

Case Study: A Successful Model of the Urban Water Partnership in Karachi (#440)

Description

This case study describes the formation of Karachi Water Partnership as a platform for collective action by all concerned stakeholders to better manage water resources in Karachi. Case involved communication with stakeholders and changing behaviour patterns. The current population in Karachi is estimated to be about 18 million people and this is predicted to rise to almost double in another decade or so. The Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KW&SB) is the single largest utility that is solely responsible for both municipal water supply and the management of wastewater and sewerage in the city district. The problem of mismanagement of water and failing water services rendered by the public utilities is compounded by the wasteful and injudicious use of water by consumers. Failure to supply proper water and sanitation services leads to an obvious shortage; however this situation is worsened due to the wasteful consumption patterns on the part of the users.

Action taken

A water partnership for the city of Karachi to promote Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) processes. Karachi Water Partnership (KWP) was launched as an initiative of the Hisaar Foundation, a foundation working towards water, food and livelihood security issues with a vision of balancing environment with development through innovation and a mission of promoting creative, low-cost solutions and policies for conservation in Pakistan. The KWP evolved as a multi-stakeholder platform which provided space for discussion, arguments, consensus and agreed action on the part of the stakeholder groups in the city. During 2007-2013, KWP successfully brought in a wide range of partners (government, private sector, civil society, elected representatives, media, academia, water professionals, women and individuals), signed seven Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with city-based institutions, held several conferences, training workshops, thematic dialogues. It also developed and circulated water conservation and management guidelines for homes, offices, schools, industries and mosques. KWP has also provided twenty government schools with clean drinking water and toilets, and three more clusters of schools are currently undergoing interventions. Water conservation training and orientation programs for teachers and students are well established.

Lessons learnt

The Karachi Water Partnership experience has shown that that through active involvement of all stakeholders, the shortcomings of established services can be overcome by simply improving the existing delivery mechanisms and suggesting ways in which these existing services can be made more efficient, equitable and sustainable.

An innovative models of “cost-synergy” and the “mutual accountability” were established to encourage stakeholders to engage in dialogue with each other and move forward together, rather than against each other and cohesively develop committed action plans and take responsibility for their behavior towards the resource as part of their obligations and duties.

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Full description of the case

1. Problems

Karachi is one of the largest and most densely populated cities in the world. Its current population is estimated to be about eighteen million people and this is predicted to rise to almost double (thirty two million) in another decade or so. Karachi is also plagued with numerous demographical, social, economic, political and environmental problems. Of the several environmental threats faced by Karachi, access to clean water, sanitation and sewerage issues are paramount.

Municipal water supply and related facilities are grossly inadequate compared to users' needs and expectations. The Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KW&SB) is the single largest utility that is solely responsible for both municipal water supply and the management of wastewater and sewerage in the city district of Karachi. Karachi experiences a shortfall of 50 MGD (million gallons per day) in water supply and approximately 250 MGD of wastewater is left untreated as well. Unsafe water is the primary cause for the death of almost 25,000 children each year. Moreover, it is estimated that about 40% of the water in Karachi is lost through delivery leakages before reaching point of consumption and another 25% is lost by consumers through wasteful consumption.

The problem of mismanagement of water and failing water services rendered by the public utilities is compounded by the wasteful and injudicious use of water by consumers. Failure to supply proper water and sanitation services leads to an obvious shortage, however this situation is worsened due to the wasteful consumption patterns on the part of the users. That is, lack of access to water and sanitation is due to inefficiencies on both the demand side and supply side.

The solutions to these problems therefore should be built around participation by both government and citizen groups so that both may take actions as part of their duties and responsibilities to Karachi a city where safe drinking water and proper sanitation facilities is available to all. This is the premise of the Karachi Water Partnership model which encourages all stakeholders to take ownership of their scarce water resources and enables them to employ in more efficient, equitable and ecologically sustainable practices and management of these resources.

