, the program provided 306,533 individuals with increased coverage of basic water services and a total of 153,545 households with improved sanitation during its 5-year first phase from 2007 to 2012. As a result of the project, 68 percent of women reported at least doubling their water use, with 48 percent reporting that it takes half the time to fetch water as compared to before, and 76 percent reporting improvements in water quality. In addition GWI helped to increase multiple uses of water with a focus on irrigation, clothes-washing facilities, cattle troughs and showers. To adapt to increasing water scarcity and environmental degradation, with help from GWI partners, communities launched conservation initiatives such as tree planting and the formation of local-level natural resource management committees and school environmental clubs. The program also bolstered district and sub-basin-level integrated water resource management through training, data collection assistance and funding.



FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY

Far too often the flow of water from a new water-point project is stanchied in a few years. Studies of functionality across sub-Saharan Africa estimate that between 20 percent and 70 percent of installed hand pumps are not functioning, with an average rate of 36 percent non-functionality across 21 countries.^{xv} The early demise of these points wastes an estimated \$1.2 to \$1.5 billion dollars worth of investment^{xvi} and disappoints the communities that rely on these water sources.

How has failure become so rampant? Inadequate monitoring may provide part of the answer. Less than 5 percent of water points are revisited by the implementing organizations and less than 1 percent of water points are reported to receive any long-term monitoring. Other reasons for this systemic breakdown are not fully understood. Research into how specific factors impact sustainability, especially related to community-based water governance, is relatively sparse, yet donors and implementers are increasingly recognizing the need to focus on the sustainability of their projects.

To investigate what factors most strongly influence the sustainability of a water-point project, in 2011, CARE USA conducted a preliminary study across three countries: Ethiopia, Uganda and Mozambique. A governance snapshot survey was used in each country to assess functionality of the water points and quantify the extent of governance in each community. The governance snapshot survey is a close-ended survey developed and tested by CARE USA consisting of 20 questions addressing governance domains of accountability, inclusivity, participation and transparency.

Accountability encompasses water committee existence and its operating functions. The transparency questions cover record-keeping, by-laws and guidelines that govern the committee, the community's knowledge of the committee and its role. Involvement of the community in the decision-making process for initial service provision, labor contributions and maintenance of the project are included in the participation section. Lastly the inclusivity questions refer to how inclusive the committee is of all community groups, such as women and those of different ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status, etc.

The responses were scored on a 3-point scale (1 = low, 3 = high), with an average of 92 surveys⁶ per country. Other methods included water-point observation in every community recording the following: type of improved water source, current functionality, taste of water and construction date. Statistical analysis was undertaken to identify overall and question-specific correlations with water-point functionality. About two thirds of the water points were functioning without difficulty at the time of the survey; a slightly higher 73 percent of the water points were functioning well in Ethiopia.

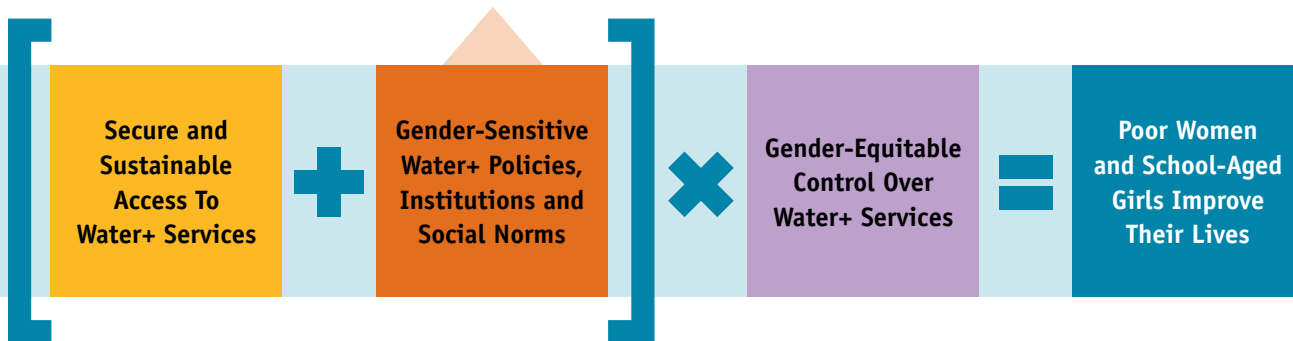
Across all three countries, strong governance was associated with well-functioning water points, suggesting that governance is firmly linked to sustainability. The average total governance scores were statistically significantly higher for communities that had well-functioning water points than for those communities with water points that functioned with difficulty or were not functioning at all. Specific governance factors that were most strongly associated with having highly functioning water points were whether community members had been trained on how to fix a water pump, the strong presence of a committee and its consistent reporting to the community, the participation of women in decision-making related to the project, the diversity of the water committee, the transparency of committee roles, elections, by-laws and the frequency of general information sharing.

The findings on the link between functionality and governance more generally revealed that although the front end of governance work is generally done well, the back end is given less attention; for example, although community engagement in initial committee elections may be strong, building in processes for re-election and ensuring that these are embedded into expectations of what management needs to include is often neglected. Likewise, beyond the initial financial discussions, annual income and expenditure review and planning and mechanisms for financial reporting from the committee to the community need to be included in by-laws that are readily available and in use.

Although further work is needed to refine predictive tools for sustainability, it is clear that to increase functionality and sustainability in the long run, stronger governance training for communities is needed, particularly focused on the back end of good governance. Finally the long-term viability of prevalent models for community management of water points is increasingly being questioned. In response CARE is working to fully explore how community management can be optimized while also examining alternative options such as private management by local operators.

⁶ Multiple people answered each survey.

DOMAIN 2: GENDER-SENSITIVE WATER+ POLICIES, INSTITUTIONS AND SOCIAL NORMS



Background

As one of the world’s most precious resources, water and its related services are fixed within a complex matrix of policies governing access and use, institutions with a role in service delivery, and finance mechanisms and incentive structures that keep or prevent water from flowing. Water+ policies and institutions are also subject to social norms and practices that determine the division of labor regarding water use and decree who has rights to control it. It is therefore not just the formal and official processes and procedures that are relevant but also the unofficial and informal traditions, most of which are experienced differently by various categories of people and by men and women.⁷

Numerous international and national declarations and policies have tried to address gender considerations. In a number of countries women are now represented at ministerial levels and gender equity is one of the goals of water reforms, the result of increasing awareness of both the critical role and unequal say that women have had in water issues. For example, as a way of institutionalizing representation, the 2010 Kenyan Constitution has a clause that not more than two thirds of the members of elective and appointed public bodies can be of the same gender. However this is not yet being practiced on the ground, particularly at higher-level institutions, see Figure 5.^{xvii}

INSTITUTION	TOTAL	FEMALE	MALE
Water Services Trust Fund	10	50%	50%
Regulator	10	30%	70%
Resources Authority	2	0%	100%
Irrigation Bond	16	20%	80%
Training Institute	9	10%	90%
Appeals Bond	3	0%	100%

Figure 5: Water Service Organizations in Kenya in 2011

At lower levels, i.e. in community structures, ensuring significant female representation on committees, particularly within leadership positions, is becoming a common aim. Even in this area, however, some studies suggest that women

⁷ The issue of recognizing and dealing with informal influences on water provision is addressed in a WSUP Topic brief <http://www.wsup.com/sharing/documents/TB004InformalInfluences.pdf>. This does not look at gendered influences however.



are more involved through contributing their labor in water+ service provision—in irrigation systems for example— than they are represented in the associated management institutions.^{xviii} Although representation issues are beginning to be tackled, beyond that, government departments involved in water+ programs often do not have clear gender policies, and strategic gender interests are therefore not being addressed.^{xix}

Progress is no less halting at community levels where there is little work on tackling social norms such as the traditional divisions of labor in which water collection and sanitation and hygiene are seen to be a woman’s burden and one that men do not need to bother themselves with. Interestingly, one global scaling up of a hand-washing project did actively involve men and reported on this^{xx} but did so for effectiveness reasons (men are gatekeepers with influence) rather than to promote gender transformation.

An exception to the inaction on addressing norms and traditions is the increasingly energized discussion and action regarding menstrual hygiene management. This has led to programs addressing taboos while tackling poor hygiene practices and facilities available to menstruating women and girls.

CARE’s Impact

Activities aimed at influencing CARE’s water+ policies and their implementation are relatively limited, although there are several solid example, such as the School Water Sanitation and Hygiene plus (SWASH+) project (see Case Studies in this report) and other action-research projects, in which research findings are used to influence local or national government policy regarding access to water+ services. There is, however, fairly regular work at the level of local- and community-based institutions addressing social norms, particularly regarding attitudes to water as a socioeconomic good and sanitation and hygiene behaviors. In the documents surveyed, 17 percent mentioned work with water policy, whereas 37 percent worked to change local institutions to support water+ and 25 percent worked on changing social norms. Some approaches included using water as an entry point for creating spaces for community dialogue that raises awareness about rights to water; working with community development associations, farmers associations, women’s groups and other local entities to manage conflicts; legalizing informal committees and groups into formal associations and cooperatives with a water management mandate; and forming community development associations to tackle not only water management challenges but other development issues.

In the evaluations reviewed there were regular references to gender issues, usually through trying to solicit women's involvement in water-user committees and increasing their decision-making abilities in community bodies.

An example, from an emergency program, of addressing change through this domain was working to strengthen existing community organizations through the emergency response.

Examples of indicators of progress in this domain included:

- One representative per village of all four villages is lobbying local councils to promote improved sanitary and waste water systems.
- Village leaders are lobbying their local council for better sanitation systems.
- Women's associations, local councils and the rural water association support and promote the water-management system piloted in the project.
- Local councils are lobbying donors for project replication.

The overall score given for the CARE's impact in the second domain of change was 4 out of 10. Factors influencing the scoring included whether the program had deliberately influenced policy or policy implementation related to water+ and whether there were positive changes in local institutions or in social norms in line with advancing access to water+ services or other developmental aims. Relevant issues under this domain that were specific to emergency programs included whether or not the intervention had adequately taken into account or was linked with government responses and policies, community structures, and social norms.

Examples of CARE's work with CBOs are plentiful. CBOs are usually instrumental for water programs to advance the objectives of access to water+. Additionally CARE has successful examples of deliberately cultivating these groups as linchpins of community development with goals extending beyond those of water+ access. More infrequent are examples of deliberately engaging government to influence policy or to facilitate dialogue between communities and local government, though there are certainly examples of this.

