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REPORT OF

FIFTH BACKSTOPPING MISSION

TO THE NETHERLANDS-SUPPORTED

WATER SUPPLY PROGRAMMES IN NAMIBIA

VOLUME 1

Executive Summary,

Joint conclusions and recommendations

and

Agreements

Mission: April 1998

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The Backstopping Missions of the Netherlands-financed piped water supply schemes rely heavily on the co-operation and partnership with the staff of the Directorate of Rural Water Supplies and many other people. The Backstopping Team would like to express their thanks to all those involved for devoting their time and effort into making this backstopping possible. Particular thanks are due to the Director of the DRWS, Mr Pita Nghipandulwa, and his staff, both at Head Office in Windhoek and at the Regional Office in Oshakati, for their considerable amount of support and good co-operation provided. The Backstopping Team likes to mention Messrs Harald Koch, Jürgen Eysselein, Sjaak Zijlma, Matty Hauuanga, Johan van der Colf, Godfrey Tjiramba, Karukirue Tjjenda, Ria Hermans, Willy Iyambo, Pinehas Elago, Mary Isaac Itembu, Petrina Ipumbu, Monica Shidute and Toivo Munenguni, and Leoni Futter with whom the relationship was maintained during the Fifth Backstopping Mission.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Backstopping Mission aims to review jointly with the counterpart Core Team of the Directorate of Rural Water Supply the achievements, effectiveness and sustainability of two Netherlands-financed rural piped water schemes in the Cuvelai Rural Water Supply Region in Namibia. Furthermore, the joint Teams will assist DRWS to develop and make related community management and support structures operational. In this way increased scheme sustainability will be achieved, field experiences gained and lessons learned. These experiences and lessons will be applicable to all staff of DRWS.

The Fifth Mission experienced a decreased collaboration with the DRWS HO staff but at RO level collaboration was satisfactory.

All WPCs in the two schemes have been established now. In the Oshakati-Omakango scheme the establishment of most WPCs was done in the crash activity. To have strong WPCs adequate follow-up is needed. The first support will be the skills training of the WPCs. This training was much delayed because of problems in finalisation of the training package which took more than a year and is still not yet complete. The DRWS Management agreed on the urgency and planned steps to have this training started as soon as possible using the Regional Training Teams. The same applies to the training of the Caretakers. In the rehabilitation of the Oshakati-Omakango scheme next to the formal training of Caretakers on-the-job training can be provided by the consultant and contractors.

The relatively slow establishment of the WPCs is amongst others due the low efficiency of the extension service. The *'Study on Efficiency of the Extension Service'* is still suggested to improve that situation by recommending better organisational structures and by proposing appropriate planning, management and monitoring instruments. In general staff capacities of the regional extension service is poor and needs urgent attention to improve sustainability of the water supply facilities through CBM. Technical functions are still favoured. Also at HO, training of senior and management staff towards CBM and management tools is suggested to achieve full commitment.

Good progress was made in CBM through the establishment of the LWCs in the two schemes. Planning on institutional and human capacity building of LWCs is planned. The LWC could manage the scheme provided that professional capacity, i.e. administrator, book-keeper and mechanic, is available next to the executive committee. The responsibilities of the LWC must gradually grow, including the payment for the water to NamWater. This cost recovery was further detailed by DRWS after the Fifth Backstopping Mission. The pro-active role of the Development Planning sub-division towards the LWCs is recognised. Monitoring of scheme and water point management was introduced and would be followed up by the regional and head office.

The CWC is not very efficiently structured and inadequate in its operations. DRWS should give attention to their strengthening.

The long-planned rehabilitation of the Oshakati-Omakango scheme is due to start. Also the Ogongo-Okalongo scheme needs some rehabilitation/corrections before it can be handed-over to the LWC.

