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COLLABORATIVE DECADE PLANNING  
A CASE STUDY OF SECTORAL PLANNING  
IN SWAZILAND

Field Report No. 317  
October 1990



**WATER AND  
SANITATION for  
HEALTH  
PROJECT**

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**A CASE STUDY OF SECTORAL PLANNING IN SWAZILAND**

Prepared for the Office of Health,  
Bureau for Science and Technology,  
U.S. Agency for International Development,  
and the USAID Mission to Swaziland  
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by  
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## CONTENTS

ACRONYMS .....	vii
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	xi
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Decade Plans and Decade Planning .....	1
1.2 Environment of Sectoral Development and WASH Assistance .....	2
1.3 Overview of WASH Assistance to the GOS National Action Group .....	3
1.4 Rationale for Documentation of WASH Assistance .....	6
1.5 Structure of the Report .....	6
2. OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTANCY .....	7
2.1 Development of a Decade Plan .....	7
2.2 Improving the Institutional Capacity of the NAG .....	8
2.3 Encouraging Increased Donor Involvement .....	9
2.4 Sectoral Reorientation and Coordination .....	10
3. COLLABORATIVE PLANNING METHODOLOGY .....	11
3.1 Guiding Principles—The WASH Approach to Consulting .....	11
3.1.1 Teamwork .....	11
3.1.2 Continuity .....	12
3.1.3 Assessment .....	12
3.1.4 Joint Decision-making .....	12
3.1.5 Delegation .....	13
3.1.6 Responsibility/Ownership .....	13
3.1.7 Institutions and Individuals .....	14
3.1.8 Directive/Collaborative/Facilitative Flexibility .....	14
3.1.9 Joint Review and Evaluation .....	14
3.2 Key Factors Affecting the Development of a Collaborative Methodology .....	15
3.2.1 Status of the NAG .....	15
3.2.2 Status of the TSG .....	16
3.2.3 Role of the RWSB .....	16

3.2.4	Role of Expatriate Advisors	16
3.2.5	Organizational Concerns	17
3.2.6	Programmatic Concerns	17
3.2.7	Budgetary Concerns	17
3.3	Key Elements of the Collaborative Planning Methodology	18
3.3.1	Authorized Direction and Timing of the Plan	18
3.3.2	Roles and Responsibilities of the TSG and WASH	19
3.3.3	Step-by-Step Approach to Planning	19
3.3.4	Linkage of Planning to Program Development and Monitoring	19
3.3.5	Capacity-Building Outcomes and Planning Products	20
3.3.6	Informal Consultations	20
3.3.7	Flexibility of the Methodology Maintaining	21
4.	OVERVIEW OF WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION INSTITUTIONS	23
4.1	Government of Swaziland Institutions	23
4.1.1	National Action Group	23
4.1.2	Ministry of Natural Resources, Land Utilization and Energy	23
4.1.3	Ministry of Interior and Immigration	25
4.1.4	Ministry of Health	26
4.1.5	Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives	27
4.1.6	Ministry of Education	27
4.1.7	Department of Economic Planning and Statistics	27
4.1.8	Ministry of Finance	27
4.2	Bilateral Institutions	28
4.2.1	USAID	28
4.2.2	Peace Corps	29
4.2.3	British High Commission: Overseas Development Administration	29
4.2.4	Canadian International Development Agency	29
4.3	Multilateral Organizations	30
4.3.1	United Nations Development Programme	30
4.3.2	UNICEF	30
4.3.3	European Economic Community	30
4.4	Nongovernmental Organizations	31
4.5	Special Issues	31
5.	INITIAL WASH CONSULTANCY: SEPTEMBER 1985	33
5.1	Introduction	33
5.2	Consultative Process	33
5.3	Outcomes	33
5.4	Special Issues	33

6.	POLICY AND STRATEGY DOCUMENT DEVELOPMENT: FEBRUARY 1986 .....	35
6.1	Introduction .....	35
6.2	Consultative Process .....	35
6.3	Outcomes .....	35
6.4	Special Issues .....	35
7.	NATIONAL SEMINAR ON POLICIES AND STRATEGIES: JUNE 1986 ...	37
7.1	Introduction .....	37
7.2	Consultative Process .....	37
7.3	Outcomes .....	37
7.4	Special Issues .....	38
8.	TWO-YEAR ACTION PLAN: JULY 1986 .....	39
8.1	Introduction .....	39
8.2	Consultative Process .....	39
8.3	Outcomes .....	39
8.4	Special Issues .....	40
9.	THREE-YEAR ACTION PLAN: MARCH 1989 .....	41
9.1	Introduction .....	41
9.2	Consultative Process .....	41
9.3	Outcomes .....	41
9.4	Special Issues .....	42
10.	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS .....	43
10.1	Introduction .....	43
10.2	The Setting for Sectoral Planning .....	43
	10.2.1 Sector Institutions and Sector Development .....	43
	10.2.2 USAID Support for the Water Supply and Sanitation Sector .....	44
10.3	The WASH Approach .....	44
10.4	Implementation .....	45
10.5	Key Factors .....	46
10.6	Outcomes .....	46
10.7	Outlook .....	47

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## ACRONYMS

CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
EEC	European Economic Community
IDWSSD	International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade
MNR	Ministry of Natural Resources
MOAC	Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives
MOH	Ministry of Health
NGOs	Nongovernmental Organizations
ODA	Overseas Development Administration
RWBDC	Rural Water Borne Disease Control
RWSB	Rural Water Supply Board
TSG	Technical Subgroup, a working committee of the RWSB established in July 1985 as its action arm
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WRB	Water Resources Branch
WSB	Water and Sewerage Board
GOS	Government of Swaziland
LDCs	Less Developed Countries
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
WS&S	Water Supply and Sanitation

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

One of the major contributions of the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (IDWSSD) has been the development of national plans of action for the water supply and sanitation (WS&S) sectors of the participating nations. This report describes the "collaborative Decade planning" which took place with the Government of Swaziland's National Action Group and the WASH Project over four years between 1985 and 1989. A series of five short-term technical assistance interventions from WASH assisted in the development and production of background papers, a national sector policy, a two year action plan, a review of the policy and two year plan, and finally, a national plan of action.

The reason for producing this summary of sectoral planning capacities in Swaziland is to add to the lessons learned from the IDWSSD. While "Decade" plans are no longer needed, there is still a great need for sectoral planning. During much of the Decade, there was an emphasis by donors on producing plans and very little emphasis on building the capacity to produce those plans. This report describes WASH's experience in assisting an interministerial body, composed of seven ministries and two departments, to develop its own plans for the sector.

The collaborative planning methodology developed over the course of the four years is characterized by clear roles and responsibilities, a step-by-step approach to planning, the linkage of planning to program development and monitoring, and maintaining flexibility of the methodology.

The outcomes of this four year effort were:

- A planning mechanism which has demonstrated its effectiveness and has been integrated into the national rolling capital planning process. Processes established under the Technical Subgroup have been adopted for other planning activities within the water and environmental sectors
- Realistic policies and strategies for development within the sector
- A plan of action as a basis for project design
- Improved organization and coordination within the sector

- Improved coordination and implementation of projects by both the Government of Swaziland and NGOs
- Acceptance and support of policies and strategies by other donors, and buying into and building on implementation plans prepared by the Technical Subgroup

The report concludes with a set of recommendations based on strategies that proved successful in Swaziland but which have applicability in any country. Following are some of the more important recommendations for donors or external support agencies.

- Donor strategies and statements of project purpose should emphasize institutional development in such a way that it is not sacrificed during implementation to the more visible construction of facilities.
- Donors, project design teams, and project staff should be sensitive to the priority of sector development needs and to the timing of support activities. Programs or activities should not be forced but rather should be supported when the need is felt.
- Donor agencies should support a self-reliant national planning process and capability, aiming at establishing an institutional base for planning and plan formulation responsive to nationally identified needs.
- Donors should coordinate their support strategies to ensure consistency of purpose, complementarity of approach, and the avoidance of conflicts.
- Donor agencies should remain flexible and responsive to changing and emerging sectoral needs and priorities.
- Donors should be willing to commit themselves to long-term support or to extend support of sectoral development to permit continuity and establishment of development initiatives.

## Chapter 1

# INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Decade Plans and Decade Planning

One of the major contributions of the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (IDWSSD) has been the development of national plans of action for the water supply and sanitation (WS&S) sectors of the participating nations. Right after the UN Water Conference at Mar del Plata in March 1977 designated the decade of the 1980s as the IDWSSD, the Thirteenth World Health Assembly passed a resolution in May 1977 calling on all its members to appraise the status of their community water supply and sanitation services, formulate policies and plans for achieving Decade objectives, and implement these programs between 1981 and 1990. By the midpoint of the Decade, 72 percent of participating countries reported that they were reviewing, preparing, or had established Decade programs, as compared with 67 percent in 1980. Of greater interest, the percentage of less developed countries (LDCs) with such plans rose from 67 percent to 79 percent during the first half of the Decade.

These figures do not distinguish between countries that developed their own plans and programs and those that had them drawn up by outside consultants. Experience has shown that countries developing their own sectoral plans make greater use of them. Plans developed internally often more closely reflect national experience and an understanding of the problems of the country. The implementing agencies have a greater interest if they have been closely involved in program development, which also is more likely to be in a form useful to the government. All too often, Decade plans produced by outsiders have ended up as neatly bound documents sitting on the shelves in a chief engineer's office.

The experience of the Water and Sanitation for Health (WASH) Project indicates that plans cannot be divorced from the process of planning. If a national sectoral plan is to be of practical value, it has to be a dynamic tool more than a polished document. Plans need to be continually updated and adapted, to be redrawn every few years, and to be based on policies and strategies that have been debated and agreed upon by all the involved parties. Planning may be more important than the plan itself by bringing about a consensus on policies, strategies, and program elements, and generating a document that becomes a tool rather than a mere piece of paper. Implementing agencies, through their involvement in the planning process, improve their institutional capacities to develop plans and to use them effectively.

During the Decade, WASH has assisted three African governments (Central African Republic, 1982-84; Zaire, 1984-85; and Swaziland, 1985-89) in developing plans and improving planning capabilities. This report covers WASH experiences in Swaziland.

## **1.2 Environment of Sectoral Development and WASH Assistance**

Swaziland is a small country with limited human resources, although in many instances, especially at the ministerial level, they are well trained and highly competent. Agencies and ministries draw on a common pool of technical expertise and financial resources, and interagency and interministerial communications and linkages are therefore important. At both the central and regional levels, these tend to be informal, generally based on personal relationships, and for the most part, quite effective. Interministerial coordination at the central level is often achieved more easily than at the regional and local levels.

Until the mid-1970s, the WS&S sector concentrated on development in the urban areas, where about 20 percent of the population lives. In 1974, the Rural Water Supply Branch (RWSB) was established within the Water and Sewerage Board in the Ministry of Works, and in 1979, at the beginning of the IDWSSD, became an autonomous board within that ministry. This was an important step, because the rural subsector, serving the majority of the population, became the focus of development and of the attention of donors. External support during the early years of the Decade was provided primarily by the British Overseas Development Administration (ODA), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and USAID, and was well coordinated. CIDA provided participant and counterpart training for engineers and engineering technologists, and helped to establish the organizational capability to construct and maintain water supplies and an implementation program. ODA provided the major funding for construction of water supplies. USAID, primarily through the Rural Water Borne Disease Control (RWBDC) Project, provided funding and technical assistance to sanitation and support activities within the Ministry of Health (MOH) that included health education, social sciences, and epidemiology. Although it did not provide funds for construction of water supplies, it did fund a public health engineering advisor who was responsible to the MOH but divided his time between the MOH and RWSB.

