

**Benue Rural Water  
Supply and  
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**MOBILISATION  
STRATEGY IN RURAL  
COMMUNITIES'  
INTERVENTION.**

## **MOBILIZATION STRATEGY FOR BERWASSA INTERVENTION IN RURAL COMMUNITY**

### **1.1 BACKGROUND:**

**A situation Analysis of women and children in Benue State jointly carried out between the Federal Government, Benue State and UNICEF in 1991 identified Benue State as one in need of intervention. It was discovered that only 20% of the rural population has access to potable water. There were also reported outbreak of water borne diseases in the areas which later came to be identified as needful intervention.**

**Universally, water is life. It is therefore not unexpected that the degree of response and acceptability by the initial six focus local governments of Ado, Kwande, Ogbadibo, Gwer-west, Ukum and Katsina-Ala has been high and fast. And many more requests have been\***

made by other councils to BERWASSA to focus on them.

We hope that very soon all the needy areas shall be spot lighted for assistance, and also expected that the various communities will be reached.

## 1.2 BERWASSA OBJECTIVES FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES:

The objectives of BERWASSA activities in the intervention communities include the following:

- i. Enhancement of the well-being of the rural population especially women and children by reducing the burden of water-related diseases caused by low levels of access to adequate and safe water supply and sanitation.
- ii. Improvement of the environment generally and \*

dwelling places in particular.

iii. Eradication of guinea worm

iv. Reduction of child and maternal mortality and morbidity.

**MOBILIZATION STRATEGY:**

**Mobilization is the act of organizing and assembling people or resources to become ready for action or support. The purpose is to create awareness, willingness, acceptance and support for a programme being embarked upon.**

**The mobilization unit of BERWASSA is responsible for community interaction, counselling of local communities on methods of safe sanitation and obtaining good drinking water.**

**Through mobilization of the communities, participation in BERWASSA activities in the intervention areas become easy\***

**because a sense of ownership would have been created and this goes a long way to sustain the projects.**

**Mobilization is a major tool employed to enlist the support of the rural community to accept and participate in WES programmes.**

**The different BERWASSA teams are all trained to mobilize the communities whenever they are assigned. This has led to the formation of such committees as task force for coordinating water and environmental sanitation WES activities, water and sanitation committees WESCOM, and mothers' clubs for advocacy and campaign for WES activities.**

- (a) The method of mobilization in the rural community starts formally through the local government Chairman, the Councilors and various heads of department by intimating them with the objectives of BERWASSA and why they should embrace the Agency.**
- (b) Apart from formal meetings with the\***

**local government Chairman and his Councilors, another mobilization process is the informal meetings that are held with the following groups**

- i. Traditional rulers**
- ii. Church leaders**
- iii. Non Governmental Agency**
- iv. Women group**
- v. Community based organization**
- vi. Age grades etc.**

**The essence of these meetings is to intimate them with their expected roles in the execution of the projects.**

**The following methods are used by the Agency to get across the objectives to the people.**

- (a) Dramatization**
- (b) Local media e.g. folk songs and town criers.**
- (c) Public address system In\***

**schools, markets, church etc.**

**(d) Media such as radio, pamphlets, posters, etc.**

**Having mobilized the community of intervention to embrace the project, the mobilization unit also intimate them with the roles expected of them, such as:**

- a. Material contribution in form of sand, gravel, water, cement, accommodation for the intervening work force.**
- b. Labour inputs such as clearing, digging,**
- c. Occasional financial input: The whole essence is to foster a sense of ownership through participatory approach for the sustainability of the projects.**

**IMPLEMENTATION OF BERWASSA OBJECTIVES:**

**BERWASSA's basic goals of Safe Water\***

**and Sanitation are implemented through a multi-system approach such as:**

- a. Provision of boreholes and tubewells operated by low-cost technology machine or handpumps,**
- b. Installation of rain water harvesting devices where boreholes are either not available or inoperable due to insufficiency of ground water.**
- c. Development of natural springs**
- d. Surface water schemes and channelization.**
- e. Construction and promotion of ventilated improved pit, VIP latrines for safe disposal of human waste.**
- f. Sustained community education on prevention of water-related diseases, and household water**



**security and general consultation on both water and sanitation related issues.**

**CONDUCTING BASELINE SURVEY:**

**Baseline survey is a process of investigating, data or information collection as they relate to the needs, attitude, belief of the intervention community to determine the reasons for intervention.**

**In selecting the focus local governments in which the intervention communities are collocated, baseline surveys are carried out to determine the disease endemicity of a community; guinea worm infestation and other water-borne related diseases. Also baseline surveys are intended to identify the people's belief and attitudes towards personal hygiene and sanitation so as to determine the appropriate method of**

