



DEPARTMENT OF WATER AFFAIRS AND FORESTRY

**Tshiungani II
Community-Based Water Services
Provider**

Case Study Overview

Prepared for the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry by

NETWORK COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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PREFACE

Network Community Development Services (NETWORK CDS) was contracted by the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry to examine Community-Based Water Services Provider institutional arrangements within a number of case studies. The purpose of the study is to:

- Document and analyse the institutional arrangements for water services provision between water services authorities and selected community-based organisation water services providers (CBO WSPs)
- Assess the performance of the different CBO WSP models
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the different case study examples
- Identify success factors
- Make recommendations concerning CBO WSP models
- Prepare guidelines for Water Services Authorities concerning CBO WSP models

This case study overview was researched and written up by Jean de la Harpe. The research component was facilitated by Mr. M. S. (Zephania) Nekhavhambe of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry who introduced the researchers to the Tshiunghani Village II CBO WSP and the Mutale-Masisi-Vhutshwema Transitional Local Council.

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The assistance of Dr Thomas Mogale in researching the case and drafting the detailed case study is also gratefully acknowledged.

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Contents

1	Introduction.....	4
2	Key Features of Tshiunghani CBO WSP	4
2.1	Tshiunghani Village.....	4
2.2	Establishment of the Tshiunghani CBO WSP	4
2.3	Roles and Responsibilities within the Tshiunghani CBO WSP.....	5
2.4	Tariff and Financial Matters	5
2.5	Cost Recovery	6
2.6	Relationship with the WSA.....	6
3	Critical Success Factors	7

1 Introduction

This paper provides a brief overview of the Tshiunghani Village II community-based water services provider (CBO WSP) which is an example of a highly successful CBO WSP. The paper aims to highlight those factors that have contributed to the successful operation of Tshiunghani CBO WSP so that lessons can be drawn for other CBO WSPs operating within similar conditions.

This case study is particularly significant because it illustrates a CBO WSP that is functioning effectively and providing reliable, cost effective, affordable and sustainable water services **without any formal support services** from either the water services authority (WSA) or any other support services agent (SSA).

Details of the case study are contained in the Tshiunghani CBO WSP Case Study prepared by Dr Thomas Mogale.

2 Key Features of Tshiunghani CBO WSP

2.1 Tshiunghani Village

- The community is small consisting of approximately 150 households with approximately 6 to 7 people per household. The total village population is approximately 1 000 people. The estimated average estimated average income is around R500 per capita per month.
- The community receives water from a borehole and reservoir which is reticulated to standpipes within 200m of each household. Water quality is maintained through the use of Jik. The community also has access to the original hand pumps as a back-up system.
- Since the system was upgraded in 1995, it has only broken down once and was repaired within less than a week. During that time the village used the hand pumps so they still had access to water.

2.2 Establishment of the Tshiunghani CBO WSP

- The establishment of the Tshiunghani CBO took place under the auspices of a gathering of the Headman whereby community members selected a committee.
- The committee consists of seven members including a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary and additional members.

- The committee is constituted as a voluntary association with a constitution. The constitution was prepared through a participatory process involving the committee members as well as members from the community.
- The Headman sits on the committee although the Headman is not an elected member of the committee.

2.3 Roles and Responsibilities within the Tshiunghani CBO WSP

- The Committee takes overall responsibility for the provision of water services. This includes, operations, revenue collection, financial management, customer relations, communication, reporting, monitoring and maintenance.
- A trained pump operator is employed to operate the scheme, monitor for leaks and to undertake minor repairs. The operator is the only employee of the Tshiunghani CBO WSP and is accountable to the Committee. Although the operator is not a voting member of the committee, he attends all the committee meetings where he reports on the services delivered and any problems with the scheme.
- The Committee takes responsibility for purchasing diesel. Diesel is purchased from Agrivan, which is 15 kilometres away, and is stored at the Headman's household.
- Major breakdowns or maintenance is contracted out. The Tshiunghani CBO WSP procures maintenance services as and when required.
- Bi-monthly community meetings are held to report on the water services and the finances. When there are specific issues or problems to discuss concerning the water services meetings may take place on a more regular basis such as every two weeks. Meetings take place in the Headman's yard.
- Revenue collection takes place at the bi-monthly meetings or households make payments to the secretary.