By 1985, the RWSB was a well-established and competent organization with a well-trained cadre of professionals who initiated and provided leadership for the sectoral planning process. Funding under existing projects was coming to an end. Much had been learned about the design and construction of water supplies, and about the importance of community development, linkage between sanitation services and health education, operation and maintenance, financing, particularly cost recovery at community level, water quality, standards of design and construction, involvement of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and human resource development. The time was right for comprehensive sector planning. It had become clear that planning was required to define policy issues more clearly, to establish priorities, to assign resources, and to coordinate implementation.

USAID had demonstrated its commitment to development in the sector. The RWBDC Project had met emergency needs during a cholera outbreak and following a cyclone, and

had become an integral part of the sectoral institutional base. The project was a vehicle for coordinating the sector-related activities of several government programs.

WASH was known in Swaziland through consultancies in management and community participation connected with the RWBDC Project and through its midproject evaluation, and had established a close relationship with the government, the project, and USAID. These factors contributed to the creation of a favorable environment for WASH assistance to the National Action Group (NAG) of the Government of Swaziland, and in large measure facilitated its success.

### **1.3 Overview of WASH Assistance to the GOS National Action Group**

The request for WASH assistance was initiated by the NAG in November 1984. The NAG was established in April 1979 as an interministerial body responsible for coordinating and planning all project activities in the WS&S sector. It is co-chaired by the principal secretary of the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), formerly the Ministry of Works, and the director of medical services, Ministry of Health (MOH). It is assisted by the MNR's Rural Water Supply Board (RWSB), whose chief engineer is its secretary, and by the technical subgroup (TSG), a working committee established in July 1985 as its action arm, or secretariat.

The first WASH consultancy with the TSG took place from August 29 to September 17, 1985. Two WASH senior staff held three meetings with the TSG to discuss Decade planning and the production of a sectoral plan. WASH's role would be to "serve as advisors" to the NAG and its working subgroup, which would develop the various documents and plans "under the general guidance of the consultants." The consultancy recommended that the sector plan should be in accord with Decade principles and have the general goals of strengthening national institutions, coordinating all sectoral activities, and encouraging greater external donor support. A three-year work plan was formulated, and the TSG agreed to a collaborative arrangement to include the following WASH consultancies at key points in the planning process:

- Formulation of national policies and strategies for water supply and sanitation development
- Presentation of policies and strategies at a national seminar
- Preparation of a short-term action plan

- Preparation of the water and sanitation component of the Fifth Five-Year National Development Plan, 1988/89 - 1992/93

The second consultancy took place from February 10 to 21, 1986. Two WASH consultants reviewed a TSG analysis of experience to date in the sector and policy needs and issues, and helped to produce a first draft of a policies and strategies document. The consultants met with the full TSG on three occasions and worked with two subcommittees the rest of the time. The document was outlined and revised by the full TSG and written entirely by the subcommittees.

The third consultancy took place from June 2 to 13, 1986. One of the previous WASH consultants returned to help the TSG prepare and conduct a three-and-one-half-day national seminar on WS&S policies and strategies, and on how to finalize the policy and strategy document and prepare for the short-term action plan. The TSG prepared a background paper on the policy and strategy document and took care of the logistic arrangements for the seminar. The consultant helped the TSG finalize the seminar plans and trained several TSG members to conduct it. The seminar, from June 9-12, 1986, was attended by 61 participants from the Government of Swaziland, private and nongovernmental organizations, and the donor community.

The fourth consultancy took place from July 14 to 25, 1986. The other consultant from the second assignment returned to help the TSG develop a two-year action plan for the WS&S sector. The TSG prepared for this activity by finalizing the policy and strategy document, incorporating the results of the seminar and some additional data. The consultant met with the entire TSG on three occasions and worked closely with three subcommittees to develop the plan. The TSG first discussed the elements of a short-term action plan and established a work plan, then reviewed the subcommittees' identification of program elements and costs, and finally reviewed the first draft and provided guidance for finalizing it.

The fifth consultancy took place from February 27 to March 10, 1989. Two consultants (one of whom had been on two previous assignments in 1986) helped the TSG complete the last step in the planning cycle. The GOS had changed its national planning system from five-year to three-year revolving capital plans, so the TSG requested assistance in developing a master plan for the period 1989/90 - 1991/92. It also requested help in revising the policies and strategies document prior to drawing up the new plan. The TSG prepared for the consultancy by reviewing the national policy and two-year action plan. The entire group met with the consultants on three occasions and two subcommittees worked with them the rest of the time.

During the two-and-a-half years between the fourth and fifth consultancies, WASH provided consultants to the RWSB and TSG to develop an evaluation system for the rural sector, and to conduct a human resource development assessment and plan for the entire WS&S sector.

Both of these consultancies grew out of needs identified during the overall planning consultancies.

Over the course of four years the TSG produced the following planning documents:

- A collaborative sectoral planning program (9/85)
- Background Papers on Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation in Swaziland—Implementing Agencies, Policy, and Strategy Needs (11/85)
- GOS National Water Supply and Sanitation Policy (2/86, 7/86 & 3/89)
- Background Paper on the Policy (5/86)
- Two-Year Action Plan for the Development of Water Supply and Sanitation in Swaziland (7/86)
- Review and Analysis of the Policy and Two-Year Action Plan (2/89)
- Development of Water Supply and Sanitation in Swaziland—A National Plan for Action, 1989-1992 (3/89)

Three additional consultancies were closely linked to the overall process, although they were not initially planned as a part of it. These were:

- Human Resources Assessment and Plan (8-9/87)
- Information Systems and Evaluation (4/88)
- Case Study of the Planning Process (1/89)

The first two were implemented as elements of the Two-Year Action Plan. The third—and the resulting analysis of lessons learned—which was carried out prior to development of the Three-Year Action Plan for 1989-1992 turned out to be an important prelude to the second phase of planning for the rural subsector.

## **1.4 Rationale for Documentation of WASH Assistance**

The rationale for publishing a case study of sectoral planning capacities in Swaziland is to add to the lessons learned from the IDWSSD. While Decade plans *per se* are no longer needed, there is still a great need for sectoral planning. The WASH experience in assisting an interministerial body to build the capacity to develop its own plans is of great value to that effort. A case study of that experience should provide the following information:

- Descriptions of the objectives and approach of the consultancy
- Descriptions of the setting and of planning activities
- Findings and conclusions drawn from the experience
- Recommendations for future collaborative planning consultancies

## **1.5 Structure of the Report**

The report is organized to provide the information listed above. Chapters 2 and 3 describe the objectives of the consultancy and its approach. Chapter 4 describes the institutional setting in which sectoral planning takes place. Chapters 5-9 provide detailed descriptions of the five consultancies, with an overview of each consultancy, an explanation of the consultative process, a description of the outcomes, and a discussion of the issues that influenced the outcomes. Chapter 10 presents the findings and conclusions drawn from the case study and Chapter 11 summarizes the recommendations for conducting similar collaborative, capacity-building planning consultancies.

## Chapter 2

### OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTANCY

#### 2.1 Development of a Decade Plan

The GOS has been committed to improving its WS&S systems throughout the Decade. At the start of the Decade, it recognized the need for better sectoral planning and greater coordination among government implementing agencies, the private sector, and the donor community. In March 1979, after discussions with the WHO/SIDA Cooperation Project for the Development of Drinking Water and Sanitation Programmes, it established the NAG to

- coordinate and provide general supervision of all sectoral activities, particularly those undertaken under the IDWSSD;
- establish sectoral policy, design parameters, methods of construction and standards of water quality, and approve design plans;
- undertake general planning for the sector, including formulation of targets and service levels;
- develop viable sector strategies and formulate short- and long-term WS&S programs for inclusion in national development plans;
- liaise with UNDP on matters related to the IDWSSD and donor support;
- act as a focal point for the exchange of information among government agencies, and with external support agencies.

Sectoral planning was initiated under the guidance of the NAG through the RWSB. During the first half of the Decade, planning activities included an analysis of projected urban and rural coverage target costs through the year 2001, and development of a draft sectoral plan. This was never a useful document, however, because of uncertainty as to the specific objectives and needs to be addressed, the shape of the policy guidelines, and the most appropriate form of the planning document itself, as well as the most effective way to carry out the planning process.

The impetus to move forward with sectoral planning in 1985 came from several events affecting the rural subsector. External funding for construction was running out, and it was evident that a clear plan identifying external financial requirements for both capital projects and support programs was needed. In addition, the complex inputs required to implement

sustainable projects at community level and throughout the sector had become clear, as had the need for definitive policy guidelines and a comprehensive plan agreed to by all participants in the sector. It was obvious that all this could be achieved only through a sector plan. The need had become urgent in the rural subsector by 1984.

In March 1984, a team from the RWSB and the MOH participated in a review of the **Zambian Decade Plan** and returned with ideas of how the planning process could be carried out in Swaziland. Although the environment of sectoral development differed greatly and the way in which planning was carried out seemed inappropriate to Swaziland, participation in the review provided a look at the process and how it could be applied in Swaziland.

The GOS terms of reference for WASH assistance to the NAG in the preparation of a Decade Plan stated that the "preparation of a revised national water and sanitation policy and plan based upon a sound analysis of the sector is necessary and will require the collaboration of all units of Government involved in the sector. Effective mobilization of resources, both internal and external, and implementation will require the approval and support of all involved units of Government at the Ministerial level." WASH was specifically asked to assist a working committee of the NAG "in the gathering and analysis of background data, in the drafting of a sectoral policy, and the drafting of a recommended plan of action."

Thus, the first objective of the WASH consultancy was to help the working subgroup of the NAG to produce a Decade Plan.

## **2.2 Improving the Institutional Capacity of the NAG**

It was clear from the start that WASH was not being asked to produce a plan but to assist in its production. The RWSB chief engineer and public health engineer had already met with WASH staff in Washington and were familiar with the approach used in Decade planning in the CAR and Zaire. They requested the same collaborative arrangement in the following terms:

The consultants will serve as advisors to the NAG and a working group to be appointed under the NAG consisting of members from Ministries and Agencies which play a role in the water and sanitation sector as well as from the Ministry of Finance.

The working group will prepare a draft sectoral analysis, policy, and plan under the general guidance of the consultants.

The consultants will make an initial visit of two weeks in August or September 1985 to assist in the preparation of a scope of work for the

consultancy and of a work plan for the preparation and approval of the sectoral plan.

The findings of the initial consultancy in 1985 (see WASH Working Paper No. 39 of April 1986) reiterated the need for improving the institutional capacity of GOS bodies responsible for sectoral planning. The consultants found that the planning operations in the sector were weak. A comprehensive sector analysis had yet to be carried out. The 1982 draft plan was limited in scope, focusing mainly on the cost implications of alternative coverage targets. The National Development Plans provided little of the background analysis and detail required of a Decade plan. The consultants noted that although the NAG had the authority to coordinate the planning activities of the various ministries, it had done little in this regard since 1982, when government attention was drawn to more pressing matters. The members of the NAG, being principal secretaries, had a heavy burden of other responsibilities to attend to, which meant that the TSG as its secretariat or action arm needed officials with the capability and authority to carry out its obligations.

The consultants concluded that national planning of sector development was necessary to give overall direction to the sector, coordinate the activities of the various institutions, and encourage greater support from external donors. Such planning would require external assistance to help government officials acquire the necessary skills.