2. Decisions and Actions Taken

With the realization and firm belief that the provision of clean and safe drinking water and sanitation facilities for all Karachi citizens is absolutely critical and an issue that requires urgent attention, a group of concerned citizens came together in 2000 and floated the concept of a water partnership for the city of Karachi to promote Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) processes and outcomes. This group consisted of individuals from various facets of water management, including 2 government officials (belonging to the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board), 1 water specialist, 1 water conservation and marine wetlands specialist and 1

farmer from Karachi's agricultural periphery. Initially, when this group called for a joint government-citizen ownership and collaboration for water conservation and improved management of water and sewerage, they were told that what they intended was impossible because Karachi was so vast and a hot bed of political, social and ethnic unrest. This only strengthened their resolve to succeed and they began to speak widely on these issues, produce papers as well as engage with different groups of stakeholders.

The concept of Karachi Water Partnership (KWP) was fine-tuned in September 2006 and a seven member Management Committee was also formed. This committee included four members from the original group and three others who were willing to dedicate time, office space and financial resources. An Advisory Council comprising twelve members was also set up to provide overall strategy and direction to KWP at the time. After years of internal debate and discussions, and meetings with local and international agencies, the members of the Management Committee and Advisory Council were confident to take KWP a step forward and thus KWP was formally launched in April 2007 with an open call for partnership for the citizens of Karachi.

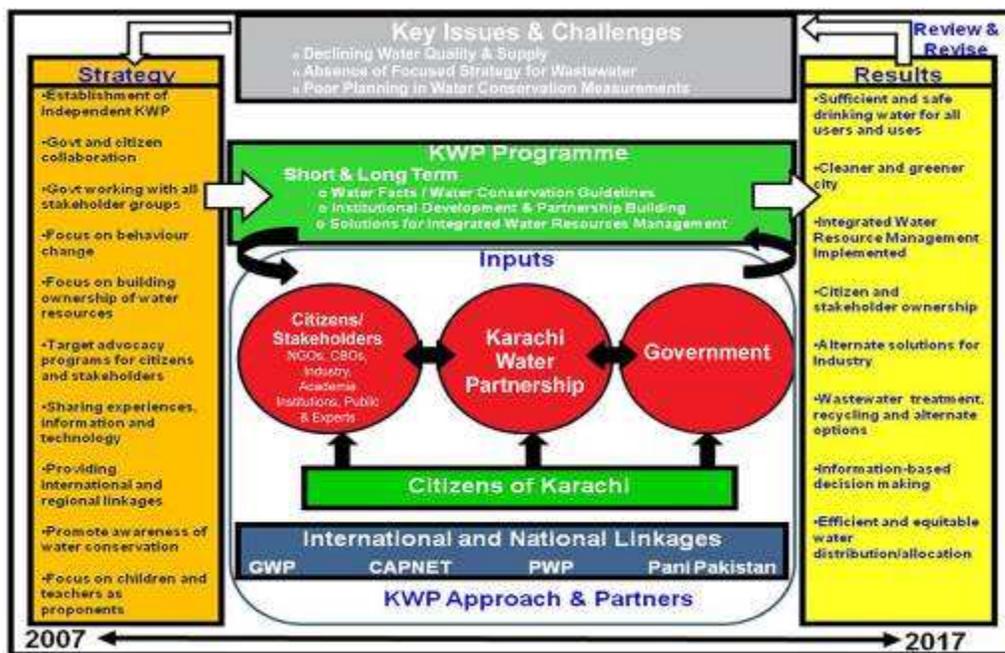
Karachi Water Partnership was launched as an initiative of the Hisaar Foundation, a foundation working towards water, food and livelihood security issues with a vision of balancing environment with development through innovation and a mission of promoting creative, low-cost solutions and policies for conservation in Pakistan. Hisaar Foundation's belief that public-private partnerships are essential to solve the water challenges of Karachi and that the government, private sector, civil society and citizens all have to work together for transparency, better governance, better management, improved service delivery and conservation of water for all uses led it to undertake the bold and extremely challenging task of establishing the Karachi Water Partnership initiative.