Too frequently evaluations pointed out the need for CARE to better integrate its work with government plans. In very little of the material reviewed was there any indication of how the program influenced, or was influenced by, the policy environment. There were few structured learning components that might provide an evidence base for advocacy and sparse mention of participation in regional or national coalitions that could collectively influence government. Though it could be argued that in certain operating environments, such as within failed states and unstable political contexts, an entirely community-based response was appropriate, the counterargument could be made that the most successful programs are those that examine how to magnify localized change to achieve wide-scale influence. Even though it may not be possible in all cases to gain a seat at the crowded national table to participate in discussions around water-related issues, regional, provincial and district-level advocacy and hand-in-hand coordination going beyond routine consultation, is feasible and should be more consistently addressed.

Although the programs did promote behavior change and thus provided an avenue for re-shaping social norms, more could have been done to consistently analyze and evaluate existing norms and power relationships, particularly around access to water and its use for productive purposes.

In summary CARE has done some robust work in strengthening CBOs and in working with government for advancing water+ access. A major shortcoming is that these types of interventions are not consistent. The question inherent in this domain of change is to what extent community-based projects can transcend water+ to influence and challenge social and political infrastructures to achieve change at a large scale.

IMPACT SNAPSHOTS

ZAMBIA: LOBBYING GOVERNMENT FOR PERI-URBAN WASH

In Zambia the Northern Province Peri-Urban Water Supply and Sanitation project aimed to improve access to water and sanitation services and improve the management of water and sanitation structures in seven peri-urban settlements and Chilubi Island. The project emphasized building the capacity of local authorities, CBOs and the Water Utility company, Chambeshi Water and Sewerage Company, to meet these objectives. Beyond constructing water and sanitation facilities, the project focused on activities such as promoting community participation, strengthening institutional capacity, and lobbying the government to implement sustainable health policies and other policies aimed at protecting the interests of the poor living in peri-urban settlements through legalization of the areas. As a result of these efforts, communities saw an improvement in health and hygiene practices, an increase in knowledge about the importance of safe water and sanitation, and better coordination of water activities through CBOs. For example a total of 1,962 community workers were trained in water and sanitation competencies, and participants in all of the project sites reported that they felt empowered enough to organize for improvements in water and sanitation beyond the program end date. Project efforts made on both the local and national governmental levels resulted in the appointment of a coordinator for Peri-Urban Water Supply and Sanitation, the establishment of a technical committee and an urban WASH forum on peri-urban water supply policy, and a dialogue on the legalization of unplanned peri-urban settlements, among other successes. The efforts of this program on stakeholder coordination resulted in the birth of the NGO WASH forum, a legally recognised network of NGOs focusing on policy advocacy and learning.



MOZAMBIQUE: TARGETING DISTRICT-LEVEL SERVICE PROVISION

In Mozambique the Environmental Hygiene and Productive Use of Water project used a community-led total sanitation approach that involved the formation of local water and sanitation committees that became an instrument of local governance. The community-led total sanitation (SANTOLIC) approach was successful in motivating 291 communities to address water and sanitation issues, and resulted in 183 communities (46,894 households and 109 schools) becoming completely free from open-air defecation by June 2012. Behaviors adopted by community members included use of hygienic hand-washing facilities and lids to cover the latrine pits when not in use. This noticeable increase in understanding of the importance of sanitation and hygiene reflects a transformation in social norms within the project communities. Furthermore, some communities not originally included in the project came forward for help in similarly incorporating these behaviors. The Environmental Hygiene and Production Use of Water's main focus during its final year of implementation was on the provision of local water and sanitation services from the district level. Toward this end the project provided technical support to local organizations to develop the capacity of district-level service providers, such as artisans and technical advisors. The example of this progress in sanitation has resulted in SANTOLIC being adopted by the government's PRONASAR (national rural WASH program) and incorporated into the training program for WASH professionals at the government-run Training Center for Water and Sanitation Professionals.

LATIN AMERICA: COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS EXCHANGE KNOWLEDGE FOR BETTER WATER GOVERNANCE

CARE, in partnership with Fundación AVINA, organized the third Annual Encuentro Latinoamericano de Gestión Comunitaria del Agua (Latin American Conference for Community Water Management), held in Cuenca, Ecuador in September 2012. The primary objective of the conference was to strengthen regional partnerships among community organizations that manage WASH (OCSAS). OCSAS exchanged technical, financial, administrative and legal best practices in the management of rural and peri-urban water systems. Discussions were structured around the democratic governance of water, partnerships, and the efficient and sustainable management of communal water services for human consumption. Overarching challenges identified by the OCSAS included the lack of recognition for OCSAS by governments or businesses, the need for capacity building and political agendas that interfered

with social processes. Meanwhile taking active roles to involve the authorities, having knowledge of laws and rights regarding WASH, and ensuring transparent management practices were identified as successes amongst the OCSAS. Additionally, the conference officially launched the Programa Unificado de Fortalecimiento de Capacidades en Agua e Saneamiento, a regional proposal for capacity building in WASH.

ANGOLA: EMBEDDING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WITHIN A NEW WATER LAW

In Angola the Luanda Urban Poverty Programme was created to promote effective and sustainable gender- and age-sensitive strategies for basic service delivery and poverty reduction. CARE, Save the Children U.K. and Development Workshop implemented the program to encourage the development of pro-poor policies and best practices for poverty reduction in Luanda. Best practices included incorporating community engagement into the new water law of 2004 and developing local committees that provide an avenue for community members to lobby governmental bodies on the issue of water supply. The local committees changed the norms of community dialogue in project areas, creating safe spaces for open discussion about such topics as saving, micro-enterprise, and water and sanitation services. The project also resulted in the federation of these committees and interest groups into associations, thus ensuring some sustainability and effectively institutionalizing local water management capacities. As a result of the project the European Union developed a major community-based water and sanitation program to benefit 1.3 million musseques (slums) in Luanda.



AFRICAN CITIES OF THE FUTURE: IMPROVING URBAN WATER SUPPLY

Currently 790 million people living in urban areas lack access to safe sanitation and 140 million live without safe, affordable water. Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor (WSUP) is a non-profit partnership focused on addressing urban WASH issues. The WSUP partnership includes members of the private sector, NGOs, and research institutions and counts organizations such as CARE, International Water Association, WaterAid, and World Wildlife Foundation as members. WSUP's African Cities for the Future (ACF) program, funded by U.S.

Agency for International Development (USAID), aimed to provide water and sanitation services in urban areas of Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Madagascar and Ghana. The goal of ACF was to build the capacity of service providers to deliver sustainable water and sanitation, support innovative service and financing strategies, and plan for implementation at scale. The program's approach involved collaborating with government service providers and communities to ensure sustainable pro-poor service delivery that would be replicable at scale. The program helped develop local organizations to engage community members in the financing and management of these services, such as using water kiosk revenues to cross finance environmental hygiene, fostering discussion about environmental standards, and mapping water and sanitation infrastructure. Upon conclusion of the ACF program, household surveys indicated that water facilities use substantially exceeded project goals in three of the five cities. In addition all five cities showed improvement in water and sanitation satisfaction levels among households.



FOCUS ON SCALE

Surprisingly few programs are designed to provide district-wide coverage. Yet planning for universal access within an administrative area can be an important step in the process of achieving wide-scale (e.g. national-level) influence and integrating NGO-led programs into government planning. CARE has worked on WASH programming in South Gondar, Ethiopia, since 2000 and has learned the following valuable lessons pertaining to working at scale.

Coordination Through Joint Structures

One of the distinguishing characteristics of CARE's WASH program in South Gondar is its strong linkage with district government bodies and processes. This close day-to-day collaboration is further supported by strategic coordination at higher zonal and regional levels. CARE also works closely with other key stakeholders including its local partners.

Water-Point Mapping and Analysis

Systematically and regularly identifying and mapping the status of all the water points in target districts promotes more equitable planning, site identification and implementation by impartially showing where there is the greatest need. In South Gondar staff and partners regularly collect data about all water points in the target districts. This mapping and analysis activity also helps to encourage staff because it provides evidence of real impact. Additionally, the data have shown some significant differences between the coverage as stated by government figures and the situation on the ground based on a physical inventory.

Integrated Water Resource Management Approach

CARE has adopted an IWRM framework that takes into account environmental and climatic components such as monitoring water quality and water quantity where possible, ensuring an effective drainage management system, assessing up-stream and down-stream rights prior to interventions, and protecting water sources. The program also aims to maximize the multiple or secondary use of the water service through cattle troughs and washing basins and support to small-scale vegetable and fruit-tree cultivation.





Community Participation and Ownership

Community participation and ownership is very strong. After widespread information dissemination in an area, which includes sharing information on how to apply for WASH support, interested communities request assistance. All requests for assistance are then evaluated and prioritized by government and CARE together. Community WASH committees are formed for each WASH system and a multi-stakeholder team conducts a feasibility study and follow-up appraisal to identify costs and select appropriate technical options. If the community is selected for support, a formal memorandum of understanding is signed between all parties clarifying roles and responsibilities. Community contribution in labor and cash resources has increased from 5 percent in 2007 to 30 to 40 percent at present and the overall sense of ownership of the projects has likewise been transformed.

Capacity Building

Capacity building with stakeholders at all levels is a key program component. CARE supported the emergence of community artisans by training two people in each project community. Artisans were trained on well digging, pump instillation and latrine construction. In addition to providing income-generating opportunities for these artisans, many of them have become invaluable by providing local, cost-effective, committed and accountable services. CARE is currently piloting a new approach to organize artisans into groups that can bid for larger contracts.

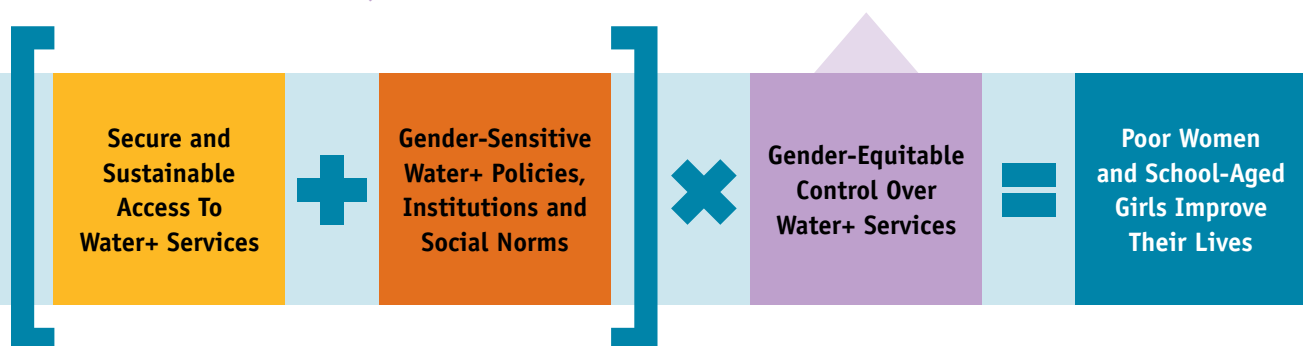
Functionality and Governance Assessment

The program conducted a functionality and governance assessment of 100 water projects in two districts. The study identified correlations between good governance and functionality. Community participation and inclusiveness factors scored relatively well, however issues regarding WASH committee transparency and accountability still require greater attention.