One of the primary purposes of external technical assistance should be the strengthening of the planning capabilities of government so that it can formulate national plans in the best interests of the Swazi people....This assistance should take the form of advice and guidance to a planning committee (technical subgroup) of government officials who will have direct responsibility for the planning process.

Because national planning of water and sanitation in Swaziland is not well established, it will take time to develop the institutional capability to properly coordinate activities in the sector. Therefore, a series of measured steps is proposed to bring governmental institutions to this level. External assistance from the donor community will be needed to support these steps, but the main responsibility for carrying them out and the ultimate success or failure of this process will depend primarily upon the efforts of government.

### **2.3 Encouraging Increased Donor Involvement**

Another objective of the consultancy was to encourage greater donor involvement. During the early 1980s, donors provided 80 percent of the capital investment in the sector which was apportioned among several government bodies and projects. One of the GOS's reasons

for establishing the NAG and embarking on the process of Decade planning was to increase and better coordinate donor involvement in the sector. The introduction to the terms of reference for the consultancy stated that the purpose of Decade planning was to ensure that "development of the sector can proceed in the most effective manner and donor funds can be sought for programs where they will produce the greatest benefits." Accordingly, WASH suggested that the National Seminar be opened to the representatives of bilateral and multi-lateral donors, and, in discussions with these representatives, urged them to increase support for planning, organizational, and programmatic development in the sector.

## **2.4 Sectoral Reorientation and Coordination**

The third objective of the consultancy was to influence, to the degree possible, the reorientation of the sector in accordance with IDWSSD goals and the wishes of the GOS, and to improve coordination within the sector. The consultants were asked to advise the TSG on policy and programmatic issues during the course of the five assignments. They raised questions about periurban coverage, the role of rural communities in project development, the linkage of water supply to sanitation and health education, and the recurrent costs of maintaining existing systems. Through their contacts with the TSG and senior officials of the agencies represented on the NAG, they sought to improve sectoral coordination.

## Chapter 3

# COLLABORATIVE PLANNING METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Guiding Principles—The WASH Approach to Consulting

Over the years, WASH has developed certain guiding principles in its approach to consulting, adapting them where necessary to meet the needs of a particular client or situation. They are listed below and in this chapter as background to the collaborative planning methodology used during the consultancy:

- Teamwork
- Continuity
- Assessment
- Joint decision-making
- Delegation
- Responsibility/ownership
- Institutions and individuals
- Directive/collaborative/facilitative flexibility
- Joint review and evaluation

#### 3.1.1 Teamwork

Most WASH assignments are performed by multidisciplinary teams of consultants that bring together people with complementary backgrounds and skills. The interactions among members of a well-led team have a synergistic effect on its work. Teamwork and the role of the team leader, therefore, are important topics for discussion during the Team Planning Meetings (TPMs) which precede all WASH assignments. This emphasis on teamwork carries over to the field. Whenever possible and appropriate, WASH consultants create a broader team by including their primary clients. They will often go over the planning activities from the TPM with them and get their concurrence on the scope of work, proposed outcomes of the assignment, contents of the final report, and work plan for the consultancy. Assignments with capacity-building objectives will often include the client's accepting responsibility for parts of a collaborative work plan. Action-training, or the accomplishing of learning objectives for client team members in the course of an assignment, is often built into the approach to the consultancy and becomes one of the intended outcomes.

### **3.1.2 Continuity**

WASH makes every attempt to assign the same consultants to multiple-assignment consultancies. This provides continuity and improves the chances for a successful outcome. The effective working relationships that develop over the course of an assignment are as important as the knowledge of local issues. Knowledge can be communicated by one consultant to another through trip reports and TPM briefings, but a beneficial interpersonal relationship between consultant and client cannot. The need for continuity is greater when the consultancy contains capacity-building objectives and is primarily collaborative or facilitative in nature.

### **3.1.3 Assessment**

All WASH consultancies are based upon a careful assessment of several factors. WASH staff assess the initial request for assistance, and, if it is approved, draw up a clear statement of work. The consultants brought in to perform the assignment review the SOW and define its purpose and objectives in their own words. They also assess the stakes of all the clients involved in the assignment and identify any issues which might influence its outcome. Once in the field, this process of assessment continues in collaboration with the clients. Assessments completed during the TPM are reworked with the clients to include any new information they may provide or to comply with their perception of the purpose of the consultancy. WASH consultants share their findings with the clients and invite feedback before they draw any conclusions. In like manner, they share their conclusions before proposing any recommendations. Thus, the clients have had an opportunity to assess and discuss the consultants' findings, conclusions, and recommendations before they are ever drafted into a report. Finally, the first draft of the report is assessed by the client and modified if needed before it is finalized.

### **3.1.4 Joint Decision-making**

WASH provides technical assistance to institutions in the WS&S sector. Most of its activities are in response to requests from USAID missions, and most of its clients are the missions themselves and the governmental and nongovernmental organizations they support. One aspect of its collaborative approach to consulting is its insistence on joint decision-making, based on the experience that clients make better use of advice and training when they are permitted to define the purpose of the consultancy and share in decisions regarding methodology, staffing, and intended outcomes. WASH involves the client in this process from the first contacts. Requests for WASH assistance usually grow out of prior discussions. The scope of work is determined jointly by the WASH activity manager and the client. Staffing must be approved by the mission. The consultants refine the SOW during the TPM and discuss their understanding of it with the client at their initial meeting. They also reach a

consensus on their objectives, report outline, and work plan before starting work. If the consultancy permits the inclusion of clients in the team, they become full decision-making members. As previously mentioned, all findings, conclusions, and recommendations are discussed with the client before being written up and presented.

### **3.1.5 Delegation**

Whenever possible and appropriate, WASH consultants try to bring clients into the team. This is critical when institution- and capacity-building objectives are a part of the SOW, or when there is an opportunity for skills transfer between consultant and client. In such cases, consultants will delegate responsibility for the accomplishment of specific objectives to the client. These objectives may be producing background reports prior to the start of the consultancy, sharing in gathering data, discussing and analyzing findings, drawing conclusions, helping to make recommendations, and even writing sections of the draft report. In training assignments, clients are often expected to co-train with WASH trainers or provide technical resource materials to the training. The degree of delegation depends on the nature of the assignment and the willingness of the client.

### **3.1.6 Responsibility/Ownership**

The purpose of joint decision-making and delegation, in addition to improving the products and outcomes of the assignment, is to increase the client's responsibility for the consultancy and the sense of ownership of its outcomes. Most WASH assignments are short-term interventions. The responsibility for making effective use of the outcomes in an ongoing program rests with the mission or implementing agency. A client's ability and willingness to make the most of a short-term consultancy is directly related to the degree of involvement in it and satisfaction with its outcomes. When institution-building and skill-sharing are part of the assignment, success is conditioned by the client's readiness to accept assigned responsibilities. Institutional capacity-building, like individual skill development, is an active rather than a passive process.

### **3.1.7 Institutions and Individuals**

Consultants tend to regard the client as the person or group of people with whom they are working. But the client is in fact the institution whom these individuals represent. WASH emphasizes that its consultancies are directed at both institutions and individuals. The first task required of a consulting team after the TPM briefing is to make a list of all the organizations directly or indirectly involved in the assignment, and the key contacts in those organizations. Without an institutional perspective, a consultant can get overly involved with the people with whom he or she is working and lose sight of the institution they represent. Given the frequency of personnel reassignments, study leaves, and losses to the private sector, consultancies must be as mindful of the institution as of the individuals working for it.

### **3.1.8 Directive/Collaborative/Facilitative Flexibility**

Different assignments require different approaches to working with clients. This may be true even within an assignment. WASH categorizes consultant approaches on a continuum from directive, through collaborative, to facilitative. A directive approach would be providing technical advice or solving a problem. A collaborative approach would be making joint decisions, planning a program, or assessing a project with the client. Consultants may also be called upon merely to facilitate the work of a client when their expertise is not needed as much as their ability to help a group do its own work more effectively. WASH stresses to its consultants that they must be able to use all three approaches and the gradations between them as required.

### **3.1.9 Joint Review and Evaluation**

The final guiding principle in WASH's approach to consulting is the joint review and evaluation of the performance and outcomes of the consultancy. This review and evaluation is conducted by the consultant team, the client, the WASH staff, and the Cognizant Technical Officer for the WASH Project from the Health Office of the Science and Technology Bureau of A.I.D. In the field, this review and evaluation occurs informally during team and client meetings, and formally during final debriefings, written evaluations, and reviews of draft reports. The more often informal review and evaluation occurs between consultant and client, the better the outcome of the consultancy and the less likely that final reviews and evaluations will uncover dissatisfaction. Reviews and evaluations also occur in Washington during regular meetings between the WASH staff and S&T/H personnel, briefings at the end of each TPM, and debriefings at the end of the assignment. All reports are reviewed in the field and in Washington before being finalized.

## **3.2 Key Factors Affecting the Development of a Collaborative Methodology**

Collaborative consulting methodologies, by definition, develop out of the relationship between consultant and client. Once that relationship is established, the two parties may be able to plan the methodology before the start of subsequent consultancies, but the methodology is rarely imposed on an a priori basis before the start of the initial consultancy. The collaborative planning methodology used in the five consultancies undertaken by WASH and the NAG/TSG grew out of the relationship between the two groups before and during the initial consultancy and was continually refined during the subsequent ones. The methodology was consistent with the WASH approach to consulting described above and was formulated to accomplish the objectives set for the consultancy by both parties. It also took into consideration several indigenous factors specific to the situation and needs of the client.

The key factors which affected the development of the methodology were:

- Status of the NAG
- Status of the TSG
- Role of the RWSB
- Roles of expatriate advisors
- Organizational concerns
- Programmatic concerns
- Budgetary concerns

### **3.2.1 Status of the NAG**

Although the NAG is the official GOS body authorized to develop policies and plans for the sector and therefore WASH's primary client, it has not acted in that capacity during the entire consultancy. The NAG has not formally met since 1982, and its planning responsibility has been delegated to the TSG since July 1985. WASH consultants therefore have worked almost entirely with the TSG, meeting with the principal secretaries of MNR and MOH only as a courtesy and to keep them informed of progress. The NAG has also been kept informed of the TSG's work by its chairman, the secretary to the NAG, and by the senior representatives from the ministries. Although the NAG has not formally met to approve the policy document and action plans and pass the former on to the Cabinet for official GOS approval, the Department of Economic Planning has always participated in the activities of the TSG and these documents have been used by the implementing agencies in the sector to guide their programs, coordinate their efforts, and secure donor support.

### **3.2.2 Status of the TSG**

Since its creation by memorandum of the chairman of the NAG on July 31, 1985, the TSG has carried out sectoral program planning and coordination for the NAG. When it first met with WASH consultants in September 1985, it was not even a month old. Its membership was not stable until 1986. In the matter of experience, a few of the members had planning backgrounds, almost none in sectoral planning, and none had experience in the level of interministerial coordination required of the TSG. The methodology developed step by step during the consultancy was sensitive to the inadequacies and the short working history of the group. As the capabilities of the TSG have grown, it has taken on some of the leadership and initiating roles played by the RWSB in the initial phases of the consultancy.

### **3.2.3 Role of the RWSB**

The Rural Water Supply Board has played a predominant role in sectoral planning. Created out of the Rural Water Supply Program in 1979 along with the NAG, it was given the authority to plan and coordinate WS&S efforts and act as the secretariat for the NAG in the rural sector. Of greater importance has been its leadership.

