Unstructured Post Construction Support under Structured Local Governance: Evidences from Rural Drinking Water Service Delivery- Kerala, India

V. Kurian Baby* and P.K. Kurian**

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*Sponsored by Water for People - https://www.waterforpeople.org/ Views are personal
Global shift from supply driven large schemes to demand driven small community piped schemes as rural water service delivery model

- **1980s** - UN International Decade for Drinking Water and Sanitation
- **1990s** - Demand responsive Approach and community based-management
- **2000s** - Decentralization; PPP’s for small piped water system, programmatic approach (SWAP) and donors harmonization
- **2010s** - Shifting focus from infrastructure creation to sustainable service delivery approach (SDA)
  - Professional management, Long term support and water security

Centralised approach in the **1960s** and **70s**
CBM Dominate RWSS Model Globally – We are reaching there!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service delivery model options</th>
<th>Ethiopia</th>
<th>Mozambq</th>
<th>Burkina</th>
<th>Uganda</th>
<th>Ghana</th>
<th>Benin</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Honduras</th>
<th>Sri Lanka</th>
<th>Thailand</th>
<th>Colombia</th>
<th>South Africa</th>
<th>USA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural coverage (%); JMP, 210</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>84</td>
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<td>88</td>
<td>98</td>
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<td>Private contracting (includes to NGOs or CBOs)</td>
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<td>Local govt. /municipal Provider</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Association of community or user associations</td>
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<td>Urban utility (public, private or mixed)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Lockwood, H. & Smits, S., 2011
Cracks in Community Based Management (CBM)?

**CBM: Basic Principles**

- Empower communities to plan and implement small water systems with partial capital cost recovery
- Handover schemes to communities for post construction management through full life cycle cost recovery
- CBM has been recognized as an integral part of decentralized local governance on the principle of subsidiarity

**CBM under critical scanner now!**

- Recent evidences show sustainability concerns.
- Increasing slippage
- Successful only in very small rural communities
- Critical of decentralization as a means to attain sustainable service delivery
Testing the Hypothesis
Withering CBM - What does evidences say?

- Analytical Revisit to a local government in Kerala, India where CBM is a dominant service delivery model for over a decade
- Test the validity of basic principles of CBM in the context of globally acclaimed decentralised local governance model
- Identify critical post construction support Gaps in sustainable services —everyone forever
Kerala’s Unique Decentralization Model

- Big bang approach in mid 1990s (People’s planning)
- Transferred 3 F’s (funds, functions, functionaries) at a stroke
- Under 73\textsuperscript{rd} & 74\textsuperscript{th} National constitution amendment
- 25-30\% funds devolved (in 2016-17 INR 72 billion –US$ 1.10 billion)
- Grama Panchayat (GP) is the lowest tier of government –average population 35000 and budget US$ 615,000
- Water supply and sanitation is one of the 27 subjects transferred to local self government Institutions (LSGIs)
- GPs on an average spend 6-8\% of their annual budget of water supply - 13400 Community schemes (cover 2.3 million people)
- In drinking water supply - multiple funding sources and multiple service delivery models co-existing
Kerala - CBM coincided with Decentralization

- Olavanna Model (early 1990s) 30 small piped schemes self-started
- World Bank funded RWSS ($ 80 million) “Jalanidhi” started in 1999

- Mundathicode was one of first generation the pilot GPs to test CBM
  - 26 small piped water schemes in 2001-2002 (registered entities; open dug well based piped schemes- 100% house connection)
  - State (GoK): GP: Community:: 75:15:10 capital cost sharing
  - Handed over to communities for O&M full cost recovery
  - GP scaled up in 2008-10 another 13 Small Piped Water supply schemes ( same demand driven model) totaling 39
  - Average size 65 HH (population 375) ranging 16-217 households
  - Revisit after 15 years to test sustainability of CBM
Location Map of Mundathicode Grama Panchayath, Thrissur, Kerala*

Thrissur, Kerala – India: Area of GP 23.37 sq. km.