Conclusion

CARE South Gondar is currently in its 12th year of programming. Rather than continuing to implement WASH programs in the same way, CARE has questioned and evaluated its approaches to strengthen program quality and impact. The main lesson is the importance of thinking strategically to achieve scale and ensure greater impact in the long-term. South Gondar's WASH programming is now shifting to an even higher zonal approach, with three levels of intervention, as a pathway towards full coverage of the zone.

DOMAIN 3: GENDER-EQUITABLE CONTROL OVER WATER+ SERVICES



Background

In societies with gender-based divisions of labor and entitlements—a reality in practically all societies to varying extents—any water+ intervention is likely to affect women and men differently. Understanding this is critical to assessing impact. The usual assumption—often well justified—is that because the collection of water is almost exclusively considered to be girls’ and women’s work, the provision of water for domestic purposes improves women’s lot, releasing them from drudgery and danger and, for example, by opening up alternative uses of time, interventions can contribute to women’s empowerment. The same types of argument apply to hygiene and sanitation as they are seen to be primarily women’s responsibilities and concerns—improving services reduces workload but also improves women’s lives in terms of security and dignity. Additional ways in which water+ services are seen to have the potential for gender equity transformation opportunities comes from the way water+ services are managed, e.g. with processes that encourage significant women’s representation in committees and on leadership of the committees. Traditional communities that do not usually allow women on public committees are seen to make exceptions in the water+ arena because water is considered to be women’s concern. This provides a window for changed attitudes to women in leadership more generally. Furthermore the perception that women often make particularly trustworthy treasurers, is often another practical justification for promoting women in water+ leadership roles.

For all the reasons outlined above, the possibilities of water+ interventions contributing to gender equality are clearly significant. However, a conscious women’s empowerment approach rather than a technical approach to the water+ service provision could no doubt achieve more than many projects actually deliver in this regard.

The more critical concern lies in the issue of who controls the decisions about alternative uses of water (between, say, water for domestic use and water for livestock or for other income earning livelihoods) and, in general, who benefits from increased water for productive uses. It is important to monitor this issue of who controls how water gets used and by whom and who benefits. For example, women may have control over how water is used but still be required to hand over the proceeds of any food produced and sold to their husbands. The introduction of improved water+ services can reduce social and economic inequalities rather than perpetuate them but only if the dynamics of how benefits are shared are understood and addressed.⁸

CARE’s Impact

The issue of control over water+ resources is inextricably linked with power, and power inevitably has a gendered dimension. Most of the evaluations reviewed dealt with equipping communities to manage their own water resources, particularly through the formation or nurturing of water-user committees and community development organizations. In addition several of the evaluations also made reference to addressing women’s roles vis-à-vis these structures. Several

⁸ The need for poverty and gender sensitive approaches to water provision is, for example, argued in <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/well/resources/fact-sheets/fact-sheets-htm/Gender.htm>



of the projects increased women's membership in these bodies and some had improved their decision-making ability as members. In some cases, programs dealt with catalyzing communities to voice their aspirations and rights as citizens and enter into discussion with local government about the realization of these rights. Most of these interventions were meant to be instrumental to the realization of water+ goals; however, in a few instances, efforts in citizen or women's empowerment were activities carried as the end itself, rather than the means.

The overall score given for the CARE's impact in the third domain of change was 4 out of 10. Factors influencing the scoring were whether the program addressed gender equity, built individuals' (both male and female) ability to manage their water resources for both productive and domestic purposes, and empowered people to articulate their water+ needs and aspirations.

Most programs reviewed could be said to be contributing in some fashion to the above criteria. The process of revitalizing or forming community groups involves training sessions that help transfer important skills on organization, decision-making, governance and financial management that can be said to be empowering. As far as gender equity, several evaluations noted results favorable to women and girls, including a decreased burden of fetching water and, consequently, more time for chores and socialization; girls' increased attendance in school; a cleaner personal appearance; and women having more authority in the community.

However, few of these initiatives used tools for analyzing social structures and power relations within communities and households, disaggregated the benefits of services so as to understand their differentiated results across communities, or employed empowerment methodologies that helped to unleash community members' critical thinking, active visioning and self-motivated decision-making. Activities to address gender equity issues were conservative and clustered primarily around the model of facilitating women's involvement in water-user committees and in some cases in savings groups. Although this type of social analysis is certainly not required of a water project, water is such an inescapably gendered, political and social entity that not seeking influence—through the various relationships, beliefs and conflicts that envelop it—is a missed opportunity.

In summary CARE's traditional strength in community organization is evident, but, even with water+ programs, this should be leveraged for more ambitious, socially oriented approaches driven by empowerment objectives rather than solely water+ ones.

IMPACT SNAPSHOTS

EGYPT: CONFIDENCE TO MANAGE WATER RESOURCES

In Egypt the goal of the Right to Drinking Water Project was to empower poor and marginalized households to improve access to potable water and services. The project trained local community volunteers to gather information about water needs and conflicts through interviews and focus groups with community members. By strongly focusing on women the project acknowledged that they bear an unequal burden in gathering water and balancing domestic priorities. Interviewed women conveyed that the project especially alleviated the burden on girls, since increased water availability enabled household tasks to be completed earlier while improving personal hygiene and alleviating quarrels due to water-related problems. The project also promoted the empowerment of project participants. Participants in the focus groups and interviews were given a forum for articulating their water needs and desires, and community volunteers were able to develop their communication, presentation, and negotiation skills during the trainings. All interviewed volunteers said that the training gave them confidence and courage to manage the water resources in their communities. This was validated by the increased functioning of water connections and effective cost sharing.

WEST BANK: FOOD SECURITY AND MENTAL HEALTH

In the West Bank the Livelihood Improvement in the Occupied Palestinian Territories Project aimed to improve food security and community resilience in a way that supports equal participation of women. Food security work involved irrigating crops as well as improving household uses of water for food management. The project uniquely focused on supporting the organizational management of CBOs (80 percent were women's groups) while also addressing the psychosocial effects of oppression on community members' livelihoods. This was achieved by holding focus groups to clarify women's needs and roles, surveying community members and facilitating a workshop for key decision-makers. Results indicate that the project increased the capacity of women's groups by helping them to provide psychosocial and gender-related trainings, workshops and community discussions. Female participants responded that these activities had a positive effect on their mental health and well-being, which, in turn, positively impacted their resource security. As a result of the project, 76 percent of women reported that they had improved certain food security skills involving water, such as home garden management, food processing and water harvesting.



YEMEN: WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS PROPEL HEALTH IMPROVEMENTS

In the Hajja governorate of Yemen the Improved Health through Clean Water Project worked with women's associations (WAs) established by other projects to increase the availability and use of clean water, thereby improving health. The project educated WA members on water testing and filter usage while promoting literacy and helping them to establish solidarity with other women. These trainings aimed to teach water-management objectives and empower women through skills transfer and leadership. The project reported a 66 percent reduction of diarrhea in children, and a 100 percent increase in households purifying water for consumption. The WAs played a large role in these health improvements, with 100 percent of WA members acquiring the skills to test water quality and use water filters, and 75 percent of WAs developing water maintenance and sustainability





plans. This focus on women's involvement also resulted in other villages and women's associations requesting similar water management training. The project reported positive changes in gender dynamics within the four participating villages; men had a new acceptance for the stronger roles of WAs within the community and women gained confidence in leadership and in interacting professionally with men.

RWANDA: CHANGING WASH ACCESS, CHALLENGING GENDER NORMS

CARE Rwanda implemented the Community-Based Water and Sanitation Project to sustainably tackle the problems of inadequate water and substandard environmental health. The project combined infrastructure improvements with community mobilization and behavior-change strategies to challenge gender norms and existing health practices. It operated under a participatory hygiene and sanitation transformation methodology, training community hygiene committee members to disseminate messages throughout the villages about improving access to potable water and appropriate sanitation. The project also trained male and female community members on the subjects of gender equality and women's rights. At evaluation at least 24,000 individuals, 60 percent women and girls, gained access to hygienic sanitation facilities in homes, schools, health institutions and markets. There was also anecdotal evidence that the project approach successfully addressed some gender issues: Local authorities reported fewer domestic conflicts after project implementation because men and women more equally shared domestic workloads, and female students indicated that there was increased support for one another regarding menstrual management.

FOCUS ON GENDER

Few would dispute the special relationship between women and water, and most would believe the argument that water+ services are empowering for women and girls. Resource acquisition is empowering and what more valuable resource to have than water? However, for the vast majority of water+ programs, actively facilitating women's empowerment or addressing gender equity through water goes no further than trying to ensure women's adequate representation on water-user committees. Metrics follow suit—there is little attempt to measure empowerment beyond women's participation and decision-making in such committees.

According to the CARE Empowerment Framework, women's empowerment is fundamental to combating poverty for the following two reasons:

- Women's empowerment is important in its own right.
 - > "No single group of people is more unempowered and excluded around the world than women."^{xxi}
- Women's empowerment can help overcome global poverty.
 - > "Poverty is the result of powerful social structures that marginalize and exclude entire groups of people. CARE is part of the growing consensus—along with practitioners, governments and academics—that believes increased, and better targeted, investments in women and girls will advance the effort to end global poverty."^{xxii}

A recent USAID-funded and CARE-implemented program in Bangladesh, designed to improve child nutrition, provides an excellent example of how a focus on women's empowerment can produce greater impacts on poverty reduction. The program—SHOUHARDO—coupled its direct child-stunting and nutrition intervention, including hygiene, with an indirect





empowerment intervention that promoted and supported female self-help groups. The results: “Researchers found a direct correlation between participation in a self-help group and indicators of women’s empowerment, including women’s decision-making power, freedom of movement, freedom from patriarchal beliefs and women’s likelihood of earning cash income.”^{xxiii} Furthermore the study was able to measurably illustrate that those women who experienced higher levels of empowerment were then able to more effectively make decisions about their own maternal and child health, resulting in a 28 percent decrease in child stunting (an unusually large reduction).^{xxiv}

What the SHOUHARDO intervention highlights is not only the important relationship between a focus on women’s empowerment and successfully combating systemic causes of poverty but also the need to more effectively measure gender-inclusive development practices so that such evidence can be used to more holistically address global poverty. CARE’s research also shows that water+ services can have subtle but powerful effects on social dynamics within the home and on a woman’s or girl’s feelings of self worth, status and confidence. In a study conducted by CARE Ethiopia on women’s empowerment and water provision, 67 percent of the women responding reported feeling more equal, 68 percent reported a greater sense of control over household resources, and 67 percent reported increased feelings of respect or dignity. Importantly women that found a role in the WASH intervention as committee members or in income-generation opportunities reported the most significant changes to how they felt about themselves and how they were perceived within society.