It is headed by a senior engineer, Napoleon Ntezinde, who has worked closely with Dr. A. W. Hoadley, chief-of-party of the RWBDC Project and public health engineering advisor assigned to both the MOH and the RWSB. Dr. Hoadley was involved in all aspects of sector development in both ministries and liaised with other agencies working in the sector. Mr. Ntezinde and Dr. Hoadley initiated resumption of Decade planning, approached WASH, wrote the terms of reference for the WASH consultancies, recommended creation of the TSG, and have provided leadership throughout the consultancies.

The RWSB has benefited from a program of staff development over the last decade and now has a cadre of professionals capable of planning and coordinating WS&S programs. WASH consultants have worked informally with senior staff, checked findings and recommendations with them, liaised with them between consultancies, and in general accepted their leadership of the planning process.

### **3.2.4 Roles of Expatriate Advisors**

A shortage of civil engineers and medical professionals in the country, aggravated by the difficulty of retaining trained government personnel attracted by employment opportunities in the private sector and in neighboring countries, has required the assignment of long-term expatriate advisors to senior technical positions in the GOS. Of the sixteen individuals who attended the TSG meetings during the second consultancy, for example, two were from Britain, and one each from the U.S., Sri Lanka, Tanzania, and South Africa. Of the six

members of the two drafting subcommittees, four were expatriates. Much of the early turnover on the TSG was due to the expiration of these advisors' contracts and influenced WASH's approach to working with the TSG and RWSB.

### **3.2.5 Organizational Concerns**

Several organizational concerns influenced the development of the methodology. As mentioned above, the RWSB had taken the initiative in restarting sectoral planning and has provided effective leadership. With WASH, it has insisted that all sectoral planning for the NAG be done by the TSG, with whose members the consultancies have worked for the most part. But the TSG is not a standing body. Between meetings, its members return to their respective agencies, and sector coordination falls back on the shoulders of the RWSB. The methodology has also been influenced by the fact that the NAG has taken no part in planning and has never forwarded the policy document to the Cabinet for official enactment, and by the unequal interest and institutional capacity of the several GOS agencies represented on the NAG and TSG.

### **3.2.6 Programmatic Concerns**

The pressing need for WS&S systems in periurban areas, coupled with unclear institutional responsibility for this subsector, has influenced the structuring of documents and TSG working subcommittees. WASH consultants have had to consider the linkage of water supply with sanitation and hygiene education when working with the MOH health inspectorate and town council health inspectors. In discussions with the TSG, their concerns have been with system operation and maintenance, the high recurrent cost to government of system repairs, and constraints on promoting community participation.

### **3.2.7 Budgetary Concerns**

The planning and budgetary cycles of the GOS have strongly influenced the planning process and the role of WASH consultants in it, affecting the timing of planning events and the format of the action plans. Since one of the objectives of the planning process was to improve donor involvement in the sector, keeping the donor community informed and interested in the development of sectoral plans also influenced the methodology of the consultants. Finally, the consultants helped the GOS acquire the fiscal and human resources for sectoral planning, the cost of which it could not have borne alone.

### **3.3 Key Elements of the Collaborative Planning Methodology**

The collaborative planning methodology developed over the course of the consultancy can best be described by the key elements that were identified when it was over:

- Authorized direction and timing of the plan
- Roles and responsibilities of the TSG and WASH
- Step-by-step approach to planning
- Linkage of planning to program development and monitoring
- Balancing capacity-building outcomes and planning products
- Use of informal consultations or behind-the-scene consulting
- Maintaining the flexibility of the methodology

#### **3.3.1 Authorized Direction and Timing of the Plan**

The NAG was created as an interministerial coordinating body and delegated its planning responsibility to the TSG. The TSG, as the authorized GOS institution responsible for Decade planning, has been WASH's collaborator and primary client throughout the consultancy. While Decade planning was driven by the IDWSSD goals, sectoral planning was influenced by other factors. Serious planning was repeatedly postponed despite strong pressure from international bodies, particularly during the first two years of the Decade. The building of institutions and training of staff to meet immediate needs were given priority. Between late 1981 and mid 1984, an outbreak of cholera, the death of the King of Swaziland, a governmental reorganization, a disastrous cyclone, and the departure of some influential members had a serious impact on the functioning of the NAG. The August 1984 RWSB proposal to the NAG to set up a technical working group was a response to these conditions and to two other important changes: the RWSB's newly minted cadre of trained personnel capable of initiating and following through on sectoral planning activities; and its completion of the first phase of system construction, an operational program it could assess. The RWSB felt strongly that attempts to develop a Decade plan any earlier would have been seriously constrained by its lack of professional staff and field experience, a judgment borne out by the good use the TSG has made of its analysis of current programs in developing the various parts of the plan. The collaborative methodology could work only when an authorized body was prepared to embark on sectoral planning with technical assistance from WASH.

### **3.3.2 Roles and Responsibilities of the TSG and WASH**

It was always clearly understood that the TSG would be responsible for developing the plan and for decision-making, with the WASH consultants in a purely advisory role. As the consultancy developed, the TSG took on greater and greater responsibility for producing the various background papers and planning documents and for running its own meetings. The WASH consultants adapted to this situation. For example, during the initial consultancy, they were asked by the TSG after two discussions to develop a draft planning program. In the second consultancy, they helped write sections of the draft policy and strategies document and edited other sections. In the two action planning consultancies, they merely advised the drafting subcommittees. The role of the consultants at the formal TSG meetings also changed over the course of the consultancy from providing advice on how to plan and raising questions about sectoral issues to facilitating discussions and finally listening to the deliberations of an independent body. The consultants also briefed GOS and donor community representatives on the work of the TSG and urged continued support of their planning and programming efforts. They also briefed each other and helped new consultants plan for upcoming assignments.

### **3.3.3 Step-by-Step Approach to Planning**

WASH staff proposed a step-by-step approach to planning during the initial consultancy on the basis of experience in the CAR and Zaire and discussions with members of the RWSB and TSG. The program was designed to coordinate sectoral planning with GOS planning and budget cycles and to respond to changes in those cycles. This incremental approach recognized the institutional development objectives of the consultancy, the inexperience of the TSG as a working group in 1985, and the inadequate planning experience of most of its members. The approach provided enough time between short-term consultancies for the TSG to finalize the documents drafted with the consultants' help and to prepare for the next step in the planning process. The TSG took on extensive preparatory tasks before each consultancy so as to get the most out of the consultants' time in Swaziland. This enabled the consultants to complete their work in 12 days, controlling costs and making the full package more attractive to the donor. It also gave the TSG and its subcommittees a clear understanding of needs and issues before the consultants arrived, and the experience of working together to promote a sense of responsibility for the process and its products.

### **3.3.4 Linkage of Planning to Program Development and Monitoring**

The planning methodology stressed the linkage of planning to program development and monitoring. The background papers on policy and strategy written in preparation for the second consultancy were based on analyses of sector programs through 1985. The policies, strategies, and program elements of the two-year action plan were all reviewed in light of

program developments through 1988 when preparing for the three-year master plan. Planning cannot be done in a vacuum. It must be based on program assessments if it is to have any relation to operational realities. One of the reasons for the May 1987 consultancy to develop evaluation systems for the rural subsector was to provide the database for an accurate master plan in 1989. The need for improved systems came to light in 1986 during the development of the two-year action plan. Programmatic feedback improved the revisions of the policy document and the development of the program elements of the three-year action plan.

### **3.3.5 Balancing Capacity-Building Outcomes and Planning Products**

The methodology sought to balance the production of specific planning products and quantifiable capacity-building outcomes. The incremental approach to planning permitted each consultancy to set specific capacity-building objectives along with the planning product or seminar objectives. As the consultancy progressed, the consultants were able to spend more time facilitating the work of the TSG rather than doing tasks for or with it. This facilitation took the form of posing questions instead of making direct comments; turning questions back to the group; leading brainstorming, problem-solving, or other information generating exercises; orienting group discussions; and delegating tasks to TSG members. Although the consultancy schedules were tight and everyone worked long hours, there was always time to step back from the task at hand to discuss how the work was going and why it was being done in a certain way. The GOS has kept TSG membership fairly stable since 1986, appointing new members only to replace people posted to other government positions or expatriate advisors whose contracts have expired. WASH has tried to use the same consultants throughout, or, when that has proved impossible, to recruit specialists with good facilitative skills. The easy relationship between consultant and client contributed greatly to the accomplishment of the institutional development objectives.

### **3.3.6 Use of Informal Consultations**

All consultancies have formal and informal aspects. For example, the success of a formal meeting with a group of clients may result from a dinner with one or two of them the night before. Such informal consulting was an important part of the collaborative planning methodology that evolved during the consultancy. The consultants developed close working relationships with several of the key members of the TSG and RWSB and made use of the leadership provided by the RWSB senior engineer. They met with him at the start of each consultancy to clarify the objectives of the activity, discuss their respective roles, and review their work plan. These informal briefings and discussions continued throughout each consultancy. They often met before each formal meeting of the TSG which was usually

chaired by the senior engineer. Dr. Hoadley helped through his close personal and working relationships with the key figures, provided space and secretarial support in his office at the RWSB, and hosted social gatherings at his home where the consultants could get to know their clients better. TSG members accompanied the consultants to meetings with GOS and donor representatives and on trips outside Mbabane, providing additional opportunities for informal discussions.

### **3.3.7 Maintaining Flexibility of the Methodology**

The collaborative methodology had no formal status nor was it ever explicitly referred to in the terms of reference written by the TSG. It was accepted informally by WASH and the TSG, built into the plans for each consultancy, and recognized as the working norm for the two parties. The fact that it was never codified made it flexible and adaptable to each situation. The trust and mutual respect it generated were the underpinning of a sound working relationship over the years. As new people became involved, they learned how things were being done from those who were there before them.



along with the NAG, for which it develops policies and strategies for rural WS&S activities. During the first half of the Decade, the RWSB concentrated on developing its institutional capabilities by recruiting and training qualified Swazi engineers and actively assessing the work it had begun in the rural areas. These institutional and program developments laid the groundwork for the sectoral planning efforts and expanded construction programs of the second half of the Decade.

The RWSB has been very effective at getting donor support for its programs. Capital construction has been funded primarily by American, British, and Canadian bilateral assistance, and by the European Economic Community and the United Nations Emergency Operations Trust Fund (UNEOTF). The Canadians, Americans, and British have also assisted in the institutional development of the RWSB through extensive staff training and technical assistance.

In response to acute public health problems following a cholera outbreak in 1984, the RWSB has provided intermediate technologies such as standpipes and springbox systems to periurban areas in coordination with extensions of urban systems built by the Water and Sewerage Board. The RWSB is not responsible for sanitation, which is handled by the MOH health inspectors, who worked initially with local community health and/or development committees but now primarily with combined community water and sanitation committees. Water supply and sanitation are coordinated at the regional level by RWSB community development officers and MCH staff working together on district teams.

*b. Water and Sewerage Board (WSB)*

The Water and Sewerage Board (WSB) is responsible for the operation and maintenance of water and sewage treatment facilities in 18 designated towns. It is also responsible for the distribution and collection lines within the communities and for connections and minor extensions. Reticulated water supply systems in the towns are available to approximately 80 percent of the total urban population of about 102,000 people, and sewage collection to approximately 18 percent. The rest use septic tanks whose contents are emptied at regular intervals and treated in the town's wastewater treatment plant. The coverage by sewerage systems has not increased at the same rate as the water systems because of the difficulty of convincing households with septic tanks to connect to the new system. All the sewerage systems are underused. The retirement of the capital cost for them is serviced by the government.

