

FINAL REPORT

Narrative Report

01/07/2005 --- 31/01/2006

PROJECT TITLE

**UNDERSTANDING THE GAPS BETWEEN THE WATER AND
SANITATION SERVICE NEEDS OF THE MOST VULNERABLE IN
RURAL COMMUNITIES AND THE POLICY RESPONSE AT THE
MUNICIPAL LEVEL.**

BUSHBUCKRIDGE, SOUTH AFRICA.

EZA 1980-02/2005

This text has been drafted with financial assistance from the Government of Austria. The views expressed herein are those of the beneficiary and therefore in no way reflect the official opinion of the Government.



**CARE Österreich
CARE Country Office**

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

GoA	Government of Austria
COe	CARE Oesterreich
Care SA	Care South Africa
WHELL	Water Health and Livelihoods Project
AWARD	Association for Water and Rural development
SWELL	Securing Water to Enhance Local Livelihoods
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
WSDP	Water Services Development Plan
HBC	Home Based Care
CDF	Community Development Forum
VWC	Village Water Committee
DWAF	Department of Water Affairs and Forestry
LM	Local Municipality
DM	District Municipality

PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET

Country	South Africa
Project title	Inclusive Governance and Development in Limpopo
Thematic area	Social empowerment
GoA contribution	75%
Other Donors	25%
Location of project	Bushbuckridge
Target population	Bushbuckridge population
Estimated starting date	1 July 2005
Estimated project duration	7 months (extension requested)
Name and address of the applicant organization	CARE Österreich, Lange Gasse 30/4, 1080 Vienna
Contact Person of the applicant organization	Janine Wurzer
Name and official position of the authorized representative of the organization to sign the contract	Ulrike Schelander, National Director
Local implementing agency	CARE South Africa and AWARD
Overall objective	Model developed for decentralised and inclusive governance that mainstreams the water and sanitation needs of the most vulnerable people in communities where CARE and partner organisations work in South Africa.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
1.3 A focus on vulnerability.....	4
2 CHANGES IN THE SETTING OF THE PROJECT	5
2.1 Background.....	5
2.2 Project Strategy.....	5
2.3 Other Interventions.....	6
3 PROGRESS ACCORDING TO PROPOSAL.....	6
3.1 Achievements against overall objective.....	6
3.2 Achievements against intermediate objectives.....	6
3.3 Activities.....	6
4 SUSTAINABILITY	8
4.1 Political support	8
5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	8
5.1 Problems Encountered	8
5.2 Lessons Learned	8
6 ANNEX	9
6.1 Publications, Papers and Presentations	9

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Providing water for productive uses can enhance people's livelihood options by making significant additions to household food security and nutrition, and generate income. Research by the Association for Water and Rural Development (AWARD) in Bushbuckridge showed that where villagers had more water, the economic activities of many poor households in the village doubled (Pérez de Mendiguren and Mabelane, 2001). Typical examples of productive uses in those villages included brick making, watering of cattle and goats, small home-based industries such as hair salons, beer brewing and ice making, and backyard or community gardens.

The current reality is that poor people draw water from many sources which they use for many purposes as they seek to sustain their livelihoods. However service providers, coming from different tiers and sections within government, are concerned with their specific sub-sectoral mandates, and do not easily coordinate and integrate their activities and budgets. Even though there are new planning frameworks in place in South Africa whose purpose is to facilitate integrated development – Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) –, these are still weak and tried and tested practical tools to implement them and mechanisms are not yet in place. This leads to services which do not meet the multiple demands of people in a coordinated and coherent way. This in turn affects their livelihood options and also the management and sustainability of water services.

Within this context, AWARD has been supporting¹ the Bushbuckridge Local Municipality, in its planning process through a number of methodologies and tools for a community based, participatory and holistic approach to water services. These have resulted in a methodology, called SWELL (Securing Water to Enhance Local Livelihoods). This seeks to provide a comprehensive framework and set of tools for the participatory assessment of the role of water in people's livelihoods and the planning of water resources and water services to enhance people's livelihoods. In this, it aims to link up with Municipal planning frameworks such as the IDPs.