**intervention. Data collection is carried out through the physical survey, from available official records and etc in the local government areas and the community.**

**MOBILIZATION OF COMMUNITIES AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF STRUCTURES:**

- i. Mobilizing communities is aimed at educating and creating general awareness and support for a project that is to be embarked upon. When communities are mobilized they become ready for participation. During this exercise, meetings are held with the leaders, or traditional rulers, women leaders and other community members to acquaint them with the project and the role expected of them in the execution of the project. Depending on the particular project at hand, for example,**



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**WATER IS LIFE!  
HEALTH IS  
WEALTH.**

**VASSA** for discussion  
on Water and Sanitation  
problems.

after mobilizing any community on water and sanitation, a WESCOM, Water and Environmental Sanitation Committee is set up. This committee is made up of ten members, usually consisting of five men, five women, with a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.

- ii. After sanitation and health education training are carried out, structures like village based workers (VBWs) is set up. The VBWs are volunteers delegated by their communities to be trained by the project team for the purpose of continuity of the project in the communities like Sanplat (Sanitation platforms) production and general health messages.
- iii. Village Level Operation and Maintenance (VLOM) is also set up where a handpump operated

borehole is established. This structure is set up after the training on maintenance to enable the trainees to install, operate and maintain the handpumps. The handpump caretakers should be able to respond to simple routine maintenance and repairs.

- iv. Health Club For Schools is established in schools having recognized the role of the teacher in information dissemination in primary level to the target population for the purpose of effective transformation of their immediate school environment and the community in general to a healthy environment.

**TRAINING ON HYGIENE EDUCATION AND SANITATION:**

The training is based on simple hygiene principle, elementary hygiene, nutrition and health\*

**practices. The aim of the training is to prepare the communities for continuous health practices, to be able to identify WATSAN (Water and Sanitation) related diseases and to identify ways of controlling them. The ultimate aim is the improvement, changing health habits and the promotion and use of Sanplat pit latrines. Thus the broad objectives here include:**

- a. Participating in developing appropriate messages for WES in intervention communities.**
- b. Disseminating information on personal hygiene as regards to water utilization and excreta disposal.**
- c. Train VBWs to spread health messages, personal hygiene.**
- d. Promoting indigenous communication strategies\***

**for dissemination of health related information.**

- e. Identify women's groups and involve them in advocating for support for WES projects in rural communities.**

### **SANITATION IN GENERAL:**

**The sanitation related activities of the project differs according to the conditions and customs in each area of intervention. An improved latrine system and the protection of water at every point, through the carrying and storage receptacles up to the time it is consumed are stressed.**

**The main sanitary elements of the project are the low cost improved pit, traditional pit latrines and general behavioural change. The project trains LGA artisans, masons and carpenters on latrine building techniques, who in turn transfer the\***



**technology to clans and villages. Effective mobilization of the communities and training should result in the building of safe excreta disposal and the utilization of these facilities.**

**DRILLING AND INSTALLATION OF PUMP:**

**This is the last phase of the rural water project. Its implementation is however dependent on previous performance in mobilization, health education and sanitation. Drilling starts immediately in the community that agrees with WES relationship. Once the borehole is completed, it is commissioned and handed over to the community. The operation and maintenance become the sole responsibility of the beneficiary community. Handpump maintenance is a three tier system, (the community, the LGA and BERWASSA) focussed towards self-reliance at community level with the LGA and BERWASSA acting as spares distributors.**

**More\***

**difficult repairs are reported to the local government headquarters for necessary action at that level or with support from BERWASSA office. Village/Community ownership of infrastructures is stressed and enhanced at all time during implementation.**

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

**WES activities are a joint responsibility of the State government, the local government area of intervention and the benefitting community. UNICEF and other donor agencies assist through technical and resource assistance to the LGAs and communities that respond to an agreed relationship. Each tier of the government has spelt out roles in which they are expected to concentrate. These roles can be found in the signed MOU documents.\***

### **FUNDING SYSTEM:**

The nature of capitalization of projects of BERWASSA is counterpart financing. This means the three tiers of government are involved in the proportion of the 50% State, 35% local government and 15% by the intervention community. On the other hand, UNICEF assists by providing complimentary support services such as vehicles, motor cycles, plants and machinery together with the training of project staff.

The State and the local governments bear the overhead and personal cost as well as recurrent expenditure while the percentage on the cost of whatever facility provided in the community within the local government is borne by them.

BERWASSA works side by side with other agencies and or organization like NGO and other social donor agencies. \*