The work of the WSB is coordinated with that of the housing branch of MNR and the Ministry of Interior, which is responsible for planning and building new systems and major extension of services in undeveloped urban areas. The Ministry of Interior, through the township engineers, specifies the project. A consultant designs the system using WSB design criteria, and a contractor constructs it according to WSB standards.

Quality control of drinking water is handled cooperatively among the town councils, the WSB, and the MOH. Sampling and analysis are performed by the town councils through their laboratory facilities. Results of these analyses are shared with the WSB and the MOH.

c. *Water Resources Branch (WRB)*

The WRB is responsible for the determination, apportionment, and control of surface water resources, internally and internationally. Its major activities have included constructing dams, building border gauging stations to collect and monitor water flow data, establishing a water pollution laboratory, purchasing meteorologic and hydrologic equipment, and carrying out water resource studies. The WRB provides information and advice to the Water Apportionment Board and the Joint Permanent Committee on Water Resources.

d. *Department of Geological Surveys and Mines*

The department's groundwater development unit was established in 1974 to undertake hydrogeological investigation and well-drilling. This unit works with the RWSB to site boreholes and to operate drill rigs for rural domestic water supply.

In 1986, CIDA supplied two rotary drilling rigs, maintenance support, trained crews, and supplies to drill more than 200 test holes in the lowveld. These test wells will serve as data banks for hydrogeological maps and in determining recharge rates. Where possible, they will be used for domestic drinking water.

e. *Housing Branch*

The housing branch of the MNR was established in 1979 to develop and implement a national housing policy. It concentrates on providing shelter and services for low-income families. The squatter problem dominates the housing and urban services sectors, specifically as it relates to health and sanitation. In 1983, the housing backlog (temporary structures in the urban areas) was approximately 12,000 units and it is increasing at a rate of 460 annually. These are conservative estimates based upon a 4.6 percent urbanization rate derived from census data, where actual measured rates in Nkwalini-Mahwalala were 21.9 percent annually between 1976 and 1983.

#### **4.1.3 Ministry of Interior and Immigration**

a. *Township Administration Department*

The township administration department is responsible for developing, constructing, and maintaining municipal engineering infrastructures in small urban communities. Its responsibilities related to water and sanitation are to upgrade squatter areas, sanitary

conditions, and potable water in the nine townships of Swaziland. National priorities call for upgrading squatter areas in Nhlanguano and Pigg's Peak, upgrading the infrastructure in Vuvulani Township, and introducing sewerage systems in Hlatikulu, Nhlanguano, and Siteki. Once these systems are built, they will be turned over to the Water and Sewerage Board.

*b. Town Councils*

The town councils are semiautonomous statutory bodies responsible for administering defined planned areas where the land has been subdivided into plots with roads and water and sewerage services for which they recover user charges. The townships engineering branch is responsible for planning, designing, and constructing municipal infrastructures (see 4.1.2 b for relationship to WSB). It also develops and enforces building regulations.

The undeveloped areas with mostly substandard housing within a township's gazetted borders have often been referred to as periurban areas. This is confusing because it refers to areas of substandard housing recently brought within town boundaries and developed areas outside the towns, such as the Ezulwini area between Mbabane and Manzini. The areas of substandard housing within the towns are marked by poor infrastructure investment and lower health and sanitation conditions due to lack of available clean drinking water and sanitation facilities.

The town councils are responsible for sanitation within the urban areas. Health inspectors attached to the town councils oversee septic tank siting, public toilet issues, and pit-latrines construction and use. In substandard housing areas responsibility is shared with township committees.

**4.1.4 Ministry of Health**

The Ministry of Health is responsible for promoting and constructing low-cost sanitation facilities in the rural areas and, through the town councils, in the urban areas. It also assists rural communities with small spring protections, about 20 of which are constructed each year. Latrine construction in the rural areas has increased markedly during the Decade. Community surveys in 1981, 1985, and 1988 show an increase in latrine use from 21.9 percent in 1981 to 39.4 percent in 1985 and 46.1 percent in 1988.

The MOH has trained field workers in community development and health education to increase the effectiveness of these programs and has prepared health education materials for field workers and clinic staff. Bilateral funding has paid for planning and producing mass media campaigns.

#### **4.1.5 Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives**

The Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MOAC) has been involved in rural water supply through its Rural Development Area (RDA) Program. During the second phase of the RDA Program, the construction of domestic water supply systems became an important element. Communities requesting these systems and demonstrating a capacity for community participation were given priority. These systems ranged from gravity-fed to borewell diesel and electric pump macro systems and generally supplied both local communities and governmental institutions (RDA project centers and schools). RDA has encountered maintenance problems and many systems are no longer operating. As a result, the MOAC no longer constructs water systems but instead implements its projects through the RWSB.

The land use planning section (LUPS) of the Ministry is responsible for carrying out environmental, land capability, and soil surveys throughout the country and for designing and constructing small irrigation dams. LUPS was moved from the MNR to MOAC in 1987. LUPS is coordinating its irrigation dam construction efforts with the RWSB and the MOH and attempting to integrate domestic water supply, sanitation, and other environmental and primary health care activities into these projects.

#### **4.1.6 Ministry of Education**

The WS&S facilities of more than 50 percent of the rural schools in Swaziland have been directly contracted and paid for by the Ministry of Education. The rest are being assisted by the RWSB.

#### **4.1.7 Department of Economic Planning and Statistics**

The department of economic planning and statistics is responsible for coordinating all national and sectoral planning and for preparing the National Development Plans. In addition, it has primary responsibility for liaison with the donor community and serves as the official government channel through which requests for foreign assistance are sent. The principal secretary of the department is a member of the NAG, and an assistant planning officer is a member of the TSG.

#### **4.1.8 Ministry of Finance**

The Ministry of Finance is responsible for advising government on all fiscal matters and ensuring that annual estimates and appropriation drafts are prepared. In addition, it prepares and monitors consolidated budgets and is responsible for all policy, legislation, and

administrative direction of a number of departments, including Treasury and parastatal financial institutions.

## **4.2 Bilateral Institutions**

### **4.2.1 USAID**

From 1980 to 1989, the USAID-financed Rural Water Borne Disease Control Project provided technical assistance to the MOH and the RWSB in five areas: public health engineering, social science/anthropology, health education, epidemiology, and sanitation. It financed the construction and equipping of a schistosomiasis laboratory and health education center and supported participant and in-country training, development of health education materials, and latrine construction. The project was able to adapt itself to changing priorities and apply its resources where they were most needed and could be used most effectively. It was also extended several times to permit the completion of important activities. This led to full integration of project-supported activities into national sectoral development.

In early 1986, with the end of the final extension of the agreement between USAID and the contractor only nine months away, two important initiatives were implemented. The first was the planning, design, and construction of six water supply systems, one of which was a failed system constructed under another ministry some six years earlier which had to be rehabilitated. This posed severe community development problems over and above those which normally precede and accompany implementation. The systems were completed with extraordinary speed and tested the capacities of the RWSB, the health inspectorate, and the target communities, as well as the concept of integrated sectoral development which was the goal of the government and of project support.

The second was the sectoral planning initiative, which was assisted by the RWBDC and WASH projects and led to the drafting of a sound plan for the next two years of the Decade. It was completed within an extremely demanding time frame dictated by the government planning cycle, and took full advantage of the resources of the RWBDC Project which was approaching its completion date.

In October 1986, USAID obtained funding for a three-year extension of the project embodying the policies and proposals of the Two-Year Action Plan. The extension provided funds for the construction of rural water supply systems and latrines, community development activities, training, and continuation of sectoral planning.

In addition to the support to the sector provided through the RWBDC Project following the devastation of Cyclone Domoina in 1984, USAID assisted the RWSB in reconstructing nine clinic/community water systems through the Rural Clinic Reconstruction project. Extensive

short-term technical assistance has been provided through WASH. All support under these projects has been linked to the core RWBDC Project.

#### **4.2.2 Peace Corps**

Peace Corps volunteers are working in water/sanitation related activities in the Ministries of Agriculture, Interior, Natural Resources, Education, and Geological Survey and Mines. PCVs assigned to the RDA have built simple low-cost roof catchment systems and simple spring protections. They have assisted local communities with financial support from the Peace Corps/USAID Small Project Assistance Fund and U.S. Embassy Self-Help Fund.

#### **4.2.3 British High Commission: Overseas Development Administration**

Since 1979, ODA has provided support for rural water supplies in over 130 Swazi communities. These have been mainly large reticulated systems from boreholes and smaller spring protections. The first two phases (1979-1984) constructed systems in 97 communities. The third phase (1985-1987) emphasized seven macro projects and 26 smaller spring protection micro-projects serving 19,000 people. The remaining support from ODA has been in the area of manpower development. The assistance has been provided in conjunction with training support by CIDA.

#### **4.2.4 Canadian International Development Agency**

CIDA assistance has been in human resource development. It has provided 10 scholarships for engineering degrees and engineering technology diplomas at Canadian universities and several staff for the Swazi College of Technology and substitutes for water sector staff away on study leave. This assistance has been provided in collaboration with ODA since 1976. In September 1985, the staff was reduced to three: a faculty member at the Swaziland College of Technology (SCOT), a senior Clerk of Works, and an engineer with RWSB. In 1988 this project was renewed with provision for the training of Swazi staff in Canada and their subsequent apprenticeship with Canadian staff at SCOT. In 1986 CIDA started a program with the Department of Geological Surveys and Mine's groundwater development unit to drill 200+ test boreholes in the lowveld (see 4.1.2 d above).

## **4.3 Multilateral Organizations**

### **4.3.1 United Nations Development Programme**

UNDP is responsible for coordinating the Decade-related activities of all UN organizations in the country. It has no water and sanitation programs of its own. UNDP coordinated a grant from the U.N. Emergency Operations Trust Fund in 1986 for a two-year project within the RWSB that provided for the procurement of a large drilling rig and assisted in constructing 45 boreholes with handpumps, several large piped water supply systems, and five or six protected springs. In 1989 it coordinated planning for another RWSB project financed by Dutch bilateral assistance that will incorporate the principles in the policy document revised in 1989 and will buy into the Three-Year Action Plan drafted in the same year. The UNDP resident representative has convened several ad hoc meetings of the main donors in the water and sanitation sector, providing a valuable forum for coordinating external assistance.

### **4.3.2 UNICEF**

UNICEF operates a relatively small office in Swaziland, with program emphasis in sectors other than water and sanitation. In the past (1976-1981), UNICEF participated with the U.N. Environmental Program (UNEP) in a major Integrated Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Demonstration pilot project. Although no major UNICEF water and sanitation projects are anticipated, it has plans for a small public health communication program in periurban areas and could be of assistance in procuring information on the UNICEF-developed India Mark II handpump.

### **4.3.3 European Economic Community**

The EEC has been supporting rural water supply development in Swaziland since 1983. The first two phases of the program ran through 1988. A third phase was started in 1989. In the past, large reticulated systems were designed by consultants and built by private contractors with the coordination of the RWSB, which then became responsible for their maintenance and repair. The new phase of the program, while continuing to utilize consultants and contractors, will work more directly through the RWSB and under its supervision and provide funding for coordinated sanitation and community participation in keeping with sectoral policies and the current Three-Year Action Plan.

#### **4.4 Nongovernmental Organizations**

NGOs have been involved in the water and sanitation sector in Swaziland for a number of years. Among these are the Baphalali Swaziland Red Cross Society, the Council of Swaziland Churches, Emanti Esive, the Mennonite Central Committee, the International Volunteer Service, the Conference of Churches, and the Unitarian Service Committee of Canada. An NGO representative sits on the TSG. Working with the RWSB and the MOH, NGOs have mobilized communities to protect springs and construct small water systems. Their programs, built into both action plans, have been funded by USAID under a tripartite agreement and have contributed to significant improvement in community involvement and operation and maintenance.