The vision of the Karachi Water Partnership (KWP) is a Karachi with safe and sufficient water resources for all essential purposes. Its mission is to support the development of an environment friendly Karachi with focus on safe water, conservation and management of sewage, industrial and solid waste. And the initiative is primarily geared towards the specific aim of building citizen ownership of water resources in order to ensure safe and sufficient water for all essential purposes for the different user groups of water residing in the city of Karachi.

The short term phase of KWP (January 2007 to December 2008) aimed at institutional development and capacity building within all stakeholder groups in order to implement IWRM processes in decision-making with regards to water distribution and consumption in Karachi. This initial phase envisaged building partnerships, engaging stakeholders, conducting dialogues and training workshops, and disseminating training and awareness materials with regards to improved water management and water conservation practices. To this end, it was decided to launch and establish an Area Water Partnership (AWP) as a "proof of concept" in one of the eighteen towns of Karachi. Gulshan-e-Iqbal Town (GIT) was chosen to be the model town to launch the pilot AWP owing to its varied demographic and economic structure.

The AWP concept emerged as a innovative tool to foster development, provide a transparent, universal and neutral platform for stakeholders from all concerned sectors of society, both government and citizen groups, to engage in dialogue with each other and cohesively develop committed action plans, to improve water supply and sanitation issues in their own capacities and resolve general public issues in timely and cost effective ways, by leveraging each partner's resources and blend their expertise to achieve the best possible results.

To firmly establish the GIT AWP, KWP hosted five training dialogues with different stakeholder groups including Citizens of GIT, Women of GIT, Media, Town Administrators and Academia to orient them to IWRM processes and induct them in the partnership. Unlike traditional public-private partnership (PPP) models that are only limited to the integration of the public and private sectors, the KWP model is built on a more comprehensive vision and philosophy of government-citizen collaboration perpetuated by citizen-based activism across all sectors where each stakeholder group is represented in the decision-making process and no one group enjoys special privileges over others. That is, the KWP model is built on the premise of participation by both government and citizen groups, including industries, private sector, civil society and consumers. This is to ensure that all stakeholders play a key role in addressing the city's water issues and that each takes action as part of their duties and responsibilities to manage and allocate scarce water resources between competing uses in a more efficient, equitable and sustainable manner.



Karachi Water Partnership Model

Within the GIT AWP, KWP also initiated a pilot school programme that aimed at providing support to public schools of GIT to improve their environment and ensure provision of safe drinking water and wastewater management facilities in these institutions. KWP also helped in

launching and establishing a local town chapter of the Women and Water Network in GIT. The experience with the women of GIT proved to be highly successful and dynamic. The members of the GIT WWN, on their own initiative, established WWNs at the local Union Council level as well. All in all, they established 13 WWNs at the UC level and linked these back to the greater town level WWN. They also decided that they would take on the responsibility of the ensuring implementation and monitoring of the school programme within their local union council jurisdictions. As a result, it was collectively agreed and decided that women can be dynamic instruments of bringing about behavioural change within towns of Karachi mega city and that the establishment of WWNs should precede the launching of AWP in other towns in the future. The Executive Committee members went a step beyond and also played an instrumental role in identifying women in their localities to be part of hands-on trainings on home based food production.

Additionally, water conservation guidelines for homes, schools and offices were also jointly developed by KWP and the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KW&SB). This partnership spirit was taken forward by the local GIT administration who bore the printing and distribution costs of these guidelines. As a result, over one million water conservation guidelines were attached to water bills and distributed by KW&SB for three consecutive billing cycles. The GIT administration also instituted a water cell and provided training to 19 water inspectors on various aspects to help them better understand the water agenda and their role in water conservation as well being an integral and direct link between the government and the people. KW&SB provided the venue for training, and bore the transport costs of the distribution staff and personnel support.

In order to ensure effective monitoring and implementation of goals set forth by the GIT AWP, a twenty-three member Steering Committee was duly formed and instituted. This Steering Committee comprised of members from the local town administration, KW&SB, members of Hisaar Foundation, members of KWP, GIT WWN members, elected representatives and residents of GIT.