SWELL is being developed into a ward level planning methodology. The process was carried out in seven villages of Ward 16 of the Bushbuckridge Local Municipality 2004 and early 2005, in close collaboration with a range of stakeholders. This resulted in an agreement on objectives and strategies for the ward, and some budgets were approved. A forum consisting of community structures, local government and locally based government departments was established for implementation, monitoring and learning.

1.3 A focus on vulnerability

Through the latter half of 2005 the SWELL programme, with support from Care South Africa, and with funds via the Austrian Government and Care Austria, undertook a water and livelihoods assessments in 4 of the remaining 5 villages of Ward 16: Seville B, Dixie, Lephong and Hluvakani. This was done as a pilot within the ongoing SWELL programme. The team sought to focus on the most vulnerable, and what their needs may be, and how these are being and could be responded to. This meant an adaptation of the methodology, and including new stakeholders in the process: the Department of Health and Social Development, and Home-Based Caregivers and related structures. The most vulnerable households in the villages were interviewed, not a cross-section as in previous assessments. In addition to this, a consultant carried out specific research into the institutional and policy environment, to strengthen the understanding of how municipalities and government sectors prioritize and respond to vulnerable people in their policies and programmes.

¹ In the South African administrative system, the Local Municipality (LM) is the lowest administrative unit. Several local Municipalities form a District Municipality (DM). A province is conformed of several DMs. The specific division of responsibilities for water supply and sanitation between LMs and DMs differs from case to case.

2 CHANGES IN THE SETTING OF THE PROJECT

2.1 Background

As this was designed as a six month pilot project, thus with a short time span, no major changes in the environment occurred. Thus the assumptions in the project document all remain valid.

In the more immediate organizational sphere, the lead partner of this pilot is Care South Africa – Lesotho, and there was a new appointment that took place in the early part of the project period, which led to some delays in the appointment of consultants and the start up of some project activities.

Since AWARD was undertaking mayor part of this pilot by building on previous work, the delays did not undermine the major action research tasks; but put some time pressure on the final stages, which has affected to a degree the final outcomes. Planning could not go as far into implementation detail as hoped, and the research product is not as “polished” as is ideal. Therefore the project has been extended for another 5 month. Nevertheless the important content was covered, and if the extension is approved there will be opportunity to work with the research material in the coming year.

2.2 Project Strategy

Changes in the logframe (objectives, activities, results)

There was no change in objectives. Initial work was done on developing indicators for monitoring progress in meeting the needs of the most vulnerable – at village and municipal level.

For completion in the extension period the following activities are relevant:

- Develop recommendations regarding project design resulting from the pilot findings
- Develop recommendations regarding methodology that can be utilised to enable effective participation of vulnerable groups within IDP, and water/sanitation related delivery
- Examine to which extent the baseline study findings are representative of the situation faced by other vulnerable communities in South Africa with the specific intention of informing national policy, practice and prioritisation.

This will be carried forward in the new year, and the foundation and the momentum is there for this. The pilot was somewhat over-ambitious, and that a further five months is needed to complete these activities above.

The villages where the action research was carried out changed slightly. This was because the work was planned in a participatory way with the Ward Committee of Ward 16, and direction was taken from them as to which villages should be worked in. The Ward Committee requested that 5 villages be part of the assessment: Seville B, Dixie, Lephong, Hluvakani and Athol. This was because these villages had not yet been part of any assessment, whereas the other villages have been through a planning process with AWARD, and they felt it was important for inter-village relations that the new villages be done now. Thus rather than deepening the information on villages worked in before, new villages were assessed, which meant more work than originally planned. However AWARD felt happy with the reassign of the request, and that it would lead to good results. In implementation Athol village became a problem due to a local conflict, so only the first four villages were part of the process (as opposed to Gottenburgh, Seville C and Delani as proposed).