2. JOINT CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The establishment of all WPCs in both schemes by December 1997 is a major milestone in the achievements of the extension service in the region. The activity was welcomed as the establishment needed to be completed in view of rehabilitation of the scheme. The process of WPC establishment, and especially the crash activity to finish this, was evaluated with the RWEOs. It was found that the process was done less thorough than before and therefore good follow-up support needs to be given to the WPCs to consolidate their presence. These are good lessons from the development and demonstration schemes. In this context the scheduled training of WPCs is very important and needs to start very soon.
2. The main reason behind the earlier slow progress in the establishment of WPCs is the low efficiency of the RWEOs which is particularly attributed to poor planning, support and guidance and monitoring in the extension service of the RO. But as agreed during the Fourth Backstopping Mission the HO would give increased support and steering in terms of giving organisational structure to the extension service and systematise the planning, support/guidance and monitoring. As this did not happen, it is again recommended as a role the HO should take up.
3. The *'Study on the Efficiency of the Extension Service'* did not take place because it was not viewed opportune as all WPCs had been established. However, considering the continuing low performance of the extension service, the study is again proposed. The focus of the study should be on organisational structures of the extension service at regional level and management instruments and less on the specific activities of the RWEOs. Recommendations on structures and tools for efficiency improvement will help the HO and RO to take up their functions. The Netherlands Budget Support could be used for this study. This low efficiency is probably a country-wide problem.¹
4. Now all WPCs have been established, the capacity building of the WPCs, to enable them to function well, has the highest priority. This capacity building through a one-week training should have started about one year ago but because of delays in finalisation of the training package and other bureaucratic hindrances, it has not taken place yet. The same applies for the training of the WP Caretakers. Any further delay jeopardises the sustainability of the CBM and so the water supply services in the rural areas. The RO had sent several alarm signals on these risks to the HO but without significant result. The DRWS management agreed in the debriefing of this Mission to give high priority to the WPCs' training in the two Dutch-financed schemes using the present training materials, the trained Regional Training Team, and with initial assistance from Ms Terry. The Caretakers training in the two schemes should also start soon, also in view of the physical scheme rehabilitation.
5. The two LWCs have been established thanks to the commitment of two Development Planners. They conducted orientation and planning workshops with the new LWCs, in which activities were identified that are needed to build the LWC as institution and the capacities of the members of the LWC, particularly those of the Executive Committee; these activities were agreed and put in a time schedule. This planned activities look

¹. June 1998: It seems that DRWS has planned for a country-wide review of the extension service, including the two Dutch-financed schemes, using the Netherlands Budget Support!

- fine. However, the proposed timing of training is too optimistic and may not fit in the schedule of the HRD&T Sub-Division, also because the Sub-Division has a staff capacity problem. Also the introduction of full cost recovery by August 1998 for the two schemes was considered not realistic in view of (i) agreed and communicated phase-wise cost recovery; (ii) the poor functioning of the WPCs due to delayed training; and (iii) the start-up of the LWC as an organisation. A new schedule on cost recovery is recommended. The issue of the legal status of the LWC is to be addressed.
6. The Mission has raised again the issue that the responsibilities and tasks of the LWC are beyond the capacity of a voluntary committee and that the organisational set-up of LWC should include a professional unit with administrative, financial and technical expertise. The responsibilities and tasks of the LWC should be gradually expanded to create an organic growth and development creating also a *learning environment*, which should be supported by the RO extension service with backing from HO.
 7. The Mission has trust in the LWC as a viable institutional arrangement if the weak elements are sufficiently addressed (see 6. above). The functioning and performance of the LWCs in the two schemes should be closely monitored. Nevertheless, there is trust on success, other institutional options for scheme management should be considered if the present institutional structure appears not viable.
 8. The CWC has an important mandate but it does not function efficiently and effectively. It is recommended to train the CWC on responsibilities and tasks, and skills. There is need for a CWC secretary and secretarial support, possibly the formation of an Executive Committee, and the re-drafting and finalisation of the CWC constitution based on legal principles.
 9. The Oshakati-Omakango scheme is about to be rehabilitated. The consultant is in the process of selecting the contractor. The rehabilitation is the right moment to boost the role of the LWC and the WPCs. The on-the-job training of Caretakers during the physical rehabilitation work by the consultant with support from the contractors is to be considered. Of course, this on-the-job training does not replace the urgently needed formal training of the Caretakers, which is needed as soon as possible.
 10. During this mission, *Monitoring for sustainability* was introduced at the level of WPC/LWC and DRWS (RO and HO). The need and usefulness of this type of monitoring as a strong planning and management tool, was expressed by the two groups. It is recommended that this monitoring is included in the training of the LWCs and later also in the follow-up of the WPCs, and at DRWS level through monitoring system development and training.
 11. Environmental sustainability is a continuing risk in the north of Namibia due to the fragile environmental conditions and the increasing population and cattle stock. It is recommended that DWA co-operates with other ministries (such as MET and MHSS), and utilises and follows up the recommendations of present and future EIAs. The Dutch-financed mission on water and environment (planned for July 1998) will further look into this area.