2.4 Tariff and Financial Matters

- The tariff was decided upon by the Tshiunghani CBO WSP in consultation with the community. The tariff is a flat rate of R10.00 per month.
- A register of the entire community has been established which serves as a record of monthly household payments. Receipts are issued for each payment made.
- The financial records are inspected on a regular basis by the treasurer and the entire Committee. The records are also presented to the bi-monthly community meetings.

- From time to time the Community Policing Forum monitors the standpipes and requests households to produce their receipts before accessing water. Those households who are unable to produce their receipts are prevented from taking water until they have made their monthly payment. If a household continues to not pay the tariff, the Committee reports the matter to the Community Policing Forum and a fine of R30 is imposed on the household as well as the amount of the outstanding tariff.
- Approximately R1 500 is collected per month when all households pay their tariff.
- Total expenditure amounts to approximately R500 per month (R200 for diesel, R250 for the operator and R50 for transport and other minor expenses).
- At the time of the research, the Tshiunghani CBO WSP has a balance of R8 421.00 in their bank account.
- Although some households use greater quantities of water than other households (for livestock and vegetable gardens) this is not a problem despite the fact that all households pay the same tariff. This is attributed to a culture of ‘social solidarity’ where the community sees itself as a whole as benefiting from the livestock and vegetable gardens.
- The Tshiunghani CBO WSP also sells water to community members from neighbouring villages at a rate of 25c per 25 litres.

2.5 Cost Recovery

- The Tshiunghani CBO WSP is currently covering all the operation costs of the scheme and thus whilst some households may not pay the tariff (either because they cannot afford to pay or because they default on their payments) cost recovery is 100% of the costs incurred.
- Cost recovery is high because the majority of households are paying their monthly tariff.

2.6 Relationship with the WSA

- The relationship between Tshiunghani CBO WSP and Mutale-Masisi-Vhutshwema Transitional Local Council (which at the time of the research was accepted by the community as the WSA) is very good, whereby the Council is very satisfied with the water services that the Tshiunghani CBO WSP is providing.

- The Mutale-Masisi-Vhutshwema Transitional Local Council was not in a position to provide any form of support services to the Tshiunghani CBO WSP, however is keen to establish a WSA-WSP contract with the Tshiunghani CBO WSP.

3 Critical Success Factors

- Since the *community is small and cohesive* there is a strong sense of ownership for the scheme and strong accountability and transparency in terms of the operation of the Tshiunghani CBO WSP to the community.
- There are *no unauthorised connections* since there is very close monitoring of the entire scheme.
- A *culture of 'mutualism'* exists where households assist each other. Those who are unable to pay are subsidised by those who are able to pay.
- Strong *action is taken against defaulters* and thus *cost recovery is good*.
- The system is *properly operated and maintained* by a trained operator who also effectively fulfils a monitoring function.
- The water services are *affordable and cost efficient*. This plays a key role in cost recovery.
- The inclusion of the Headman at Committee meetings provides legitimacy to the Tshiunghani BO WSP and ensures effective *integration of 'traditional leadership'* with the management and leadership of the Tshiunghani CBO WSP.
- The Tshiunghani CBO WSP has established *effective mechanisms to access cost effective maintenance support*.
- *Regular meetings with the community* ensure effective communication and facilitate revenue collection.
- The Tshiunghani CBO WSP has the *necessary skills and expertise to operate and manage the water services*. Technical or other problems are dealt with timeously so that the service is reliable and meets the needs of the community.
- The Tshiunghani CBO WSP has an *excellent revenue collection mechanism* and *efficient and transparent financial reporting*.
- Ultimately the *community trusts and recognises the authority of the Tshiunghani CBO WSP*.