#### **4.5 Special Issues**

The structure and organization of the sector are complex, as they are in many countries, with planning, implementation, and support functions distributed among several agencies with their own interests and priorities. Conflicts arise and, especially in urban areas, responsibilities overlap or are not clear. In periurban areas, sectoral responsibilities are not well defined, and activities depend upon development. In the rural subsector, responsibilities are clear, but closely interdependent activities are segmented in different agencies and ministries. The assignment of a health inspector to the RWSB has greatly enhanced coordination, however. In addition, because the pool of professionals in the country is small, staff at both the central and field levels know each other or have common ties, which facilitates interaction. Communication is generally informal. Working relationships are well established and conducive to the formation of effective interministerial committees.

Donor institutions, like the agencies with which they work, have their own priorities, interests, and agendas. Their influence can be dominant, and conflicts or poor coordination among them can spread confusion throughout the sector. The three principal donors in the rural subsector over the Decade have worked well together, and their cooperation has brought immense benefit to institutional development.

Two other factors that have influenced development in the rural subsector are collaboration among donors, project staffs, and the government, and the commitment of the donors. Noteworthy illustrations of donor commitment are CIDA's continued support of training at SCOT and of groundwater exploration in the lowveld, and USAID's extension of the RWBDC Project, accepting and buying into the Two-Year Action plan as an expression of its support for the government's planning and development endeavors.

## Chapter 5

### INITIAL WASH CONSULTANCY: SEPTEMBER 1985

#### 5.1 Introduction

The first WASH consultancy took place from August 29 to September 17, 1985. WASH staff members Dennis Warner and Craig Hafner held three meetings to discuss Decade planning and a plan for the sector. The proposal they prepared became the basis of the four subsequent WASH consultancies.

#### 5.2 Consultative Process

The first move for WASH assistance was made by the GOS in November 1984 and was followed by several discussions of what the TSG would require to complete a sectoral plan for the NAG in early 1985. The official request by the Ministry of Health to USAID in May 1985 stated that the WASH consultants would "serve as advisors" to the NAG and its working group which would prepare a draft sectoral analysis, policy, and plan "under (their) general guidance."

#### 5.3 Outcomes

The major outcome of the first consultancy was the adoption of a planning program and the sequence of activities to accomplish it, and the definition of the terms of reference for the participating parties. This program was the basis of the GOS request to USAID for WASH assistance in the development of a national sectoral plan. It was clearly understood from the outset that the working group of senior GOS technicians and long-term expatriate advisors would be responsible for producing all policy and planning documents and running activities such as the national seminar, and that the WASH consultants would merely provide guidance.

#### 5.4 Special Issues

A special circumstance that WASH had to contend with was the shortage of Swazi civil engineers, many of whom work in the private sector. As a result, the ministries and departments represented on the TSG depend on a high proportion of full-time expatriate technical advisors. The planning expertise and experience of both Swazi and expatriate advisors were limited. Another factor was that the TSG was very new. It had met for the first time a month before the WASH consultants arrived. There was a considerable turnover

In the early stages, but as the group became more cohesive and showed an ability and willingness to take on more responsibility, the consultative process became more collaborative.

Mitigating influences were that Swaziland is a small homogeneous nation, and that a core group from the RWSB provided a catalytic role in the TSG. Most government officials are familiar with national programs and problems, which made it easier for TSG members to understand the policy and planning needs of the entire sector. The role played by a core group of RWSB staff was equally important.

## **Chapter 6**

### **POLICY AND STRATEGY DOCUMENT DEVELOPMENT: FEBRUARY 1986**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

The second consultancy took place from February 10 to 21, 1986. WASH consultants Robert Gearheart and David Yohalem helped the TSG to develop a national water supply and sanitation policy and strategy document for the NAG.

#### **6.2 Consultative Process**

Although the overall approach was collaborative, the consultants offered advice when requested. They provided information on the planning process and the importance of a policy and strategies document; helped the TSG to identify major policy issues; and participated in open discussions of the best approach to writing the first draft of the document.

#### **6.3 Outcomes**

The major product of this consultancy was the draft of the National Water Supply and Sanitation Policy. The TSG also decided on a timetable for the next two planning activities: design of a national seminar on the policy and strategy document, and preparations for the seminar itself. The draft was a notable accomplishment for the group, which was pleased with the quality of the document and with the fact that they had produced it.

#### **6.4 Special Issues**

A fact worth repeating is that many members of the TSG and the drafting subcommittees were expatriate advisors. Of the sixteen individuals who attended the three TSG meetings, two were British, and four were American, Sri Lankan, Tanzanian, and South African respectively. Of the six members of the two drafting subcommittees, four were expatriates.

Another relevant observation is that when the TSG was established by the NAG, it was envisioned that it would include senior technical personnel from the various ministries and departments involved in the sector. All these agencies, with the exception of the Ministries of Agriculture and Cooperatives and Education, participated in developing the policy and

strategy document, giving it broad institutional support and contributing to its acceptance by the implementing agencies in the sector.

## **Chapter 7**

### **NATIONAL SEMINAR ON POLICIES AND STRATEGIES: JUNE 1986**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

The third consultancy ran from June 2-13, 1986. WASH consultant David Yohalem worked with the TSG to organize a three-and-one-half day national seminar on WS&S policies and strategies, decide on how to finalize the policy and strategy document, and prepare for the short-term action plan. The seminar was held from June 9-12 and attended by 61 participants from the GOS, the private and NGO sectors, and the donor community.

#### **7.2 Consultative Process**

TSG members approached the preparation and implementation of the national seminar with a clear sense of their own responsibility for the event. They were up front most of the time, and the participants were aware that the seminar was being run by their government colleagues not by an outside consultant. As the seminar progressed, the staff assumed part of the consultant's role during the frequent staff meetings, initiating design adaptations, providing feedback to their colleagues, and preparing for subsequent activities.

After the seminar was over, the TSG met to review the participants' evaluations and assess its success. There was agreement that the seminar had achieved its goals and provided valuable ideas for improving the policy and strategy document. Each section of the document had been discussed during the seminar, and there was also an extensive discussion of the implications of the document on future program development. The TSG agreed to review all the seminar recommendations and to amend the document before submitting a final draft to the NAG for presentation to the Cabinet.

#### **7.3 Outcomes**

The most significant products were the seminar itself and the recommendations and observations it generated. While graciously acknowledging the assistance of the WASH consultant, the TSG legitimately took credit for the success of the seminar. Several members, including all those who worked as seminar staff, expressed appreciation for learning how to plan meetings and lead discussions and said they expected to be able to use these new skills within their own agencies.

## **7.4 Special Issues**

The three TSG members chosen by their peers to assist in conducting the seminar were all Swazi nationals and came from three different GOS agencies. The expatriate technical assistants attending the seminar had no staff roles.

The seminar was responsible for adding two members to the TSG, from the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives and the Ministry of Education. Both individuals and a representative of the NGOs involved in the sector have remained active in TSG affairs.

## **Chapter 8**

### **TWO-YEAR ACTION PLAN: JULY 1986**

#### **8.1 Introduction**

The consultancy took place from July 14-25, 1986. WASH consultant Robert Gearheart helped the TSG develop the Two-Year Action Plan for the water supply and sanitation sector.

#### **8.2 Consultative Process**

The consultant had worked with the TSG in February preparing the first draft of the policy and strategy document. That consultancy and the national seminar in June were both considered to have been very successful. TSG members were now starting to take over some of the responsibilities of the WASH consultants in the earlier consultancies, leaving this consultant free to play a more facilitative role with the subcommittees. His primary concern was to press them for more detail for their plans and to make sure that they had sufficient information to support their conclusions.

The first draft of the Two-Year Action Plan contained 60 pages describing program elements of the urban, periurban, and rural subsectors and 18 pages of budgets. It was reviewed for amendments and a final draft after the consultant's departure, signaling the TSG's confidence in its ability to complete the plan independently. This confidence was manifested again the following year when the TSG took upon itself major revision of an HRD plan prepared by consultants.

#### **8.3 Outcomes**

The principal outcome of this consultancy was the Two-Year Action Plan, a detailed description of proposed sector activities for the fiscal years '87-'88 and '88-'89. The consultant's approach was to explain how an action plan was prepared and then leave the TSG to do it. He provided enough advice to ensure the product would have the detail and factual backing to make it a useful planning document, but allowed the TSG members to learn by doing the work themselves.

The other major outcome, like that of the national seminar, had more to do with attitudes and perceptions than skills. During the 1985-86 consultancies the TSG grew into a cohesive unit capable of taking responsibility for increasingly difficult tasks. The full TSG allocated more time to meetings and accomplished more work at these meetings with less outside

facilitation. By this activity, the ownership of the product was never in doubt. The Two-Year Action Plan was clearly the work of the TSG.

#### **8.4 Special Issues**

The long-term expatriate advisors to the various ministries were still disproportionately represented on the subcommittees, a situation more pronounced in the urban/periurban subcommittee than in the rural subcommittee, where the American public health engineer was joined by two Swazi design engineers from the RWSB. However, the impact of their presence was mitigated this time by the active participation of more TSG members in the discussions of the subcommittee's work during the full TSG meeting.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives and the NGO sector continued to be involved during this consultancy. Also, TSG members showed a greater tendency to keep their superiors and colleagues informed of their work and to secure compliance with subcommittee and full TSG decisions. Responsibility for TSG work gradually expanded to include more members representing a wider range of agencies.

## Chapter 9

### THREE-YEAR ACTION PLAN: MARCH 1989

#### 9.1 Introduction

The fifth and final consultancy took place from February 27 to March 10, 1989. WASH consultants Robert Gearheart and Lee Jennings assisted the TSG in revising the National Policies and Strategies Document for the water supply and sanitation sector, updating the program elements of the 1986 Two-Year Action Plan and developing a procedure for annual revisions of a three-year sectoral plan to comply with newly established GOS procedures for annual revisions of three-year rolling capital plans. Using this approach, a new Action Plan was prepared for the years 1989-90 to 1991-92.

#### 9.2 Consultative Process

The consultative process during this assignment was influenced by the expectations growing out of the previous consultancies. The two subcommittees worked with the consultants to finalize their recommendations for updating the Policies and Strategies Document and revising the program elements of the previous Action Plan. After discussing and accepting the final changes in the Policies and Strategies Document, the TSG turned its attention to the new three-year Sectoral Plan, agreeing that the plan should draw on the program elements of the previous two-year action plan and various assessments of activities in the sector. The first draft of the Sectoral Plan was reviewed with only minimal input from the consultants. At this stage in the capacity-building process it was felt that the TSG should take full responsibility for the final planning products.

#### 9.3 Outcomes

The planning process culminating in the production of the Three-Year Plan was the final step in WASH involvement in sector development in Swaziland. The activity was no longer a learning process. The TSG independently carried out the assessment of progress, identification of needs, and planning to meet them with a strong sense of confidence.

The leadership in the rural subsector knows how to use the plan effectively as a program management tool, for project design, as a basis for seeking funding, and for achieving optimal use of resources. In the urban subsector, the plan has not been used as effectively as it could have been to strengthen the negotiating position with donors.

## **9.4 Special Issues**

The overriding issue is where the planning process leads from here. In the rural subsector, staff understand the use of the plan and readily recognize the benefits. In the urban subsector, staff do not know how to use the plan effectively and do not see the benefits as clearly. Yet without the planning documents the needs of the urban subsector cannot be credibly upheld in negotiations with donors.