* Now made part of Vadackanchery municipality
Methodological Framework of study

Preparatory Processes & Study Design
- Reconnaissance and discussions with GP Board and Office Bearers of CMWSS
- Review of Secondary Information
- Designing the Tools and methods and pre-testing

Consultations and Field Level Enquiries
- Stakeholder Workshop
- Survey of WSS
- FGD
- Technical assessment
- Water Quality Analysis

Analysis and Arriving at Findings, learning and Report
- Analysis of Institutional Technical and Financial aspects
- Presenting findings and receiving feedback from GP Board and BG Federation

Final Report
Key Findings

- 100% schemes are sustainable over 15 years with full O&M cost recovery
- Overall satisfaction rating by beneficiary households is high at 81%
- However
  - **Source unsustainability** – leading to contraction in membership
  - **Over extraction** to keep service level – schemes not metered except one
  - **Quality unsustainability** - 75% schemes do not check water quality periodically – water potable but high iron and bacteriological contamination
  - High operator turnover – **continued training needs** at all levels including GP – the service authority
  - **Inequity in services** in hilly and tail ends of network NOT metered
Key Findings (contd....)

- Erosion of social capital - emerging provider-consumer relations
- Management sticky – new members not willing to take charge
- Tariff inadequate to meet CapManEx & Contingency risk
- Inadequate repairs and maintenance leading to interrupted supply (only 23% have surplus funds)
- Increasing complexity of PWS – technology and scale
- Modality is crisis management – one time contribution by members, GP, others
- Post Construction support mechanism ad hoc, unpredictable and not ring fenced
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability Parameters</th>
<th>Post construction Support (PCS) Gaps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Service Provider (SP) Communities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Technical**            | • Lack of internal technical capacity and capacity to out-source  
                          | • Lack of arrangements for trouble shooting and correct design flaws. | • Capacity constraints to facilitate technical backstopping to SP |
| **Financial & Managerial** | • Weak Tariff administration and cost recovery  
                          | • Weak financial strength and surplus for CapManex and risk financing  
                          | • Weak financial planning, management and poor capacity for resource mobilization | • No control of financial sustainability  
                          | • Lack of transparency  
                          | • Weak financial planning, management and poor capacity for resource mobilization | • Ad hoc arrangements to finance risk and contingencies – not ring fenced  
                          | • Over extraction and over pumping  
                          | • Source unsustainability and disregard source protection | • Ineffective systems of social audit |
| **Source/ Environmental** | • Weak regulatory capacity to control over-pumping and water pollution |

*Source: water for people*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability Parameters</th>
<th>Post construction Support (PCS) Gaps -Contd…..</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Service Provider (SP) Communities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Service Authority –Local Government</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Water quality** | • Weak capacity for **quality assurance** and checking/treatment  
| | • Weak monitoring system  
| | • Lack of awareness  
| | • Absence of horizontal flow of quality monitoring data  
| | • Poor capacity to regulate  
| **Institutional/social** | • Jalanidhi BGs are registered entity legally not linked to GP  
| | • Lack of capacity for asset management  
| | • Frequent drop out of households  
| | • **Erosion of voluntarism** and social capital  
| | • Absence of continued handholding and capacity building  
| | • No credible system for **dispute resolution**  
| | • Assets Not legally owned by GP – schemes to be included in the asset register of GP  
| | • VWSCs /BGs to be made sub-committees of GP and mandated for technically and financially facilitate service delivery  
| | • Capacity constraints  
| | • **Lack of role clarity** |
Key Inferences: CBM as a robust model

- 26 small piped schemes functional for past 15 years with full O&M cost recovery at one third of the production cost of bulk providers like Kerala Water authority.

- However, critical post construction support gaps are threatening sustainable services at scale.

- The gaps *inter alia* are technical backstopping needs, financial, managerial, institutional and social.

- The existing arrangements to fill these gaps are either lacking or ad hoc – not structured and predictable.

- CBM is getting redefined as the rural societies are fast moving ahead in development trajectory.
Despite many symptoms of crack in CBM,

- 81% households have reported that the timing of water supply is convenient,
- 50% of schemes supply is adequate
- 46% schemes households are happy about both quantity and quality
Communities are successful in larger Schemes!!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Panchayat Name</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Scheme Name</th>
<th>Connections</th>
<th>Population covered</th>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>Pananchery (38 BGs)</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Chavara – Pan</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Tsunami Scheme -44 BGs</td>
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<td>99083</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>AVERAGE 11191 PEOPLE</strong></td>
<td><strong>32555</strong></td>
<td><strong>179058</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion and way forward

- Do not judge CBM when the journey is only halfway through?
- CBM is an orphan – to enable CBM to perform:
  » Either professionalize Communities
  » Or provide professionalized, predictable, structured and ring-fenced post construction support (PCS) to communities that are-
  » Institutionally anchored to well capacitated local governments – service authorities

CBM + Post Construction Support is the new community plus (CBM +) and way forward!!
Thank You