The GIT AWP experience proved that water challenges cannot be overcome without the proactive support and collaboration of the government and citizen groups and other stakeholders and that solutions to these problems can only be found if they are built around participation by both government and citizen groups, so that both may take actions as part of their duties and responsibilities.

While KWP evolved as a multi-stakeholder platform which provided space for discussion, arguments, consensus and agreed action on the part of the stakeholder groups in the city, it also served as an umbrella to the town level urban water partnership established in Gulshan-e-Iqbal Town (GIT) and other town level AWP.

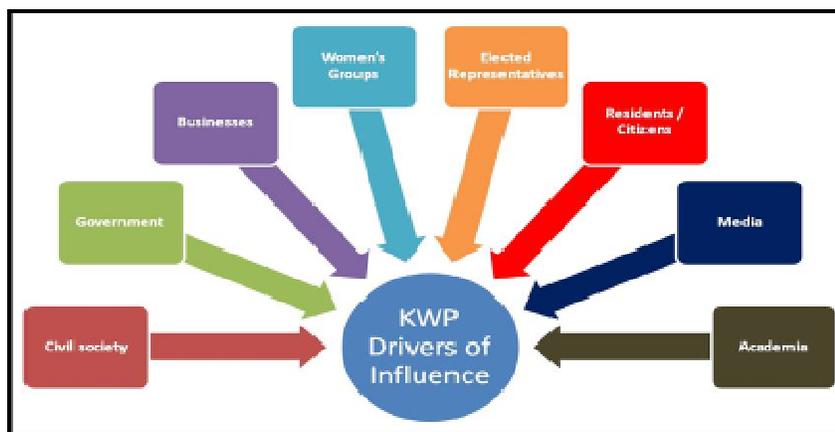
The GIT AWP model not only served as a forum where all users and stakeholders of water collectively engaged in dialogue and decision-making with regards to the competing uses of water resources in a manner that was transparent, participatory and inclusive of all but also emerged as a innovative tool to foster the cohesive development of committed action plans on

the part of all stakeholder groups, to improve water supply issues in their own capacities and resolve general public issues in timely and cost effective ways, by leveraging each partner's resources and blend their expertise to achieve the best possible results.

It also set the pattern of building citizen ownership of water resources in order to ensure safe and sufficient water for all essential purposes for the different user groups of water residing in the city of Karachi and brought recognition and acceptance of the role and responsibility on the part of each stakeholder group and thereby brought about a behavioural change among the citizens in relation to water resources conservation and management.

KWP through its process of dialogues with the City District Government Karachi (CDGK), the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB), the administrative Towns of Karachi, the private sector, civil society groups and citizens of Karachi obtained strategic outcomes by making the stakeholders realize that each one of them had a responsibility towards the water resources of the city and unless and until they played their part and took responsibility of their actions the water and sanitation issues that they faced could not be resolved.

The collaboration has grown to be a strong partnership between the public and the private sector, encompassing the government, community, individuals, NGOs, and private sector in funding, management, and operations for urban water management in the mega city. Each partner has a complementary role according to its comparative advantage while maintaining its own identity. KWP's belief that each partner should do what it does best, has provided benefits by allocating the responsibilities and risks to the party that is best positioned to implement and control the activity to produce the required results. The KWP model has shown that each AWP can have its own "driver of influence" – that is, each AWP can and is spearheaded by different agents and women alone would not be held responsible to ensure its success.



