



Second announcement and call for abstracts

Slippage of WASH services: causes, costs and how to counter Workshop – Hyderabad, March 2009

Deadline for submission extended till 12 December 2008

What it is about

The main objectives of the workshop are to quantify the scale and extent of the challenge of “slippage of WASH services” and to increase the understanding of the main causes. Secondly the workshop is about disseminating the results of the research and workshop, and scaling-up of good practices related to the WASH slippage challenge. The workshop will build upon the experiences of both government and non-government organisations, using their implementation and research programmes as context.

Background

Since more than 5 years IRC and its partners in different parts of the world have taken a special interest in improving the governance of water resources and water services. One recent initiative is the global 5-year WASHCost project, for which CESS (Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Hyderabad) is the lead partner in India. This project seeks to contribute to improving the governance of WASH services with a focus on quantifying life-cycle costs of sustaining these services. The overall aims being to develop improved participative planning approaches and decision-support tools, which should lead to more cost-efficient, equitable and sustainable WASH service delivery.

Prof. Kirit S. Parikh, member of Planning Commission of the Government of India (GoI), states in a speech in October 2007 that: *“Clean water for all is as important for health as perhaps health services. Currently, 95% of the villages have clean drinking water. But large number of villages often slip back and there are numerous villages with serious water quality problems.”* In the budget of 2007-8 the GoI emphasises the priority of tackling the issue of slippage and non-covered habitations.

Although little research has been carried out, it is likely that the so-called ‘slippage’ of the drinking water services has a number of different causes. In addition to the general quality (e.g. fluoride and arsenic) and functionality problems (power supply, seasonal) with the water sources, increasingly the competition for water and the reallocation to other uses becomes an issue. Other causes can include: sub-standard quality and poor O&M as a result of, for example, value for money problems; lack of proper support mechanisms; weak village institutions; and, inadequate financing. Another major cause is that installed infrastructure is unable to meet ever increasing demand in either time or space.

The workshop will be a first opportunity for practitioners and researchers with a special interest in the problem of “slippage” of WASH services to share their experiences and insights on the issue. For IRC and WASHCost it will be a first opportunity to invite the wider WASH community to reflect on the impact of slippage on the life-cycle costs of sustainable and prop-poor of WASH services.

For who

Practitioners from the sector will be invited to participate by providing a research - or practice paper, which will be an input that is discussed during the workshop. The aim being for a wide group of stakeholders to share experiences and knowledge to build consensus on actions that are needed.

Outputs

The main output of the workshop will be the learning between the different participants on the subject of 'slippage' and related costs. A second output will be inputs for a common agenda to take the issue a step further.

More specifically the workshop will attract papers and produce discussions on subjects like:

- The scale and extent of slippage
- The costs of slippage or of certain aspects thereof
- The impact of slippage on the MDGs
- The definition and use of numbers in monitoring sustainability
- Practical methods on addressing slippage

Depending on the papers submitted, the workshop may separate the drinking water and sanitation sub-sector for parts of the workshop.

The workshop is visualised to be the first major event in a longer term regional sharing and learning process that seeks to contribute to the sustainability of drinking water and sanitation services, especially for the poor, in the South Asia region. This longer-term process aims at contributing to the scaling up of proven good practices in the drinking water sector and enter into the policy dialogue. WASHCost will provide an important learning platform. National networks like Wes-Net India in India will be invited as they have a pivotal role in this longer-term learning process.

Audience and format

The workshop aims to bring together professionals from the WASH sector (drinking water supply, water resources, sanitation, health&hygiene), particularly researchers, policy makers, practitioners and donors. It will follow a combination of presentations of selected papers, and interactive sessions in which practical implications will be discussed. The maximum number of participants is 40.

Call for abstracts

The symposium will bring together lessons learnt from research and practice and therefore seeks two types of papers:

- Research papers. These are papers that synthesise research and provide a critical analysis of (aspects of) the problem of slippage in WASH services and/or suggestions to overcome the problem. The maximum length of these papers is 5000 words.
- Practice papers. These are shorter papers that present experiences from the field with the problem of slippage and ways of overcoming them. These are expected to provide a critical look at innovative implementation practices. The maximum length of these papers is 2000 words.

Interested authors can submit abstracts. The abstract should be in Word format and include the following:

- Type of paper—research or practice
- Proposed title
- Name of author(s), including contact information for lead author
- Abstract of 250 words maximum

A format for papers will be provided to authors of selected abstracts. It will also be possible to submit a photo essay instead of a written paper (guidelines to be provided. An abstract is still required and the same deadlines apply).

Abstracts and full papers will be reviewed by an editorial committee, made up of members of the networks of IRC and the WASHCost project.

Location

The workshop will be held at CESS, Hyderabad in India and is scheduled for the first week of March, 2009.

Timeframe

12 December 2008:	Deadline for submission of abstracts
24 December 2008:	Authors notified if abstracted accepted
1 February 2009:	Deadline for submission of papers
First week of March, 2009:	Workshop on Slippage of WASH services

Further information and submission of abstracts: slippage-workshop-2009@googlegroups.com