The Sustainability Question?

Lessons Learnt from NAWASSCO’s Implementation of Yard Taps in Nakuru; A Case of Kaptembwa and Ronda Areas

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Sustainability of Yard Taps: Lessons Learnt from NAWASSCO’s Implementation of Yard Taps in NAKURU; Kaptembwa and Ronda Low Income Areas.

Nakuru Water and Sanitation Services Co. Ltd (NAWASSCO) received funding from WSTF under 2nd Call of UPC projects to construct 40No. yard taps, among other project activities, in Kaptembwa and Ronda areas. The project was declared fully completed and was officially commissioned in January ‘2011.

A monitoring visit conducted by WSTF and NAWASSCO on 19th and 20th May ‘2011, 5No. Months after project commissioning, revealed that only 10% of the yard taps were satisfactory and less than half were rated likely to be sustainable. For NAWASSCO, once the yard taps were built, getting the residents/ tenants to use them has been tougher than the construction aspect particularly in areas where the target beneficiaries were new customers.

Lessons learnt

1. Supply Driven Rather than Demand Driven: It was observed that NAWASSCO failed to make any prior arrangements / agreements/ consent with the respective landlords before implementation. It’s recommended that appropriate social marketing (SM) tools should be employed to sell the yard tap concept to the landlords, and then allow the prospective / interested landlords to apply for yard tap constructions / connections on cost sharing approach.

2. Over reliance on Project Task Team: The Project Task Team (PTT) was largely /fully involved in determining the priority needs of the target beneficiaries based on their own perceptions; NAWASSCO did not actively participate in verifying/ confirming the suitability of the sites in line with the WSTF requirements. For instance, 1No. yard tap was located in a shamba while another was found in a police station.

3. Lack of Post Project Monitoring: The percentage of failures in Kaptembwa and Ronda areas is high due to the instant pull out by NAWASSCO after construction. Post construction support to beneficiaries was found to be lacking. There is need to continue the post project monitoring for at least 3No. months after completion. Even the project inauguration should be held 3No. months after project completion.

4. Lack of Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Mechanisms: NAWASSCO’s main challenge remains in developing the procedures and capacity to repair and maintain the yard taps infrastructure at the local level. Most of the yard taps visited had taps, fittings, and water meters missing barely 5No. months after project commissioning. This is an indication that O&M issues do not receive as much priority / attention as those meant to construct new facilities.

5. Lack of Proper Planning Process: NAWASSCO’s planning for yard taps (getting the right beneficiaries) did not factor an integrated understanding of the existing water supply structures, landlord / tenants’ attitudes, social class realities, technical objectives, affordability, managerial capacities and risk factors in the local context. For instance, 3No. functioning yard taps belong to middle class while only 1No. belonging to low income beneficiary is operational.

“Maybe yard taps are viewed as a form of prestige by the low income earners hence the observed attractiveness / uptake by the middle class in Kaptembwa and Ronda areas”
6. **Demonstration and Replication of Yard Taps:** After the completion of the demonstration yard taps in the project area, NAWASSCO could not provide any evidence of replicated yard tap in Kaptembwa and Ronda areas; an indication that either the **subsidies approach** for yard taps may not be sustainable in the long term and should be gradually phased out or that the approach is not working.

7. **Weak Coordination Approach at NAWASSCO:** Lack of systems for coordinated approach between the project implementers and area based NAWASSCO staff was discovered. Incorporation of the regional/zonal/area based staff during project planning, implementation, operation and monitoring of the project was not very strong and should therefore be enhanced in future projects. For example, some of the landlords claimed that they have never seen any NAWASSCO staff after project completion while in some areas existing standpipes had not been disconnected to allow the tenants use the new facilities.

**Recommendations**

Water Services Trust Fund (WSTF) and NAWASSCO while playing their strategic role in water supply delivery should move from discrete yard tap project issues to address the challenges confronting up scaling yard tap delivery in general by considering the following issues:

a. **The Use of Appropriate Approach to Sustain Behavior Change:** Yard tap is related to behavior change and changing behavior is a long term phenomenon which requires the appropriate approach (social marketing tools) that will shift the focus from physical installations to long term promotion and sustainable behavior change.

b. **Promotion of Innovation Ways of Financing Yard tap:** The new efforts to promote independent (**non project**) financing of yard taps should include; linking the landlords to village banking institutions or through community based revolving funds or credit schemes. NAWASSCO should focus on improvement/rehabilitation or replacement of old/ existing stand pipes rather than construction of new yard tap facilities.

c. **Liaison with Established Local Artisans Groups:** Key functions of the local groups could include; providing information on appropriate options of yard tap technologies for local conditions and how they function, the construction processes, hygienic use and costs, sales point for prefabricated yard tap components, show-case constructed models, and resource centers for training artisans, and for linking landlords and artisans.

d. **Training of Yard Tap Beneficiaries /Groups:** A comprehensive training for landlords/local groups should cover the transferring of technical knowhow on remedial measures with trouble shooting to solve the common operational and maintenance (O&M) issues. Identified groups or individuals who are interested in yard tap promotion should be given technical assistance to guarantee sustainable yard tap development.

e. **Documentation and Promotion of Best Practices:** WSTF should provide adequate information and knowledge on new yard tap concepts, experiences and approaches including best practices from the yard tap projects “dotted” all over the country. In addition an inventory of IEC hygiene and yard tap materials should be taken, reviewed and harmonized for use in new yard tap projects.
f. **Effective Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E):** There is need for regular monitoring and evaluation of yard tap projects implemented during the 1\textsuperscript{st} & 2\textsuperscript{nd} Calls to determine their viability and effectiveness to ensure refining of strategies for effective service delivery by:

- Maintaining a continuous dialogue (open & participatory approach) with the beneficiaries while encouraging them in using the facilities in a proper manner and providing technical advice during the operation phase for at least 3No. Months.

- Understanding reasons behind adoption or non adoption of the developed yard taps by drawing up the features/ designs of the technology, or the model that may have contributed significantly to the levels of uptake and sustained use.

- Ensuring that Field Monitors (FMs) dedicate a percentage of their working days to monitor the operational phase of the project for at least 3No. Months.

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