12. The staff capacities of the regional Extensions Service is too low for proper functioning. There is no Control RWEO, only an Acting Control, and there is no Chief and only one Acting Chief for the Four O-Regions. If DRWS is serious in their CBM approach, the Extension Service should get more attention and more staff capacities (including Chiefs RWEO). Training on Community Management (at IWSD in Harare) for one Acting Control and one RWEO is recommended. These supervisory RWEOs also need training in management and supervision. It appears that the technical functions are still favoured above the extension functions. Increased involvement of the private sector to support the RO in maintenance and other technical tasks of the schemes (and boreholes) should be considered.
13. At the DRWS HO a gradual re-orientation from a mainly engineering to more CBM direction is taking place. But not all senior and management DRWS staff is strongly supporting this new direction. The Backstopping Team will continue to make contributions to this re-orientation through exchange of experiences and lessons learned from the actual practices in the two schemes. It is recommended that senior staff gets the opportunity for further orientation (DRA² and CBM) through training courses and study tours abroad either through the CDF or other financial sources.
14. Capacity Development Fund will be used for training specific DRWS staff, for training materials, and for 'development and demonstration' activities in the two schemes.
15. In the debriefing meeting with the DRWS management, it was agreed that the Backstopping Team would make regular enquiries on the progress of the agreed priority activities. This will be important so that the Backstopping Team can know when and how to contribute to the progress of these activities.

Timing of last Backstopping mission is tentatively planned for April 1999, but also depending on the progress of training and functioning of WPCs and LWCs.

². DRA = Demand-Responsive Approach

3. AGREEMENTS

During the debriefing with the DRWS Management and the First Secretary of the Netherlands Embassy in Windhoek, the following agreement was reached on high priority follow-up action points, time frames and responsible persons (See table 1). None of the activities is new but this time the DRWS Management expressed a strong commitment. The activities are also included in the table 2 on overall agreements and follow-up.

Table 1. Agreed high priority follow-up activities April 1998

Follow-up activity	Time frame	First responsible	Others involved
Training WPCs Ogongo-Okalongo and Oshakati-Omakango schemes	expected to start in June	Harald Koch at HO; Willy Iyambo at RO	HRD&T sub-division; Beth Terry; Regional office staff
Training caretakers Ogongo-Okalongo and Oshakati-Omakango schemes	expected to start in June	Harald Koch at HO; Willy Iyambo at RO	HRD&T sub-division; Regional office staff
Support to institutional and organisational development of LWCs (including training)	May till end of 1998	Karukirue Tjijenda and Ria Hermans at HO; Willy Iyambo at RO	Regional office staff; staff HRD&T
Gradual introduction cost recovery at LWC and WPC	August 1998	Karukirue Tjijenda and Ria Hermans	Regional office staff
Training and support on monitoring at WPC and LWC	end of 1998	Development Planning and HRD&T sub-divisions	Regional office staff
Efficiency Study Extension Service	end of 1998	Harald Koch Jürgen Eysselein	Abraham Nehemia, Chief Control RWEO
Appointment Chief RWEO	September/October	Jürgen Eysselein	Willy Iyambo
Training Acting Control and RWEO	November 1998	HRD&T Sub-Division	Willy Iyambo
Training other DRWS staff	before end 1998	HRD&T Sub-Division	
Improved general support to RO and RWEOs	asap and continuing	Pita Nghipandulwa Jürgen Eysselein	Abraham Nehemia, Chief Control RWEO