The training of the assessment team became two distinct activities, rather than the initial plan of having one such event. The first involved a training and planning workshop with the mix of departmental staff from the Departments for Water, Agriculture and Social Development, municipal officials, Home Based Care Managers, and community members from Ward and community structures. These participants then carried out the village level assessments. A further step was taken with Home Based Carers from each of the four villages, plus their managers, undergoing training to work with the team in carrying out the household interviews. In doing all this additional facilitators were contracted by AWARD to join the facilitating team, and this enabled more interviews to be carried out, and for work to happen concurrently and so for the deadline was met.

2.3 Other Interventions

An additional activity also became that of having the gender consultant design and run a joint analysis workshop to bring together the village, household and institutional analysis, using a conceptual and planning framework to do so. In addition this consultant introduced the team to tools for their own use and to use in their work with communities that work on sustaining and managing energy. This turned out to be a very important addition, as the four field staff were not only exhausted by the two months of intensive training and field work, but were exposed very intensely to the distress of the highly vulnerable, and this provided them with a chance to process this emotionally and physically.

3 PROGRESS ACCORDING TO PROPOSAL

3.1 Achievements against overall objective

To develop and implement an effective and workable model of decentralised and inclusive governance that mainstreams the water and sanitation needs of the most vulnerable people in rural areas.

3.2 Achievements against intermediate objectives

Objective 1: To improve the understanding of the gaps between the water and service needs of the most vulnerable and the policy response at the municipal level. Generation of conceptual framework that is formed by participatory sectoral experience

This objective was met – the understanding of the gaps in terms of the most vulnerable are now much greater (see research report for the analysis).

Objective 2. To design a programme that develops a methodology that guides villagers and external agencies through the process of developing practical and achievable implementation plans underpinned by effective and inclusive mechanisms of (local) governance

A strategy was developed by the team, and a first engagement on this undertaken with villagers and external agencies. However designing a programme and set of indicators will take more time – these are very new concepts, and the analysis of the gaps shows that a careful process of awareness raising along with programme and indicator development is called for, that will take more time. Still at least a EU proposal was developed and submitted to carry on this objective.

3.3 Activities

Objective One:

1.1. Situational Analyses:

Determine what support structures are in the area (FBOs, CBOs, etc.)

Agree with the selected 3 villages in Ward 16 on the need for the assessment and methodology to be used **Done – 4 villages selected with Ward Committee**

Prepare and train the assessment team on community and household assessments (will be comprised of members of civil society organisations, and local government representatives), and support them to carry out the assessment. Information will include:

- ◆ Criteria for, types of and number of vulnerable households in each village
- ◆ Their water and sanitation requirements, in the context of the overall village water and sanitation situation
- ◆ What support is available to these households from what sources (local, municipal, state), and what are they able to access (and why, and why not). This will require a review of the existing mechanisms of governance, to determine the decision making trail and how representative are the players involved
- ◆ Their capacity to construct and manage rainwater collection and tanks
- ◆ The suitability of their structure and ground for rainwater harvesting.
- ◆ Institutional assessment of municipal knowledge, activities and practices (KAP) – understanding of problem around water, sanitation and vulnerable groups

Done as planned. 4 villages assessed and 80 households interviewed. This data has been analysed at a first level, but should go into a data base for more intensive analysis for various purposes. (proposed for the extension period)

1.2. Information collection from other research organisations in the area

Collect information from other Witwatersrand University's Rural facility, and related programmes (there are programmes on health, refugees, HIV/AIDS, natural resources and disability), as well as secondary sources on services available at the ward, municipal and district levels. **Done**

1.3. Conduct a retrospective review of the IDP, both with regards to its content, but also of the processes of its development and reviews. It will be important to determine who participated, and in what way, through document review and interviews with varied stakeholders. **Done – see research report**

1.4. Develop indicators for monitoring progress in meeting the needs of the most vulnerable – at village and municipal level. Facilitate processes of developing indicators for monitoring inclusion of vulnerable groups in decision-making processes. **Delayed – this needs more time and a careful process of awareness raising along with indicator development**