## Chapter 10

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### 10.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the factors influencing the planning process, how they determined the direction of WASH's assistance to the NAG, and the achievements of the planning phase of sectoral development in Swaziland and WASH's contribution to them.

#### 10.2 The Setting for Sectoral Planning

The environment in which sectoral planning took place is essential to understanding the timing, approach, and implementation of WASH participation.

##### 10.2.1 Sector Institutions and Sector Development

During the early years of sector development, priority necessarily was given to learning how to plan and implement projects. Several attempts at sectoral planning—including an analysis of Decade coverage targets and estimated costs prepared by sector agencies at the request of the NAG, and planning documents prepared by consultants on behalf of the NAG—proved unsuccessful primarily because the energies of the sector were directed to building organizational capacity. Sectoral planning was not a priority.

The institutional structure of the water and sanitation sector in Swaziland was well established at the time WASH assistance to the NAG was requested in 1985. The rural subsector had received well-coordinated support since the late 1970s from three donors, including USAID, which had given priority to institutional development. Thus, by the time WASH assistance was requested, a well-trained staff, interagency linkages, and strong leadership were in place.

But agreement was needed on policy and implementational guidelines, and a plan was needed to facilitate the increasingly complex task of managing implementation. In addition, external funding was coming to an end, and it was clear that a comprehensive sector development plan was required to attract more donor support and ensure that it met the needs of the sector. The need for planning had become urgent.

Finally, a problem plaguing the rural subsector during the first half of the Decade was the question of format and how to carry out the planning process effectively. The NAG needed the assistance of consultants with experience in sectoral planning who could guide sector agencies, facilitate the planning process, and provide a focus for the planning effort. It was

with these requirements in mind that the NAG requested WASH assistance, and that the role of the WASH consultants was defined.

### **10.2.2 USAID Support for the Water Supply and Sanitation Sector**

USAID assistance to the sector began in 1980 with the RWBDC Project, which provided funding to enhance the benefits of development in the sector, principally the strengthening of institutions and the fashioning of a comprehensive approach to development in the subsector. The support was supplemented with allocations in response to emergency needs. The RWBDC Project proved very effective, and became closely identified with government programs in the sector. Prior to the request for assistance to the NAG, WASH had been involved with the RWBDC Project through consultancies and the midterm evaluation of the project. This background was useful in determining the form of WASH assistance to the NAG.

### **10.3 The WASH Approach**

The WASH approach was distinguished by the following key elements:

- Quality of consultants. Consultants were selected not only for their technical skills and experience, but for their ability to work with government officials and TSG staff.
- Continuity of WASH staffing. Continuity was important to the success of each consultancy, both because it ensured consistency of concept and style, and because it fostered a comfortable relationship between consultants and the TSG. When it was necessary to bring in new consultants, they were carefully selected and thoroughly briefed. There was always at least one consultant who had been part of an earlier consultancy.
- Linkage to RWBDC Project. WASH worked with the RWBDC Project in assisting the NAG, maintaining contact in the field and keeping abreast of progress, problems, and emerging needs. This close contact kept up the momentum and continuity between the visits of the consultants.
- Facilitative role of WASH consultants. The consultants offered the benefit of their experience in sectoral planning where needed, leaving the technical and drafting work to the TSG and intervening only when requested. This encouraged the independence of the TSG

staff, which was able to take over fully as confidence increased. Had the consultants attempted to determine content or to draft the documents, it is certain the TSG staff would have gained little.

## **10.4 Implementation**

A clear definition of consultant and TSG roles at the beginning established with certainty that the relationship was a collaborative one, with the consultants providing guidance and the TSG making the final decisions. As a result, the TSG understood the direction it would have to take in the planning process and the steps it would have to follow to get there.

Four stages in this process were identified as the points at which WASH assistance would be requested. These stages and the assistance that WASH provided were:

- Formulation of a policy and strategy document. This step required a review of the sector, an assessment of needs, and a definition of policy issues by the TSG prior to finalization with WASH assistance.
- National seminar. A national seminar was conducted to give all participants in sectoral development an understanding of the needs of the sector. WASH helped to determine the content of the seminar and prepared the TSG staff assigned to run it.
- Drafting of Two-Year Action Plan. The TSG revised the policy and strategy document on the basis of recommendations made at the national seminar. This revised document provided the framework of a Two-Year Action Plan which was drafted with WASH assistance.
- Drafting of Three-Year Action Plan. The original intention was to draw up a five-year master plan after the experience of implementing the Two-Year Action Plan. By 1989, this idea appeared inappropriate for three reasons: the utility of such a document was seriously questioned; the Two-Year Plan had proved adequate for program implementation and project design; and the GOS had introduced a three-year rolling capital planning process with which it seemed logical to mesh the new national planning process. The TSG took over the primary role of drafting the Three-Year Action Plan, with minimal guidance from WASH.

## **10.5 Key Factors**

There were other factors that contributed, often substantially, to the success of WASH assistance. One of the most important was USAID's response to the GOS's need to formulate realistic strategies for sectoral development, to draft a plan of action to implement these strategies, and to carry out projects embodying the principles of the policy and strategy document. By extending support to the rural subsector using the Two-Year Action Plan as the basis for the project design, USAID provided very important reinforcement for the planning process. In doing so, it afforded an opportunity to test and perfect the policies, strategies, and action plan, and to establish a comprehensive approach to sectoral development which must now be supported by other donors.

Another important factor was that if WASH's assistance been handled differently, for instance by establishing a planning mechanism outside the established government structure, by developing planning documents for the NAG, by defining planning requirements for the TSG, or by adopting an informal interactive style, it is unlikely that it would have achieved what it did. Similarly, had the RWEDC Project adhered rigidly to early contractual requirements and not adapted to changing needs, the whole course of sectoral planning would have been different. Finally, had USAID not been able to buy into the Two-Year Action Plan, an important element in the planning process would have been missing.

## **10.6 Outcomes**

WASH assistance to the NAG was provided as an integral part of USAID's overall support to the water supply and sanitation sector and in close association with activities under the RWEDC Project. Out of this effort came:

- A planning mechanism which has demonstrated its effectiveness and has been integrated into the national rolling capital planning process. Processes established under the TSG have been adopted for other planning activities within the water and environmental sectors
- Realistic policies and strategies for development within the sector
- A plan of action as a basis for project design
- Improved organization and coordination within the sector
- Improved coordination and implementation of projects both by the GOS and NGOs

- Acceptance and support of policies and strategies by other donors, and buying into and building on implementation plans prepared by the TSG

## **10.7 Outlook**

A central issue is the sustainability of the planning process itself and of its effectiveness as a management tool and basis for project design. In Swaziland, the process has served this purpose most effectively in the rural subsector, where staff are well trained, leadership is strong, and interagency and interministerial coordination are well established. It is in this subsector that the planning process has had its greatest impact and reaped its greatest rewards.

But in the urban and periurban subsectors, where it faces a threat to survival, the Two-Year Action Plan was not used effectively. The environment for planning is not as favorable as it is in the rural subsector, and enthusiasm is not as widespread. Yet the need is greater, for without a clear idea of what is needed and a strong plan for achieving it, development may lack clear direction and government may find itself in a weak position during negotiations with funding agencies.

## Chapter 11

### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 11.1 Introduction

The lessons to be learned from the sectoral development experience in Swaziland are by no means unique to that country. They apply equally to the development of water supply and sanitation, and indeed any other sector, in any other country. Although the recommendations that follow are based on strategies that proved successful in Swaziland, they reflect and reinforce conclusions drawn from the experiences of WASH and others elsewhere.

#### 11.2 The Sectoral Development Process

Several recommendations are linked to the development process itself and are fundamental to effective implementation and sustainability.

**Recommendation 1: Donor strategies and statements of project purpose should emphasize the sustainability of the sector development process, and inputs provided should support this purpose.**

It is generally easier to measure the progress of sectoral development and the accomplishments of projects in terms of capital investment, or even numbers of workshops, than it is to assess the capacity and will to implement, operate, maintain, improve, or use facilities. Yet the latter is essential to achievement of lasting impact and is the real measure of success. Therefore:

**Recommendation 2: Donor strategies and statements of project purpose should emphasize institutional development in such a way that it is not sacrificed during implementation to the more visible construction of facilities.**

The sector development process follows a logical sequence, and design of support projects must be consistent with this sequence to be effective. The Swaziland experience indicates that an initial phase of institutional development is required to establish organizational structures and capacities, procedures, and facilities, and to develop trained staff at professional, technical, and artisan levels. Water supply and sanitary facilities are constructed during this phase of development, and important lessons are learned about implementation and sustainability particularly in relation to organization and management; appropriate technologies; design and construction standards; community organization and participation; utilization, operation, and maintenance; linkage of water supply, sanitation, and health

education; coordination within and outside the sector; water quality; human resource development; and financing. The primary objective, however, must be institutional development.

The institutional development phase can be followed by sectorwide planning and plan implementation and by a final implementation phase incorporating continuous evaluation and planning components. Support projects insensitive to this progression of the development process may fail. A good example is the effort to implement sectoral planning at too early a stage before the planning issues are understood and the urgency is felt, or while staff are fully occupied learning and establishing the institutional base for further sectoral development. Thus the third recommendation:

**Recommendation 3: Donors, project design teams, and project staff should be sensitive to the priority of sector development needs and to the timing of support activities. Programs or activities should not be forced but rather should be supported when the need is felt.**

### **11.3 Role and Implementation of Planning in Sectoral Development**

International and bilateral organizations often encourage the establishment of formalized planning processes and the drafting of sectoral development plans at an early stage. Consultants may be brought in to assist in preparing plans or may even prepare them for governments. This is a logical step, but, in practice, not a very useful one for the reasons mentioned in the previous section. During the early stage of sectoral development, the emphasis is on the establishment of organizational and administrative structures and procedures on setting up facilities, training staff and workers, and learning how best to implement programs. No one has the time or energy to become fully involved in sectorwide planning. Planning, while it may be recognized as an important process, is not a priority at this stage. Planning activities undertaken under these circumstances and without the full involvement, support, and interest of national staff often are inappropriate, fail to receive the support of implementing agencies, and are not sustainable. Furthermore, the planning issues are not well understood. There is much to be learned about implementing programs before meaningful formalized planning can begin. The urgent need at this stage is to get on with the job. If formalized sectoral planning is initiated under pressure, it is likely to receive minimal support, to be limited in scope, and poorly understood. If outside consultants, no matter how experienced, are employed, they will have limited understanding of the substance of issues and local factors affecting implementation and sustainability; and government officers will have little understanding of the plan and how to implement it and little interest in the need for it.