CARE Ethiopia’s research affirms what has been said repeatedly by women participating in WASH and WRM projects and programs. They speak of subjective, yet very real, benefits such as the power of having a voice in the community, the pride of having a clean home and personal appearance, and the sense of security resulting from less domestic violence and the reduction in attacks en route to get water.

It is not a stretch to think that, similarly, empowered women will be more effective and creative in securing water+ services and that the benefits of their empowerment will extend well beyond water. They may feel more positive and confident about adopting new behaviors and encouraging their partners and children to do the same.

Water+ programs can advance gender mainstreaming through tools and research that seek to better understand through what causal pathways water+ programs promote empowerment, the differentiated results of empowerment among different demographics of women and girls, and successful approaches that will promote empowerment and gender equity.



CASE STUDIES OF IMPACT AND APPROACHES

This section showcases some of the most successful examples of CARE's work in making water+ services available to the poor and socially excluded. They demonstrate impact and the approaches taken to reach that impact, highlighting strengths that varyingly correspond to one or more of the domains of the theory of change. For example the case study from Madagascar documents the effective use of public-private partnerships in delivering secure and sustainable access to water+ services (domain 1), while the case study from Vietnam explores a community visioning approach to WRM that does justice to the individual and communal agency and empowerment-in-action spirit of domain 3 (gender-equitable control over water+ services). The global case studies on learning, partnership, advocacy and emergency WASH prove trickier to subject to the water+ theory of change lens, created as it was on a model of change within a country context where some element of direct implementation (domain 1) is presupposed. Nonetheless these global efforts are as significant to the overall picture of impact as the most successful country programs and warrant future metrics that secure their contribution to a global impact footprint.

EAST AFRICA

Kenya: Using Action-Research to Influence Government Investments in School WASH

BACKGROUND

Inadequate access to school WASH programs is a subset of the larger global WASH crisis. However, several aspects of WASH in schools differentiate it from community WASH; for example, WASH in schools generally falls under the command of ministries of education rather than ministries of health, as in the case of household WASH. In addition, the financial and accountability models that WASH in schools requires are different than those for household services because schools are controlled by governments, communities or both. These aspects must be taken into account if sustainable services at the scale needed are to be achieved.

To assess the potential for sustainability and scalability of school WASH strategies, CARE and partners piloted an action-research approach with a strong advocacy-for-policy-change component through the Sustaining and Scaling School Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Plus Community Impact (SWASH+) project. The project was implemented in 185 primary schools in the Nyanza Province of Kenya, a rural region with low levels of WASH coverage.

Through the generous funding of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Global Water Challenge, the project started in 2006 as a consortium that variously comprised CARE, Emory University's Center for Global Safe Water, the Government of Kenya and Water.org, along with local partners. The research component of SWASH+, led by Emory University, included a cluster-randomized trial testing three variants of a WASH intervention that, depending on the study group, included hygiene promotion, water treatment, sanitation improvements and water source improvements. The trial captured outcome, impact and sustainability data over 3 years. Numerous sub-studies were also conducted on different topical areas, including rainwater harvesting, diffusion of behaviors from school to home, and menstrual management, among others. As the goal was to find the best ways to reach successful nationwide implementation of school WASH, the government of Kenya was recognized as both a contributor of prime importance and the ultimate audience for the lessons and recommendations from the SWASH+ project.

RESULTS AND IMPACT

After the first 3 years of data collection, the project used research findings⁹ and knowledge gained from initial evaluations to make recommendations related to sustainability, governance and accountability of school WASH programs. The SWASH+ team used these findings to advocate for the funding of operations and maintenance costs, such as the soap and water treatment solutions that were found to be widely lacking within schools, dedicated budgets for school WASH within current grants from governments to schools, and the mainstreaming of WASH education for teachers in Kenya through the creation of supplemental curriculum materials and teacher training modules. SWASH+ also shared its research findings and advocacy-related lessons widely within school WASH circles at the global level. The results from these and other efforts are explained below.

Increasing funding for school WASH. Findings from the project indicated that increased funding for school WASH is necessary for sustainability of services. SWASH+ worked with the Ministry of Education and other partners to increase financial backing for water+ services and to improve monitoring and evaluation in Kenyan schools. As a result the government doubled funds for school WASH in the nation's 18,000 primary schools. In addition collective advocacy from SWASH+ and allies prompted the Kenyan government to allocate \$3.4 million for menstrual management supplies for girls, since a lack of these essentials often leads to girls' absenteeism in school.

Mainstreaming school WASH within the educational system. The SWASH+ project developed a water, sanitation and hygiene interactive manual for use in schools that has been formally accepted by the Kenya Institute of Education as a supplement to the primary school curriculum on health and hygiene and is available to educators throughout the country. To facilitate the adoption of the subject matter in the manual, SWASH+ also developed a teacher's training module that has been accepted for use by the Ministry of Education.

Contributing to the evidence base on school WASH impacts. Various SWASH+ research components provided reinforcing evidence for the global understanding that school WASH programs help improve the health of students, which positively impacts school attendance. Girls at SWASH+ intervention schools experienced 52 percent less odds of re-infection with helminthes, after a school-based deworming initiative, compared to girls at control schools. The full SWASH+ package of interventions was associated with a 66 percent decrease in risk of diarrheal disease. As an overall result of the project, girl absenteeism was reduced by up to 58 percent compared to control schools. SWASH+ also produced numerous findings

* For access to all SWASH+ research findings and produced content, please visit www.swashplus.org.



and recommendations related to sustainability of school WASH. For example, 3 years after implementing the safe-water system school WASH intervention, only 36 percent of schools continued to provide drinking water and only 9 percent had measurable levels of chlorine in their drinking water, thereby demonstrating the need for attention to ongoing operations and governance of school facilities.

CONCLUSION

Both the immediate provision of school WASH services in lagging areas and their long-term sustenance are vital to ensuring a healthy learning environment for students. Governments are willing to invest in school WASH, particularly when a well-evidenced case can be made for the payoff of these investments. The need for greater attention to operations and maintenance, wise investment and accountability for results are some of the main lessons that have been generated by SWASH+ and other researchers.

ASIA

Vietnam: Visioning Community Watershed Management

BACKGROUND

Muong and Thai populations located along the Ma River with its flat rice paddies and steep limestone mountains are among the poorest communes of the Ba Thuoc District in Thanh Hoa Province. Families rely on farming and natural resources for income; however, increased drought and flooding as well as severe environmental degradation mean that most struggle to survive. Land-use management is often poorly coordinated, failing to address local needs or foster participation of community members, especially women and ethnic minorities.

To improve community watershed management and expand livelihood opportunities, CARE International in Vietnam, with local partner civil society organization Thanh Hoa Union of Science Technologies Association, piloted the visioning approach through the Participatory Watershed Management Project. The visioning approach is a strategic tool that can be used for a range of development planning aims while ensuring community voices are represented from the very beginning. Visioning creates a forum where people are brought together to openly express their hopes and expectations and reach consensus about an ideal future for their community. Starting at the grassroots level and integrating plans upwards helps to reduce the gap between policy makers, poor people and ethnic minorities.

CARE and Thanh Hoa Union of Science Technologies Association held a series of visioning workshops in eight sub-watershed communes from 2007 to 2012. Local government officials and trusted community leaders, elders and members took part, and staff ensured that participation was equitably balanced among people of different socio-economic status,



half of which were women. Under the guidance of trained facilitators, participants created a shared vision and collaborated to form a detailed plan for how to achieve it. They presented these plans to the wider community for endorsement before sending them for approval to district-level decision-making bodies.

One participant, Mrs. Bui Thi Lan, explained the experience in her village of Trung Thanh: “In my vision I wanted to restore the bamboo forest and have a clean water supply and construct the irrigation dam. These dreams have already been carried out. Now we can have two harvests per year instead of one. We also save money and trees because of the new dam and even though we put in some labor and supervision for the new dam, it is less work than before.”

RESULTS AND IMPACT

Determining the long-term impact of community watershed management plans developed through the visioning approach will take more time, however CARE has already observed positive results.

Improved community watershed management and livelihood strengthening. Communities are improving their capacity to manage watershed activities, such as sustainable irrigation, in consideration of the different needs of communes located up- and downstream. Representative local governance structures were created to oversee watershed management activities. Sound natural resource management practices such as sustainable forest management are increasing, leading to new opportunities for income such as eco-tourism. Forests are being replanted and protected while the use of sloping agriculture land techniques is creating more fertile soil, allowing for crop diversification and more harvests. The visioning approach has also supported communities to prioritize and realize their needs for new public infrastructure that is required to make their visions possible.

Influence on governance practices. The creation of district socio-economic development plans used to be in the hands of very few people and failed to account for local needs, traditional knowledge, resources or capacity. After exposure to the visioning approach, district authorities acknowledged the merit of including local voices in the planning of land use and natural resource management. Accordingly these local visions acted as the foundation of the 2011-2015 Ba Thuoc Socio-Economic Development Plan.

Inclusive community participation and empowerment. Changes to planning processes strengthened grassroots democracy and, more importantly, ensured the inclusion of those traditionally excluded—ethnic minorities, women and poor people. Records of attitudes and activities after showed an overall decrease in discrimination as well as an increased awareness around rights to natural resources access among ethnic minorities and local government.

CONCLUSION

CARE’s experience in Vietnam has shown that the visioning approach can enable active and inclusive community participation in watershed management and socio-economic development planning. Integrating climate vulnerability and capacity analysis is the next logical step to ensure community plans also address the impact of climate change.

“In the beginning I didn’t like the meeting, but then I understood that we were given the rod for fishing—not the fish!”