1.5. Analyse what the gaps are, and what the constraints and opportunities for inclusive governance are, in the specific context of the Ward 16 of the Bohlabela District. **Done – see research report**

Objective Two

2.1. Analysis of causes, nature, extent and consequences of inadequate water and sanitation services on vulnerable groups. The linkages between the various interconnected issues will be highlighted. **Done – see research report**

2.2. Analysis of efficacy of decentralised governance in reaching and responding to needs of most vulnerable **Done – see research report**

2.3. Analysis of blockages in vulnerable groups access and utilisation of decision making structures **Done – see research report**

2.4. Recommendations regarding project design resulting from the pilot findings **partially done – needs more time to refine**

2.5. Recommendations regarding methodology that can be utilised to enable effective participation of vulnerable groups within IDP, and water/sanitation related delivery **broad strategies in place, but needs more time for detailed development**

2.6. Recommendations regarding the selection of 2 pilot sites for implementation phase of project, and **delayed – needs to go with awareness raising and programme development, not be rushed.**

2.7. Extent to which the baseline study findings are representative of the situation faced by other vulnerable communities in South Africa with the specific intention of informing national policy, practice and prioritisation **some indication is given by consultant (see research report, but this is not really done.**

4 SUSTAINABILITY

4.1 Political support

The participants in the training and planning workshop and village assessments – i.e. local level departmental staff and local leadership, have a high level of interest and support for this process. (See workshop report). It is less clear that there will be higher level departmental or municipal support – for reasons given in the research report. This is informing the strategies adopted. A proposal has been submitted to the EC to sustain the process.

5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Problems Encountered

The most vulnerable people tend to remain hidden from view, they fall below the line of visibility. It is very easy to fall in with the view that “everyone needs water”, and so looking at the needs of the most vulnerable is not a priority – if its fixed at community level their needs will also be taken care of. At government level the identification of needs is devolved downwards, and there is little sense that decision makers want to, or are able to, see the “invisible”. Since local government is not coping with discharging its duties now, there is a feeling they would be overwhelmed if they did try to see the differentiation, and just how bad things are for the poorest and most vulnerable. This makes it difficult to see how to improve things.

At one level it is valid – if water supplies were working at the RDP standard then the most vulnerable would have a number of their water needs met. However there are special problem some households face with regard to water, which, if recognised, could be responded to more immediately. Moreover if they were recognised, there may be solutions for the broader community that get addressed more effectively than is currently being done. There is a real sense that officials do not want to see how bad things are.

There are some policies in place that should be supportive to the most vulnerable in the villages. The understanding of these is usually limited, and the implementation a far cry from what policy intended.

5.2 Lessons Learned

We each come from our own personal places regarding gender roles and gender equality, and this colours what we see and how we understand what we see in terms of inequity, and even more, it shapes what we see as appropriate responses. We cannot by pass this personal intersection with organizational policy.

It was extremely painful for the facilitating team to be confronted with the realities of the most vulnerable – and it tells us something of why they remain invisible – it is easier not to look at that. This means team members need to be equipped to work at this level – to

respond appropriately to what they find, and to be able to process emotionally and physically to what they are experiencing.

While it remains important, we cannot only work with awareness raising and developing tools for service providers – we also need to work with the invisible people to help them have ‘voice’ – to demand they are seen and heard, to have service and accountability.

6 ANNEX

6.1 Publications, Papers and Presentations

1. Understanding the gaps between the water and sanitation service needs of the most vulnerable in rural communities and the policy response at the municipal level. Bushbuckridge, South Africa. December 2005
2. CARE South Africa. Development and Water Service Planning in Bushbuckridge: An initial investigation December 2005. Umhlaba Development Services.
3. Analysis Workshop SWELL assessment in 4 villages of Ward 16, Bushbuckridge *Understanding the gaps between the water and sanitation service needs of the most vulnerable in rural communities and the policy response at the municipal level.* 28th November 2005