As the initial phase of development proceeds, however, an understanding of specific planning issues and the need for more orderly development, for a comprehensive and coordinated

implementation process including supporting programs, and for financing become clear. An urgent felt need for planning begins to emerge. It is at this stage that effective planning can begin. Thus the fourth recommendation:

**Recommendation 4: Formalized sectoral planning should be initiated only when the planning issues can be clearly identified and understood, and when there is a strong felt need to have policy guidelines and implementation plans.**

It is at this point that local authorities and participants in sectoral development can become fully involved in the process to ensure that all issues are considered and that the lessons learned during the early phase of sectoral development are taken into account. It is only in this way that they, as the officers responsible for the ultimate functioning of programs and projects, can fully understand the plans, give them their full agreement and support, and defend and implement them effectively. The process should involve all segments and competing interests in the sector, including the central planning, finance, and human resource departments and ministries. It should also be integrated into the national development planning process, if possible. This leads to the fifth recommendation:

**Recommendation 5: Sectoral planning should be carried out by national officers responsible for sectoral development programs and by participants in sectoral development in country. It should be coordinated with, or linked to, the national development planning process.**

The primary purpose of a sectoral plan should be to put order and balance into the development process, and to assure that development can be implemented smoothly and effectively and that benefits can be optimized. It should address the needs of the sector identified by participants in the sectoral development process. While financial requirements and internal and external sources of funding must be considered, the interests and needs of sectoral development, within reasonable limits, must come first. Whereas plans should form the basis for obtaining funding and should determine the design of support projects, they must be realistic in terms of both resources and the requirements of effective and sustainable development. In this way, support for development can be balanced and effectively employed. Thus:

**Recommendation 6: Planning should be oriented around the real needs of the sector and an understanding of the requirements for effective and sustainable development.**

A number of planning issues apply almost universally. For instance, community organization and participation are important from the earliest stage in the planning of a water supply and sanitation project through construction, operation, maintenance, and utilization. Community involvement, ownership, and support are crucial to the achievement of benefits and

sustainability and touch on many other planning issues. Needs to support community development can be identified and tied to other sectoral development activities.

Appropriate technologies and standards of design and construction are also crucial, for they influence utilization, operation, and maintenance. An understanding of these issues comes only from experience in developing and operating water supplies and delivering services. Linkage of water supply, sanitation, and health education is important to achievement of optimal benefits in the sector. But it generally requires coordination among agencies and organizations at all levels.

Planning can assist and reinforce coordination and lead to additional benefits and efficiencies. It can also extend to other areas of primary health care and to other development sectors impacting on health, enhancing implementation and benefits of each.

Operation and maintenance affects nearly every other issue. It depends on the involvement of communities, training of community members, technologies and quality of design and construction, and financing of recurrent costs. It also impacts on utilization and water quality. Other major issues are human resources development, which has links throughout the sector, the financing of construction and various support activities, and recurrent costs. Thus:

**Recommendation 7: Sectoral planning should consider the above issues at a minimum.**

#### **11.4 Donor Support for Sectoral Development**

Donors can support sectoral planning and development by not pressing for sectorwide planning before the time is appropriate and by responding to the need when the timing is right (see 11.3). By supporting an independent national planning process aimed at defining and meeting comprehensive sectoral needs, donors can contribute to the development of an institutional base for sound planning and the involvement of sector agencies and organizations. This will ensure that needs emerging from the experience of implementing bodies are addressed; that realistic policies, strategies, and plans are formulated; and that responsible officers have a personal stake in implementation. Although donors have concerns that should be recognized by planning groups, they should not lobby for their own agendas or for manufactured materials and equipment that may not be appropriate or readily available locally or compatible with those currently in use. This leads to the eighth recommendation:

**Recommendation 8: Donor agencies should support a self-reliant national planning process and capability, aiming at establishing an institutional base for planning and plan formulation responsive to nationally identified needs.**

To support recommendation 9, donors should provide technical assistance for a national planning capability. Although national authorities may recognize the need for planning, they may have little understanding of planning options, alternatives, and requirements, and of policy guidelines, strategies, or a plan, and how to put each into effect. The technical assistance team can supply this knowledge and assist national participants to make independent planning decisions. In this way, donors can contribute to the establishment of an institutional base for planning, to development of planning skills, and to building self-confidence, all of which are necessary for an effective and sustainable planning process. Therefore:

**Recommendation 9: Technical assistance should be facilitative and support development of local skills and confidence in national planning.**

Sectoral plans should provide a sound basis for development of projects to meet national needs and should include elements to achieve sustainability. External agencies can reinforce the process by supporting implementation of national plans, accepting their priorities and requirements, and following established national policy guidelines designed to facilitate effective and sustainable development. In Swaziland, by buying into a national action plan and fully accepting its requirements for balanced sectoral development, USAID made possible a test of the plan itself, the demonstration of its basic soundness, and its refinement and extension based on the experience of its implementation. USAID also helped to reinforce confidence in the planning process and to establish its principles more firmly, which led to acceptance by other donors and put long-range sectoral development on a sound footing. This leads to the tenth recommendation:

**Recommendation 10: Donors should buy into sound sectoral development plans when designing projects, funding less visible elements that facilitate effective implementation and sustainability along with the more visible capital investment components, and accepting locally determined standards.**

Donors can facilitate development in other ways as well. In Swaziland, support to the sector from the three major external donors was well coordinated, complementary, and mutually reinforcing. This was important to smooth development within the sector. Thus:

**Recommendation 11: Donors should coordinate their support strategies to ensure consistency of purpose, complementarity of approach, and the avoidance of conflicts.**

Project design teams should be cognizant of national needs and plans where they exist, and should ensure that project support is appropriate and directed where it is most needed. But needs and priorities change and emergencies arise, particularly during the early stages of sectoral development when understanding of the requirements of program implementation

and sustainability is rudimentary. To ensure that projects at all times are able to achieve the best results, both in terms of institutional development and services provided, donors must remain flexible and responsive to change. Thus:

**Recommendation 12: Donor agencies should remain flexible and responsive to changing and emerging sectoral needs and priorities.**

Finally, the development of institutions, the implementation of programs, and the achievement of community level objectives require time. In Swaziland, the long-term commitment of external donors, 10 years in the case of USAID, contributed greatly to the continuity and consistency of support and its smooth evolution. This commitment also demonstrated confidence in the development process. The donors showed an understanding of the emerging needs and constraints of sectoral development and fully responded to them. Finding new funding sources and designing new projects generally are a strain on government resources. Long-term donor support greatly reduced this stress. This leads to the thirteenth recommendation:

**Recommendation 13: Donors should be willing to commit themselves to long-term support or to extend support of sectoral development to permit continuity and establishment of development initiatives.**

## **11.5 Technical Assistance and Project Implementation**

External support for the development of the water supply and sanitation sector in Swaziland was provided by a number of donors and through a number of projects. The success of the government in establishing highly capable and sound sectoral institutions and in greatly enhancing access to safe water and sanitation owes much to the way in which the principles embodied in the above recommendations were recognized in the design and implementation of these projects.

But the Swaziland experience also offers lessons more specific to implementation itself. Successful support projects in the sector have all been implemented within the institutional structure of the government, and technical personnel have functioned as members of a national team. Although technical project staff certainly created a bridge between implementing agencies and donors, they worked as part of a government team, on its behalf, and in its interest. One major project organized and implemented outside the government structure, although partly staffed by government officers seconded to it, failed to make any contribution to the development of institutional capacity. The facilities provided to communities were inconsistent with accepted standards and could not be reasonably maintained. They were consequently unacceptable to government. Furthermore, relations with communities were poor and facilities almost immediately became inoperable and were left unused. Thus:

**Recommendation 14: Sector development projects should be well integrated into the institutional structure of the sector, should contribute to its strength, and should support its programs.**

Implicit in the above recommendations is a joint team approach or a facilitative approach to technical assistance. Although technical inputs under one project were provided to fill vacancies during overseas training of professional staff, the major part of technical support was provided by consultants working closely with national counterparts. The facilitative approach proved its worth particularly with sectoral planning. One planning activity carried out by the consultants themselves, although in collaboration with the sectoral planning group, was a failure because it did not meet the group's perceived needs. One of the consultants was later recalled to assist the planning group as it rewrote a major part of the plan to fit its own needs and in a format that could be understood and implemented locally. These experiences lead to the fifteenth recommendation:

**Recommendation 15: To the maximum extent possible, technical assistance should be facilitative and supportive of national efforts, and consultants should not carry out technical functions for national staff.**

WASH's assistance in Swaziland was part of wider USAID support for sector development provided primarily under a rural water borne disease control project. The WASH approach and resources were crucial, in particular during the planning and demonstration phases of sectoral development, which leads to the sixteenth recommendation:

**Recommendation 16: WASH provides a resource and approach which should be drawn on freely by USAID Missions, USAID-funded projects, and others to complement and strengthen their own resources.**

Key to the effectiveness of WASH was its approach and the integration of its contribution with an existing USAID-funded project and government institutions. This integration was made possible by several factors. The first was a familiarity with the history of sectoral development in Swaziland, the needs of the sector, and the personalities involved. This came about as a result of early visits by WASH staff, occasional short-term consultancies, participation in the mid-project evaluation, and frequent contacts with in-country project staff. The familiarity was reciprocal as national authorities and project staff gained an intimate understanding of WASH and its capabilities. As the need for planning became more urgent and the nature of the required technical assistance was better understood, it became clear that WASH provided the ideal resource. WASH was able to field a team to discuss the planning process and help the national sectoral planning group formulate a work plan, set targets for the planning process, and identify specific needs for technical assistance. Thus:

**Recommendation 17: WASH should continue to provide technical assistance for specific short-term needs and develop a constituency in countries where it works.**

WASH involvement on an occasional basis establishes a sound base for assistance to long-term development activities. The understanding and insights gained make it easier to strategize longer term inputs, to select consultants who are not only technically qualified but who will work effectively in any given environment, and to prepare consultants for their assignments. This leads to the eighteenth recommendation:

**Recommendation 18: Team planning and briefings are key elements of any consultancy and must be based on a sound knowledge of the country, the development of the sector in the country, and the personalities involved.**

In country, the WASH approach was facilitative and collaborative. Consultants supported national institutions, providing guidance, and leaving technical and planning decisions and drafting of plans to national staff. In this way planning skills were developed and confidence and self-sufficiency were encouraged. Throughout the planning process consultant teams included at least one member who had been involved from the beginning. This was very important for continuity and ensured that each consultancy followed smoothly upon those that preceded it. Thus:

**Recommendation 19: To the extent possible, technical support for national planning or other long-term activities implemented through short-term consultancies should include core members involved at each stage of the long-term assistance.**

Finally, WASH inputs were provided in conjunction with an existing project in support of sector development in Swaziland. The close coordination of inputs and the collaboration between this project and WASH greatly facilitated contact between WASH and its consultants and progress in the field between visits of the consultants. It also facilitated implementation of tasks and continuity between visits. Joint implementation of this kind can greatly enhance the effectiveness of support for development. Thus:

**Recommendation 20: Close collaborative long-term support for sectoral development should be encouraged between WASH and field projects.**

## **11.6 Nongovernmental Organizations**

NGOs can be important contributors to the development of water supply and sanitation facilities in rural areas. Often, however, their work takes place in isolation from the mainstream of sector development, resulting in design and construction which fails to meet, or conflicts with, accepted standards. It can also result in poor community development and poor operation and maintenance. In Swaziland, NGOs were involved as full participants in the sectoral planning process and as contributors to sectoral development goals. They became parties to the formulation of policy guidelines for design and construction standards,

and facilitated coordination with other agencies and organizations providing complementary services. This led to donor support for NGOs that was tied to sectoral development goals, consistent with national plans, and implemented under agreements signed by the donor, the government, and the NGOs. The result was greatly improved standards of design and construction; improved community organization and participation; improved linkage of water supply, sanitation, and health education; and enhanced efficiency from shared resources. Thus:

**Recommendation 21: NGOs should be brought in as full partners in the sectoral development process and given a role in meeting national development objectives.**

**Recommendation 22: NGOs should be required to follow national sectoral development policy guidelines.**

**Recommendation 23: National governments should be signatories to agreements between donors and NGOs. In the absence of a donor, NGOs should sign memoranda of understanding with national governments specifying standards and project implementation guidelines.**