KWP Drivers of Influence

3. Outcomes

During 2007-2013, KWP successfully brought in a wide range of partners (government, private sector, civil society, elected representatives, media, academia, water professionals, women and

individuals), signed seven Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with city-based institutions, including Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KW&SB), held 4 Partners' Conferences, 2 Conferences on Water Conservation, 21 training workshops, 12 thematic dialogues, 25 Management Group meetings, 3 Advisory Council meetings and 65 Stakeholder meetings and approximately 50 smaller dialogues and meetings with other groups. It also developed and circulated water conservation and management guidelines in English, Urdu and Sindhi for homes, offices, schools, industries and mosques. In 2008, Karachi Water Partnership took forward the water partnership concept to set up a model Town Area Water Partnership (AWP) in Gulshan-e-Iqbal (GIT). As a result of the success of the public-private partnership approach in GIT AWP, KWP has now also successfully established Area Water Partnerships (AWPs) in 6 Towns of Karachi mega city:

- Gulshan-e-Iqbal Town AWP
- Landhi Town AWP
- Gulberg Town AWP
- Lyari Town AWP
- Bin Qasim Town AWP
- Saddar Town AWP

KWP has also succeeded in establishing nine Women and Water Networks in Karachi mega city including Gulshan-e-Iqbal Town (notwithstanding the 13 WWNs at Union Council level in GIT) to date:

- Gulshan-e-Iqbal Town WWN
- UC 1- UC 13 GIT WWN(s)
- Lyari Town WWN
- Karachi WWN
- Landhi Town WWN
- Jamshed Town WWN
- Gulberg Town WWN
- Keamari Town WWN
- Bin Qasim Town WWN
- Saddar Town WWN

These outcomes were achieved through a series of stakeholder dialogues and workshops which were organized with the support of GWP and the International Capacity Building Network (CapNet). The dialogues focused on building partnerships, engaging stakeholders and disseminating training and awareness raising materials towards solving the city's water and sewerage problems and in particular launching the IWRM programme in GIT (supported by GWP) that could serve as a model that could further be replicated in other towns of Karachi mega city. The support provided by GWP in bringing about this change, led the way for

furthering this concept into other Towns of Karachi, through the collaboration and support of other partners at the national and international levels.

These dialogues and training workshops held in various towns across Karachi led to the establishment of a forum for all users and stakeholders of water to collectively engage in dialogue and decision-making with regards to the competing uses of water resources in a manner that is transparent, participatory and inclusive of all, building of citizen ownership of water resources in order to ensure safe and sufficient water for all essential purposes for the different user groups of water residing in the city of Karachi and bringing about a behavioural change among the citizens in relation to water resources management and conservation.

Water conservation guidelines were jointly developed by Karachi Water Partnership and the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board which provided information on the ways in which water could be conserved in schools, homes, offices, industries and mosques. Being the first initiative of its kind in raising awareness on water issues, these guidelines were an eye-opener for water users, especially as domestic consumers since most people were not aware of the drastic water situation faced by Karachi. Water conservation guidelines were highly lauded by consumers not only because they raised awareness but more so because these guidelines provided practical solutions to alleviate the water problem. These guidelines informed residents about measures and practical steps that they could take which would help them conserve water and thus contribute to mitigating the water problem of Karachi.



KWP has provided twenty government schools with clean drinking water and toilets, and three more clusters of schools are currently undergoing interventions. Water conservation training and orientation programmes for teachers and students are well established. KWP has carried out an extensive public awareness campaign through print, film and broadcast media to inform all stakeholders of the seriousness of the water crisis, developing and promoting innovative and successful solutions for a mega city, while defining the role of different groups of citizens.



To encapsulate the learning and experiences of the multi-stakeholder partnership approach and develop a wider knowledge base, Hisaar Foundation, through its KWP initiative, has also developed a series of modules, handbooks and documents on Gender Mainstreaming and IWRM, as well another set on the establishment of water partnerships at various levels in urban and rural areas.

During the process of developing and building the Karachi Water Partnership, **Hisaar Foundation developed a new concept of 'cost synergy'**. This concept is based on each partner spending its own money to carry out commitments (made within the ambit of the water partnership it belongs to), such that the value of the output is much more than a simple $1+1=2$. We believe in each partner doing what it does in a better way and that any institution or group that believes and expresses that such and such needs to be done, should be the first one to demonstrate this and spend their own money in this endeavour.

KWP for the first time introduced the concept of Mutual Accountability as a model in Saddar Town in Karachi. This concept was successfully used as a mechanism through which different stakeholders of water resources, namely the government user groups, service delivery agencies and other stakeholders were brought together on a common universal platform for collective action to ensure better management and conservation of water resources.