Mrs. Huong, Head of the Luong Trung Women’s Union

WEST AFRICA

Niger: Wells for Peace in Niger Promote Non-Violent Resource Sharing

BACKGROUND

The Diffa region in Eastern Niger, bordering Nigeria and Chad, has some of the most severe living conditions in the country with an extreme arid climate afflicted by recurrent drought. Some 300,000 pastoral inhabitants face increasing competition for scarce resources of water and pasture. Recognizing that ownership and access to water is historically complex and a source of great tension amongst the different ethnic groups sharing the region, in 2006 CARE International in Niger designed Wells for Peace, an innovative action research project with the strong support of CARE Denmark through funding from the European Union.

Wells for Peace emphasizes relationship building among different groups by facilitating inter-group dialogue and negotiating consensus for social agreements about well location, management and equitable resource sharing. The project's concurrent aim was to gather research findings from using this participatory approach over 5 years to influence Niger's national water strategy and develop an accompanying facilitation guide to replication and scale-up of the project.



To achieve these objectives CARE, with its local partners and government authorities, established a new community-based water governance system. This involved creating water management committees (WMCs) to manage the water and pasture around 15 new modern well sites. The project first helped communities to form WMCs that were balanced among the different community groups and genders. CARE and partners then trained these representatives on well maintenance for repairs and assurance of water quality and cleanliness at the well sites. WMCs help to ensure that access to water and pastures is rotated equitably among the different groups around each site. Wells are financially sustained through the collection of user fees for which the WMCs are also responsible. Trained community facilitators from partner staff and local municipality officials act as mediators for peaceful conflict resolution when issues arise concerning the wells and resource sharing.

RESULTS AND IMPACT

CARE noted profound impact across three major result areas that are strongly attributed to the work accomplished by Wells for Peace.

Improved water quality and access. Thirty thousand pastoralists have directly benefited from more reliable access to safe drinking water, improving their lives substantially as a result. Well-constructed modern wells using large-diameter concrete rings instead of traditional wells is a significant factor to this improvement, because they offer increased water quantity as well as a cleaner water supply.

Conflict transformation. By creating a water governance system that includes all stakeholders and builds stronger relationships among the different pastoral communities in Diffa, the project has fostered increased trust and resource sharing, which has prevented new wells from being a source of violent conflict. A less tangible, but extremely important outcome, is the increased practice of consultation and dialogue observed between groups who previously did not interact in a positive or cooperative manner.

Policy influence. The project findings have greatly impacted both legal and institutional arrangements governing pastoral water by engaging key government players and experts at the regional level. Direct advocacy efforts to promote the community approach developed by Wells for Peace have substantially contributed to the national water strategy of the Ministry of Water and Environment, which is now finalized and awaits official adoption by Niger's Parliament. Furthermore the approach is currently being used by other modern well localities in the region, showing the project's significant influence on local natural resource management practices.

CONCLUSIONS

The great potential for scaling up Wells for Peace is being realized both in its influence at the national policy level and in encouraging signs of adoption in local practices. CARE is currently implementing the second phase of Wells for Peace, strengthening the local partner and continuing to build the capacity of local municipalities. In phase three CARE plans to shift the funding and full implementation responsibility directly to its local partner and play a more technical advisory role.

The independent project evaluation noted the remarkable impact on women's empowerment in the communities around the modern well sites. Women are much more active in public meetings than before. Women reported feeling freer to debate and feel they are more respected by men. They also explained the substantial positive changes related to their daily chores due to improved water access.

THE MIDDLE EAST

Egypt, Jordan, Palestine: Growing Water Governance from the Grass Roots

BACKGROUND

According to the International Water Management Institute, 17 countries in the Middle East will face absolute water scarcity by 2025 because of climatic trends and dramatic population growth. Traditionally a top-down approach to water resources management has been the status quo in the region. However, central government is unable to meet community needs for water for either domestic or agricultural use. Poor supply networks, illegal water use and weak communication among relevant stakeholders are at the root of the supply problem. These institutional issues underscore the need to give more attention to the effective and equitable management of water resources instead of focusing on just increasing access.

In an endeavor to change existing water governance dynamics, CARE created EMPOWERS, a European Union-funded regional partnership of 15 organizations allied to improve local communities' long-term access to water through improving water governance. Through EMPOWERS, CARE and its partners spent 4 years working to empower local people in practicing IWRM in Egypt, Jordan and Palestine. EMPOWERS envisioned a shift in existing IWRM approaches to bring focus from larger geographic units such as river basins and major watersheds down to the community level of local end users in order to tackle water problems of underprivileged populations. Under such an approach water policy and development planning involves community members in data collection, analysis and planning for action.



To include local voices EMPOWERS partners combined participatory water-planning cycle and stakeholder dialogue and concerted-action approaches. The aim of both is to support stakeholders, e.g. community-based and civil society organizations; government institutions at district, governorate and national levels; and private sector agencies in making the technical and political decisions to develop and manage their water resources within a commonly agreed vision and strategy for their specific area. Examples of these approaches in practice include:

- Bringing together a representative cross-section of community members for dialogue sessions to identify their local water problems and develop a common vision to fulfill collective interests
- Training a range of stakeholders to create strategies and scenarios to address water problems
- Supporting vulnerable communities to implement pilots to put their visions into practice

RESULTS AND IMPACT

The independent project evaluation concluded that “Against all the critical challenges, EMPOWERS facilitated a complex process that involved different partners and stakeholders and was able to achieve its intended results, significantly improving local water governance and enabling communities to increase their control and ownership over the management of local water resources.”^{xxv} Within the wider scope of EMPOWERS’ achievements, the following results are especially promising to the emergence of participation and inclusiveness in the Middle East.

A local voice in planning and policy. Through its emphasis on good-quality information and active involvement of relevant stakeholders at all levels, the project increased the influence of different stakeholders on IWRM planning and decision making. This process is now better informed by local realities; end users have more ownership and are accountable for the management of local water resources, especially at the governmental level. The increase of inclusion of vulnerable groups in the local water issues, most significantly women, has been noteworthy.

A successful outreach strategy. The project facilitated strong information exchange among the three country programs and partners and disseminated overall expertise and learning to the wider public, making good use of technology and multi-media. This was achieved through strategic alliances, the portal website, cross visits, meetings, and e-conferences as well as various publications and documentaries, available in both English and Arabic.¹⁰

CONCLUSIONS

Some observers note that “EMPOWERS is not a magic formula—some experiences show that local tradition and stubborn practices of dependency and favoritism also hamper development, no matter how well the participatory planning is done.”^{xxvi} However, an independent evaluation concluded that the project was very successful overall in reaching its goals in the pilot project areas. The ideas generated by EMPOWERS have great potential for wider application beyond the project. Despite the formal end of the project in August 2007, EMPOWERS’ local partners in the governorates, district and villages have continued with their work on the activities and plans they developed during the project cycle—a credit to EMPOWERS’ ability to influence ways of working and enable long-term sustainability.

Local water governance is about new policies, platforms, networks and institutions. But making them work is about people. When it works, it is about people challenging the traditional way of how things ‘ought to be’. These are people who do things differently; people with a bit of courage.

Doing Things Differently: Stories about Local Water Governance in Egypt Jordan and Palestine, 2007

⁸ For access to all EMPOWERS resources and produced content, please visit <http://www.project.empowers.info/page/107>

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Madagascar: Making Water Worth Paying for Through Public-Private Partnership

BACKGROUND

Meeting basic water needs is an ongoing struggle for the 70 percent of Malagasy people living in rural communities where water supply coverage rates are less than 30 percent. Where water points do exist they are poorly maintained, with a CARE 2010 inventory finding a functionality rate of only 20 percent in 42 communes.

In response to the poor track record of publicly provided community-managed water supply systems, a promising new paradigm has emerged. The passage of the 1999 Water Code enabled decentralization of water services and opened up the sector to private investment. This legal framework allows for the establishment of public-private partnership (PPP)-based service delivery in which rural communes award contracts to a registered private company to assure the operation, management and maintenance of a water system. System operators establish a cost-recovery system that is profitable yet affordable for communities and that provides tiered options for water services at different tariffs. In most cases households can choose to access public water points, private household connections or a semi-private social water point. A social water point is a tap stand with a durable spigot and water meter that is shared by a group of 5 to 15 self-selecting households.

In 2009 CARE and partner Catholic Relief Services launched the RANO Ham Pivoatra project, meaning “Water for Progress,” through USAID funding. Through partnership with local NGOs, the project aims to increase sustainable access to improved water supply, enhance the coverage rates in sanitation and improve hygiene practices. Fostering PPP development is one approach the project researched and implemented to contribute to this overall objective.



As PPP models are new to rural Madagascar, communes often lack both the local capacity and practical experience to manage such partnerships. CARE facilitated the emergence of PPP agreements by generating demand and buy-in among local politicians and citizens, helping communes to fulfill the necessary legal requirements and supporting the communes to select a suitable private service provider through a competitive and transparent bidding processes. CARE used a blend of USAID and private funding to provide these communities with the capital costs of constructing piped water supply systems. Although a significant amount of financial investment and community support is required to establish a community-driven PPP, the return on investments in terms of long-term functionality is promising and warrants future scale-up based on lessons learned from the project.

RESULTS AND IMPACT

By October 2012 Water for Progress had helped establish 10 PPPs with five different private providers. As a result 20,000 new people gained access to safe water and households had the option to select among the different levels of service. Documented experience with PPPs has shown that after 1 to 2 years of sharing a social water point households start to demand a higher level of service and begin to invest in private connections, which benefits both public health and the system managers' bottom line.

A common problem with community-managed water systems is the inadequacy of routine maintenance due to inconsistent community fee payments resulting, in part, because of a one-size-fits-all approach. In the PPP model, all water points in a piped system are individually connected and controlled by the provider so that water services can be switched off at any given point in the case of non-payment. The project only encountered one such case. Furthermore CARE's analysis has found that 70 to 85 percent of people in PPP areas are choosing to access water services. This shows that communities do, in fact, see the benefits of paying for a clean water service despite the previous longstanding belief amongst development practitioners that people in Madagascar would not accept such a model.

Anecdotal evidence from project staff has revealed high household satisfaction with private water connections, especially in terms of eliminating the daily burden of carrying water for women and young girls. The flexibility allowed by round-the-clock water access in the case of private and social water point connections is life changing for these households.