The Mutual Accountability concept encouraged stakeholders to engage in dialogue with each other and move forward together, rather than against each other and cohesively develop committed action plans and take responsibility for their behaviour towards the resource as part of their obligations and duties. This process led to the development of a Mutual Accountability Protocol to help others in establishing AWP and WWNs as institutional mechanisms for the conservation and management of water resources.

A successful example of Hisaar Foundation's principle of cost synergy, where each institutional partner spends its own money to carry out commitments, was the development, printing and distribution of water conservation guidelines to schools, offices and homes of

Gulshan-e-Iqbal town. KWP and KW&SB jointly developed these water conservation guidelines for schools, offices and homes. The partnership spirit was taken forward by the GIT Town Administration which paid for the printing and distribution costs of these guidelines for distribution within the Town. In this instance, no one paid anyone else to do their job; each partner spent money as per their own rules and; each partner saw, understood and acted on their own responsibility to complete the task at hand.

These significant changes brought about as a result of the partnerships has shown that this concept can be taken forward and the gap between various stakeholders including citizens, government, industries and civil society organizations in other Towns across Karachi can also be bridged.

4. Lessons Learned and Replicability

During the process of promoting the establishment of public-private platforms to bring about effective, transparent, accountable, equitable and citizen friendly governance in the water sector as well as develop a civic sense of responsibility towards water consumption and find real solutions on the ground, several strategic lessons emerged, the most relevant of which are outlined below.

The most important lesson to be gained from the Karachi Water Partnership experience is that water challenges cannot be overcome without the proactive support and collaboration of the government and citizen groups and other stakeholders and that solutions to these problems can only be found if they are built around participation by both government and citizen groups, so that both may take actions as part of their duties and responsibilities. A multi-sectoral, inter-sectoral, transparent, egalitarian and inclusive approach which uses the three “E”s of IWRM – efficiency, equity and ecological sustainability – is required to address the inefficiencies of the public water sector. The KWP model is a participatory partnership model primarily based on government-citizen collaboration and citizen-based activism that identifies and creates avenues for collective action to ensure a Karachi with safe and sufficient water resources for all essential purposes.

The Karachi Water Partnership experience has also shown that that through active involvement of all stakeholders, the shortcomings of established services can be overcome by simply improving the existing delivery mechanisms and suggesting ways in which these existing services can be made more efficient, equitable and sustainable.

Through the entire process we have learned that there are certain “best practices” to make the water partnership work. These “best practices” are outlined in detail below:

There should be a recognition and acceptance that each partner type (government, private sector, civil society, media, citizens, academia, etc) has a role and responsibility in addition to rights in water management and consumption.

Each partner should do what it already does but in a better way and more efficiently. This also means a recognition and acceptance that the roles and responsibilities of each partner are unique and specific to that partner type.

Flexibility is vital when it comes to building and sustaining a water partnership. Each partner should be open and accommodating of other people's perspectives and opinions. The water partnership should provide a universal platform for open discussion regarding the competing uses and users of scarce water resources.

The varied experiences in the formation of different town AWP's in KWP have shown us that there can be different "drivers of influence" in each AWP. It is recommended that these "drivers of influence" are quickly identified and supported to channelize them to be vanguards of the AWP.

We have also learned that the formation of a Steering Committee for each AWP is essential to take it forward and provide overall strategic direction. This structure is also of a non-hierarchical nature that allows for holistic and comprehensive decision-making where all stakeholder perspectives are taken into consideration.

The KWP model is one that is easy to replicate, irrespective of size and scope of the area being targeted, as long as the local government authorities and citizens actively participate in the partnership. The government is a partner that is absolutely critical in taking the KWP model to scale. If the government does not cooperate in the partnership, it is highly unlikely to succeed. Therefore, the problems foreseen are the volatility and uncertainty in the government structure that would pose a great risk to the sustainability of the water partnerships.

5. Contacts, References, Organisations and People

References:

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