CONCLUSIONS

CARE's experience with Water for Progress has shown that people in Madagascar will pay for dependable water services and appreciate the range of service delivery options a PPP allows. When implemented correctly this is not a model that reaches the highest possible number of people with a given amount of financial resources but rather invests adequate time and resources towards creating a high-quality water supply system that is socially equitable and promotes cost recovery at all levels. This leads to sustainability. CARE and its partners are advocating for the approach through different donor channels and have developed concrete recommendations to promote a more enabling environment for PPPs. Encouraging more private participation is crucial as there are still limited options for high-quality professional water-service providers. Yet equally as much effort should be made to change mindsets about the value of water and increase the demand for improved modern water services more broadly through awareness-raising campaigns.¹¹

“The fundamental premise of the ‘Water for Progress’ PPP model considers households not as beneficiaries, rather as discerning and savvy consumers who have a right to access a dynamic water service delivery model which is responsive to the heterogeneity of the communities they live in.”

Johnathan Annis, Water for Progress Project Coordinator, CARE Madagascar

¹¹ Data and supporting information drawn from the project's action research document : Annis, J. and Razafinjato , G. (2012) Public-Private Partnerships in Madagascar: a promising approach to increase sustainability of piped water supply systems in rural towns

LATIN AMERICA

Peru: Finding the Best Models for Government, Private and Citizen Cooperation in WASH Service Delivery

BACKGROUND

Although WASH projects often focus on the construction of infrastructure, in Peru CARE sought to address weaknesses in administration, operation and maintenance of water systems as the root cause for the lack of sustainable WASH services. Since its inception in 1999 CARE's PROPILAS project has progressed successfully to intervene on WASH issues at the community, local (district and provincial) and regional levels. PROPILAS has been able to test management approaches based on the principles of sustainability, efficiency and transparency and to influence WASH policies and programs at a national level.

In the initial phase PROPILAS I tested two management models in the Cajamarca region of Peru: a municipal model in which the municipality contracts the project implementer and a community model in which the community manages the contracting. Informed by lessons learned from the initial project, PROPILAS II fostered strategic partnerships between the municipal and community levels while continuing to strengthen capacity for the management of WASH services through establishing SIRAS, an online platform for management of the water systems and EPILAS, the Pilot School for Accreditation in Water and Sanitation in partnership with the National University of Cajamarca. EPILAS, which has since expanded to other regions of the country, serves to build technical capacity through professional training in WASH and, thus, to standardize the quality of WASH projects. From 2009 to 2011 PROPILAS focused on transferring the management models, methods and strategies validated in the previous phases to the regional government to ensure the project's sustainability.





RESULTS AND IMPACT

PROPILAS has had far-reaching results, some of which are summarized here.

- EPILAS has been replicated to create WASH management programs through universities in two additional regions: Lambayeque (coastal region) and San Martin (rainforest region). The model is also being adapted and replicated in El Salvador.
- The Cajamarca regional government, specifically the Regional Bureau of Housing, Construction and Sanitation has been strengthened and 36 local governments have increased their management and technical skills in sanitation.
- The Regional Operational Plan for Rural Sanitation 2011-2015 was created and implemented. In this plan the regional government agreed to invest approximately \$67,000,000 in comprehensive projects in rural areas. Additional public policies pertaining to comprehensive water and sanitation systems have also been implemented.
- Health and hygiene education and environmental preservation were integrated into the regional education curriculum. Safe sanitation practices were also promoted among 8,500 families in the Cajamarca region.
- Programs for citizen participation in WASH system management were established. These included a regional executive board, local steering committees and provincial committees, all committed to the monitoring and evaluation of the implemented public policies.
- SIRAS was developed and integrated into the management of the WASH systems. SIRAS is a database that measures and tracks the key indicators for the WASH sector in Cajamarca and allows municipalities to understand the sustainability of their services.
- Lessons learned from the PROPILAS project have been incorporated into subsequent WASH projects in Peru, such as the SABA project. Using the PROPILAS model, SABA strengthened the management capacity of Regional Bureaus of Housing, Construction and Sanitation, expanded the utilization of SIRAS, advocated for increased sanitation investments at various levels of government, and promoted collaboration among the WASH, education and health sectors in eight rural regions throughout Peru between April 2011 and December 2012.

CONCLUSIONS

The PROPILAS project took an ambitious and systemic approach to addressing WASH access by researching successful models for partnership between communities, private providers and government at different levels. A progressive model for sharing these best practices and the creation of an institution for promoting technical knowledge on WASH are further hallmarks of PROPILAS' work to revolutionize WASH within the Cajamarca region of Peru and beyond. With political will from the government and the focus of PROPILAS on strengthening government capacity, a sustainable management model for WASH is in place.

GLOBAL

Increasing Scale and Influence through Partnerships

BACKGROUND

Much of CARE's work in water+ is done through partnerships and strategic alliances that provide a means for wider outreach, impact, influence and learning. Starting in the early 2000s CARE's U.S.-based water team began actively seeking partnership opportunities with other organizations in the WASH sector. With a relatively small water team at that time, CARE recognized that achieving scale in terms of both programming and influence would be out of reach if pursued independently. Greater collective action among peers was needed to achieve program goals as well as influence national policy and increase foreign assistance allocation for WASH, especially for the world's poorest populations.

CARE has been involved in the development of several flagship partnerships over the past decade including the Millennium Water Alliance (MWA), the Global Water Initiative (GWI), SWASH+ partnership, WASH Advocates (formerly Water Advocates), WSUP and Building Partnerships for Development in Water and Sanitation.¹² The advantage of CARE's involvement with this broad range of partnerships is that they each have fulfilled different needs in terms of growth, influence and knowledge (see Figure 6). CARE has learned much from these partnerships, with a resulting tangible impact on CARE's water+ work.



Figure 6: Advantages of partnerships
Source: <http://www.ashridge.org.uk/>

RESULTS AND IMPACT

The key positive results of working in collaboration with others are:

Economies of Scale. Working in coalition programs such as MWA and GWI across regions of West and East Africa and Latin America means that CARE has been able to reach more vulnerable people located in remote communities through joining forces with partners. Opportunities to work in new areas where CARE lacked the experience to enter alone also offers the benefit of new knowledge; for instance, CARE has learned more about urban water+ services through WSUP, a successful partnership that has created a niche of addressing urban water needs among the underserved poor. The concept of the whole is greater than the sum of its parts is especially relevant here—the impact of CARE's work is increased through leveraging the skills, knowledge and additional funding enabled by working in partnerships. (See Figure 7 for characteristics of smart partnerships.)

Increased credibility and influence. CARE's participation in formal coordinated learning and advocacy efforts has been successful in raising the profile of WASH in development. Enhanced public and donor outreach has brought increased awareness about the importance of water in achieving sustainable and meaningful social and economic development. CARE's partnership in U.S.-based advocacy coalitions such as Water Advocates, the Millennium Water Alliance and the WASH working group hosted at InterAction achieved real results in terms of policy change and increased U.S. funding for WASH.¹³

¹² For more information about these and other partnerships, please visit the CARE Alliances Wiki Page at <http://water.care2share.wikispaces.net/ALLIANCES>

¹³ Refer to "CARE USA and WASH Advocacy: Achieving Positive Impact through a Networked Approach" in this report for more on CARE's advocacy efforts for WASH.



Figure 7: Smart partnership criteria.
 Source: Adapted from <http://www.educe.co.uk/>

Creating a strong and valid evidence base for the impact of programs on the ground with the support of academic research partners is another benefit that has increased the credibility of CARE’s work. Five years of action research conducted in partnership with Emory University through SWASH+ in Kenya proved strong enough to influence the government of Kenya to better prioritize and fund WASH in schools. CARE and the other program partners could not have achieved this result on their own, but together they were able to pool the necessary skills and resources to influence policy on a national scale.

Enhanced relationships and professional networks. CARE has found that, when partnerships work well, there is regular communication and information sharing between organizations. Once a good level of trust is established across partnerships, the potential for learning and meaningful engagement between organizations makes the theory behind united development a practical reality.

Creation and use of common tools for learning, monitoring and evaluation and joint field testing of technical innovations has led to more sophisticated programs and professionalization of a cadre of experts who are positively influenced by one another. The GWI notes that, “In the Central America program, for example, CARE’s focus on working with municipal governments has influenced the way Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and its partners have done so. CRS’ reliance on local partners has helped ground the project toward meeting the needs of the local communities. International Union for the Conservation of Nature has contributed expertise and conceptual depth that has provoked analysis and learning by the rest of the partners.”^{xxvii}

CONCLUSIONS

The aim of partnerships is to establish effective and equitable working relationships among organizations for a common good. However, there are real difficulties that come with working with others, and not all partnerships are equal in results and effectiveness. Managing partnerships well takes significant investment of resources and time. The good news is that such investments can and do yield results. CARE has seen positive impact in terms of learning, growth and influence for water+ as a result of its partnership efforts. On a broader scale, CARE has witnessed the emergence of a WASH community of peers in the U.S.-based development community that was largely lacking when the water team was first established.

However, while partnerships can offer significant benefits, there are real difficulties that come with working with others and not all partnerships are equal in results and effectiveness. The lessons from these past experiences have shaped CARE’s vision in moving forward with cross-organizational collaboration.

“At the end of the day, if you are in the business of maintaining a government’s social compact with its citizens to protect their rights and hold duty bearers accountable, then you always need to do it through partnerships, a social movement approach.”

Peter Lochery, CARE USA Water Team Director



A More Studied Approach to Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation

BACKGROUND

Over time CARE's work in water+ has incorporated more reflective and robust learning practices to better understand CARE's overall impact and create smarter programs. The U.S.-based water team also took specific strategic steps to grow its internal capacity for data collection and analysis and learning. To help anchor CARE's vision for measuring impact in a guiding framework, the water team developed the aforementioned theory of change in 2010 that identifies specific water-related domains of change required to achieve CARE's broader aim: Poor women and school-aged girls improve their lives. New programs with large learning and research objectives such as the GWI and SWASH+ called for more strategic investment into monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and learning. The water team also recruited permanent positions specifically dedicated to learning, communications, policy and influencing to support these efforts.

The results of the water team's efforts are encouraging, leading to tangible improvements as follows:

- **Learning as a core objective of new programs.** As much as possible, new water programs are designed to include robust learning components as a core strategic objective. There are designated learning activities and results with adequate budgeting and staff for M&E as well as learning pilots or action research. When designing new programs, there is emphasis on focus learning in areas in which CARE would like to expand its knowledge.
- **HR investment.** New roles both in the water team and on the ground are dedicated to M&E and learning, reflecting CARE's commitment to building capacity here.
- **Refinement and widespread use of CARE-developed M&E tools.** There has been more systematic sharing of M&E and learning tools within and across water programs. This enables better application of key tools such as the scheme functionality and governance snapshot, the vibrant water self-assessment and the women's experiences tool, which, in turn, has helped draw in a richer set of quantitative and qualitative data.¹⁴
- **More engaging and interactive ways of learning.** The use of technology and hands-on approaches through a globally accessible wiki page, webinars, market stalls and a range of audio-visual materials has improved opportunities for, and quality of, cross-learning and information dissemination both internally and externally.

¹⁴ For more information on these tools and others, please visit the CARE Water+ Wikispace at <http://water.care2share.wikispaces.net/>



RESULTS AND IMPACT

CARE has seen several results of these changes in M&E and learning. Here are a few:

- Documentation of achievements means that CARE can use evidence of impact for advocacy and policy influence. For example, in Kenya, advocacy efforts based on the SWASH+ Project’s action research was successful in convincing the national government to increase its per pupil allocations for school WASH. A stronger evidence base has also enabled greater dissemination of generated knowledge through publications, presentations and web content such as webinars.
- Training staff on more rigorous data collection and analysis and opening up space for reflection has led to a visible increase of both comfort and competence levels in data usage and learning skills over the past 5 years. Results from an annual learning survey administered within the GWI showed progressive acceptance and endorsement of learning, monitoring and evaluation tools. This progress suggests that there has been payoff from a consistent focus on learning in the program.

CONCLUSIONS

The vision for CARE’s water team is to better understand what it will take to make its theory of change a reality. Getting a better grasp on the approaches that will bring the most impact for women and girls and their empowerment and achieve results at wide scale is crucial. It requires on the one hand the confidence to change programming approaches based on the copious amounts of knowledge already in existence and, on the other, the agility and humility to realize that all knowledge must be contextualized; communities and societies are in constant flux and learning must keep up with them rather than stagnate around assumptions. These learning behaviors need the willingness of CARE’s partners and the communities they serve and call for donors to allow more flexibility in program design and increase investments in M&E and learning.

“When we received the data from the Global Water Initiative, it was gratifying; we saw that better monitoring, evaluation and learning actually has impact and attracts attention. We learned that it is possible to take a fairly ambitious M&E framework and make it happen.”

Malaika Cheney-Coker, Learning and Influencing Advisor, CARE Water Team

CARE USA and WASH Advocacy: Achieving Positive Impact Through a Networked Approach

BACKGROUND

The landscape of WASH in the U.S. has changed dramatically in the past decade. WASH foreign assistance for the world's poorest has increased significantly as has the U.S. government's capacity and commitment for leadership in the sector. This is reflected in the landmark Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act of 2005, which made promoting access to WASH for the poor a core development goal of U.S. foreign assistance. (See Figure 8 for summarized history of this legislation.) Current bipartisan support for the Water for the World Act builds upon existing policy to improve overall coordination, integration, transparency, and M&E of WASH foreign assistance. The momentum for change came from a series of converging efforts led by a network of concerned and dedicated civic leaders. CARE played a pivotal role in these activities, both in pushing for a collective voice and coordinating joint advocacy for WASH policy reform. This strategy is in line with CARE's model for eradicating poverty and social justice, which emphasizes the need for strengthening institutions and policies that support WASH to achieve greater impact. Though we can claim only contribution rather than attribution, CARE's networked approach to WASH advocacy has been highly successful in achieving meaningful results by influencing changes to U.S. government policy and bringing WASH to the forefront of international development priorities.

RESULTS AND IMPACT

Below are some of the key results achieved by CARE and its partners to improve U.S. foreign assistance for WASH:

- **Creation of MWA** in 2003, an alliance of the largest U.S. NGOs engaged in WASH advocacy and programming. MWA brings eleven organizations together to advance the vision that no one should die or suffer chronic illness as the result of a water-related disease. CARE's water director has served as vice chair on the board of directors, and CARE is one of the largest on-the-ground programmers.
- **Input into the 2005 Aspen Institute's publication** of "A Silent Tsunami," a report highlighting the lack of attention to WASH within U.S. foreign assistance.
- **Support since 2005 of Water Advocates** (now WASH Advocates), a nimble advocacy organization with the specific mandate to increase the amount and quality of U.S. foreign assistance for WASH. CARE has served as a board member and now adviser for the group, helped to establish its various iterations and seconds a staff person to the WASH Advocates team.
- **Passage by floor vote of the Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act** of 2005, authorizing legislation requiring a comprehensive U.S. government water strategy with high-level goals and a results framework. CARE was a major supporter of the bill, including through our CARE Action Network of volunteer-advocates who encouraged their policymakers to support the legislation.
- **Unified civic endorsement of official recommendations for the U.S. government water strategy in 2006 and continuous advocacy efforts to hold the government** accountable to its commitments under the act. CARE and partners have released a report on implementation of the Water for the Poor Act every year since 2006.
- **CARE and WaterAid in America founded the WASH Working Group** at InterAction in 2009. It remains the main U.S. civil society network for WASH advocacy, coordination and government influence.

The impact of the above combined efforts and events are threefold:

Policy change. The "A Silent Tsunami" report sparked the momentum that led to the passage of the Water for the Poor Act. This represented a significant shift in U.S. foreign assistance policy to act on issues that had been long under-prioritized. The legislation's requirement for the government to produce a water strategy that incorporates indicators and benchmarks

2.5
Billion
People



35%
of global population
lack access
to adequate
sanitation.



THE SENATOR PAUL SIMON WATER for the POOR ACT of 2005 directs USAID to focus water and sanitation assistance toward the countries, locales and people with greatest need. Yet countries with the least need receive more USAID funds than those with the greatest need.

Countries with > 80% access to sanitation received \$74 million from USAID in 2011, while countries with < 20% access received only \$51 million.

HOW CAN WE CHANGE THIS?

USAID's work to expand access to sanitation is critical. It saves lives, reduces poverty and helps drive economic growth. But it's time for USAID to do better. Congress must take action to ensure USAID funds are going to those who need it most! The Water for the World Act, which would do just that, will soon be reintroduced in Congress.



To celebrate World Water Day, call your Members of Congress at 202-224-3121 and tell them you support legislation that would improve USAID's work to provide sanitation for all, by making existing programs go farther and ensuring they help the people who need it most.

Figure 8: The Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act.

with a clear timetable and resource figures was the core element of the act. Over 7 years after passage of the Act, the U.S. Agency for International Development is poised to release its first ever U.S. water strategy. Although indications are that it will not meet all requirements of the Water for the Poor Act, the release of the strategy is itself a big success as it now creates direction and guidance for U.S. WASH programming and implies an ongoing U.S. commitment to the issue.

Funding increase. The most significant evidence of advances in WASH advocacy is the dramatic funding increase since President Bush signed the Water for the Poor Act into law. USAID allocated over \$283 million for developmental WASH initiatives for the poor in 2011 (the last reported year) with \$145 million of this spent in sub-Saharan Africa.. By comparison, in 2005, only \$15 million was obligated for developmental WASH funding in all of sub-Saharan Africa. However, serious constraints of the current economic and political climate mean that maintaining U.S. foreign assistance for WASH will be a challenge.

Strong American civil society collaboration for WASH advocacy. Positive momentum for WASH has been created among civic leaders coming together in the different forums listed above. This successfully enabled the harmonized voice and vision for WASH foreign assistance needs that had been so lacking in the past. CARE has been a key actor throughout this process by providing ongoing expertise, coordination and support.

CONCLUSIONS

Through its active leadership and support of a variety of networked actors, CARE demonstrated its value as an effective catalyst for WASH. Although the increase of both focus and funding for WASH foreign assistance is a success to be celebrated, more work is needed to ensure good practices and sustainable impact. Allocation of funding should be needs based, especially for sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Furthermore coordinated advocacy to ensure passage of the Water for the World Act is important to address shortcomings in the current policy environment and to build upon the positive momentum established to date.

“CARE’s efforts in water and sanitation advocacy in the U.S. closely track with our shift in thinking as an organization overall: We need to be a catalyst in sparking movements and action because we know we can’t do it alone. The success of this approach is evident in the dramatic up-tick in energy we see in the WASH community in the U.S. Where we used to see a handful of interested organizations, there are now packed rooms, and where there used to be a couple of staff at USAID in different bureaus focusing on the issue, there is now a fully-staffed Water Office with a high-level coordinator.” Brooks Keene, Water Policy Adviser, CARE

Emergency WASH: Building CARE's Capacity to be a Leading Responder

BACKGROUND

CARE's very origins are in emergency response—it started as an organization delivering care packages from Americans to Europeans left destitute by World War II. Since then CARE has played a strong humanitarian coordination and leadership role in several of the world's most devastating emergencies, including in recent years, the Haiti earthquake (2010), the Pakistan floods (2010 and 2011) and the Horn of Africa Drought (2011). WASH has been an important part of these emergency responses by providing safe access to water and sanitary facilities, promoting proper hygiene behavior, improving water infrastructure and preventing the outbreak of diseases while maintaining a minimum standard of dignity for the most vulnerable.

Despite these strong foundations CARE can do more to respond with emergency WASH during the initial relief phase of a crisis. CARE tends to respond well and with quality interventions during the recovery and rehabilitation phases of emergency responses by leveraging its vast development experience. However, CARE has yet to fully capitalize on its global and country strengths and resources to support the largest percentage possible of the affected population from initial crisis outbreak throughout the emergency response cycle.

A new emergency WASH strategy calls for agile and immediate response within 48 hours of declared emergencies, consistently meeting humanitarian accountability standards and integrating preparedness and resilience, all while maintaining CARE's distinctive focus on empowering women and girls in emergencies. The goals set forth in the strategy are that, by 2015, 75 percent of CARE emergency WASH responses will meet the needs of 15 percent of the affected population in large and medium disasters, and 5 percent in mega emergencies.

In addition the new strategy calls for better integration of WASH work across sectors and stronger links between emergency response and development. For example CARE successfully implemented an immediate 6-week relief phase in response to the 2012 Sierra Leone cholera outbreak. By responding in areas of existing WASH development work, CARE was able to mobilize quickly and ensure a smooth transition from emergency response back to ongoing programming.

RESULTS AND IMPACT

In the 2012 fiscal year CARE facilitated access to safe drinking water for more than 9 million people affected by emergencies across 31 countries, by constructing water sources such as wells, boreholes and water pans; improving hygiene practices; and distributing hygiene kits. These achievements were, in part, made possible by efforts in the below areas.

- **Program quality and accountability.** CARE's strategy calls for continued prioritization of learning to improve quality, accountability and technical capacity of emergency WASH programming. Trainings for field staff to assess program quality, support WASH coordination, develop program guidelines and provide technical assistance around WASH in emergencies have been conducted at the regional level as well as country missions. CARE ensures this hands-on support reaches even the most fragile and conflict-affected states such as Somalia and Pakistan. The CARE emergency toolkit has a comprehensive section dedicated to emergency WASH with detailed scenarios for response while CARE's humanitarian accountability framework is the guiding resource for all emergency interventions to ensure standards of accountability are met, especially for beneficiaries.
- **Humanitarian leadership.** CARE is recognized as a principal partner in humanitarian response, often playing an active coordination role for WASH in emergencies. In both the Haiti earthquake and Kenya drought emergencies of recent years, CARE demonstrated its aptitude for leadership because of its long-standing presence and credibility in the affected communities by successfully providing on-the-ground coordination of humanitarian WASH interventions. CARE's engagement in the

Global WASH Cluster, the chief platform for humanitarian WASH coordination worldwide, is highly significant through its role as a select member of the strategic advisory group. CARE also has a standing agreement with lead agency United Nations Children’s Fund to support the cluster through secondments of CARE staff to response missions.

- **Investment in WASH human resources.** To meet its WASH strategy goals and ensure more effective emergency WASH response, CARE has increased personnel dedicated to WASH and created in-house expert WASH bodies. A deployable emergency WASH team is at the core of additional surge capacity led by the senior specialist with four regional advisors as well as an information management officer. A reference group of 17 key CARE stakeholders provide strategic guidance on CARE’s emergency WASH policy, systems and innovations.

CONCLUSION

With a presence in more than 70 countries worldwide, CARE country offices provide an important resource and knowledge base from which to prepare for and launch timely and effective emergency WASH responses that empower women and girls. The surge capacity provided with the growing emergency WASH team and the goals outlined in WASH sub-strategy are important steps to supporting CARE’s continuing advancement to becoming a recognized humanitarian leader for WASH at national and global levels. By fostering a culture of emergency response across the organization, CARE can better realize its potential to secure poor people’s right to sustainable safe water, sanitation and improved hygiene through a holistic approach commencing from disaster risk reduction and preparedness to emergency relief and post-crisis recovery.

**“WASH is more than just water quality and disease prevention—
WASH is about livelihoods, health and education. We need to look at
it from that perspective and link our work with other sectors through
emergency relief and recovery phases to long term development.”**

Jason Snuggs, CARE Senior WASH Sector Specialist

Assessing Impact against the Goal

The goal of the theory of change—Poor women and school-aged girls improve their lives—is a progressive and sweeping one. Data reviewed in this report have offered sufficient evidence that CARE’s water+ programs have brought about improvements in the lives of women, girls, and their communities through changes such as increased abilities, improved health, and the time to pursue education or livelihood-related activities or undertake chores. The research studies in particular have provided powerful evidence on such measures as improvements in girls’ absenteeism and women’s sense of empowerment, both of which can reasonably be expected to have far-reaching effects.

Overall there is sufficient evidence of solid impact against the goal; however, this report presents a two-fold conclusion:

There is a need to re-assess programming approaches. As has been mentioned, although there are several examples of high-quality and inventive programming, most of CARE’s programs chart the much more familiar territory of direct provision of water and sanitation services and hygiene promotion, an approach that can be unsustainable if it does not address the of the cultural, policy and institutional environment in which these services are provided or facilitate public

and private partnerships for service delivery. Community-driven, gender-equitable and empowerment-centric approaches are also suggested as a means of unleashing program implementation from its often rigid frames and using water+ work as an entry to a more profound understanding of development work.

Impact against the goal is unnecessarily difficult to assess. The statements made in the previous point must be qualified by the limitations of assessing progress against the goal. Future efforts to do so will be helped by a more sophisticated quantification of achievements that allows for aggregation along with more deliberate efforts to use water+ programs to orchestrate change in the lives of women and girls. However, programs also need to better measure and categorize the types of changes they are bringing about in the lives of women and girls beyond water+ itself. In addition assessments of changes against the goal need to be carried out over longer periods to ascertain whether results have been sustained and which results might have newly arisen as part of a sequence of events.

For several years, the Water Team at CARE USA has used the Vibrant Water Self Assessment tool to promote holistic programming within CARE’s water portfolio. It assesses how well water programs are linked to broader goals within long-term, multi-sectoral programs. Through a series of multiple choice questions, it asks its country teams to self-evaluate how water+ work relates to all three areas of poverty as per CARE’s theoretical framework,—human condition, social position and enabling environments—the three domains of the Water+ theory of change, as well as other critical elements for “vibrancy” within the water+ sector. Countries are encouraged to use the results as a basis for reflection about their portfolio and to strengthen future work based on the findings. The use of the VWSA is one avenue through which theory of change thinking can be promoted within the water+ portfolio at CARE.

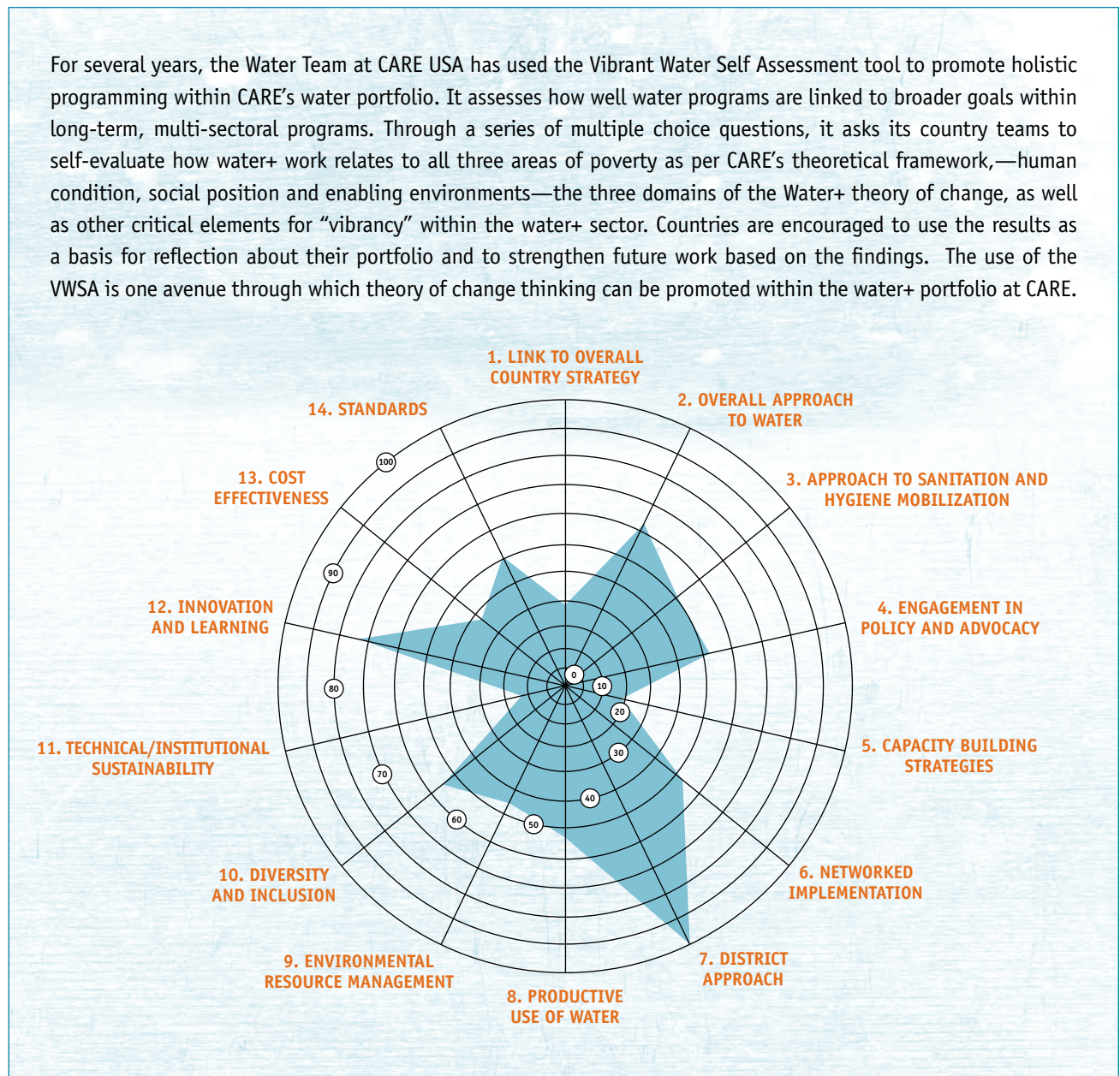


Figure 9: Example of scoring.

Conclusion

As mentioned in the forward to this report, the point of this meta-evaluation is to encourage a discipline of self-reflection. On the road to understanding impact, it is not just the answers to the questions that transform but the very act of asking. Impact itself will always be a moving target for change and is, by definition, not static; social change in particular does not happen in a controlled laboratory environment but rather in a universe of interacting factors and influences. CARE is co-creator of change; we partner with individuals, governments; global forces; social movements; and public, private and civic institutions. Rather than diminish the value of our contributions, this social reality provides great opportunities for a webbing of influence and building a forceful collective movement.

It is for this reason that this impact report has been framed within a theory of change—to help us align our vision with changes at scale, while boosting the resolve and ability of the individual to make that change at wide scale happen. This type of thinking is exemplified in CARE's program approach, which shifts focus from a project-driven orientation with a more contained and simplistic set of objectives—typically within a single development sector—to a program approach that interlocks several complementary and multi-sectoral initiatives in the service of a broader goal. Programs are long-term in nature (usually at least 10 years by CARE's definition) and focus on a defined group of people, rather than specific sectoral accomplishments. Theories of change are central to programs, as are underlying causes of poverty that help to identify the interventions needed.

Measuring impact within CARE's program approach framework will be very different. Attribution is much less clean cut; contribution is what matters. Values such as empowerment, gender equity, and good governance require completely different indicators from those around water quality or hygiene behaviors. But to measure against all these values is the road we must take. Due to water's intimate connection with human existence, water+ programs have a unique opportunity to turn the spigot on development in many areas beyond ensuring each person has access to water+ for all their needs. The challenge is for development practitioners in water+ to dream bigger about what their programs can accomplish; for donors to provide the requisite flexibility and funding so that program design can be nimble and continually evolve; for governments to use sound evidence to enact comprehensive solutions; and for poor and socially marginalized people, particularly women and girls, to act decisively in securing their rights to water+ while using it as one means to revolutionize their lives.



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Founded in 1945 with the creation of the CARE Package, CARE is a leading humanitarian organization fighting global poverty. CARE places special focus on working alongside poor girls and women because, equipped with the proper resources, they have the power to lift whole families and entire communities out of poverty. Last year CARE worked in 84 countries and reached 122 million people around the world. To learn more, visit www.care.org.

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