



PUMP4LIFE – PRIVATE SECTOR AND DEMAND-LED DELIVERY AND INNOVATIVE SUBSCRIPTION-BASED MAINTENANCE OF WATER POINTS

Grantee
MAJI SAFI KWA AFYA BORA IFAKARA (MSABI)

Grant amount
GBP 398,366

Project duration
May 2015– November 2017

Implementing partners
Kilombero District Government, Welldone International and Visible Solutions

Beneficiaries
Residents of Kilombero, Kilosa, Ulanga and Malinyi Districts

Location
Morogoro Region



The water points have helped reduce the burden of water collection for women.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In a country like Tanzania where up to 50 per cent of water points are broken or abandoned and where almost half of the population lacks access to clean water (WHO-UNICEF JMP), communities need cost-efficient, locally adapted innovations that can help improve the reliability of water services and provide a more sustainable water infrastructure.

Tanzanian NGO Maji Safi kwa Afya Bora Ifakara's (MSABI) Pump4Life initiative is a low-cost market-based solution designed to provide sustainable access to improved water services for communities living in Kilombero District, Morogoro Region.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The innovation pursues a social entrepreneurial approach in which communities are encouraged to take ownership of their water services by paying a regular financial premium for the service. This monthly subscription can be paid through mobile phone money transfer services, making it accessible to people in remote areas with no access to conventional banking. The water points

are maintained by locally trained service mechanics and a digital surveillance-response system is used to monitor distribution and functionality, subscription payments, and track spare part usage and water point history. Local water point owners can call or text a service number to report problems, which are forwarded to the ICT platform for analysis and from there to a water point mechanic.

PROJECT RESULTS

During the course of HDIF's support:

- ▶ 163 water points were set up and 39,203 users subscribed to the service.
- ▶ 14 mechanics were trained and provided a regular service to the clients.
- ▶ 7,851 maintenance visits have been performed at water points.
- ▶ 3,496 monitoring visits were performed in three sequential rounds where the same water points were revisited (Round 1 – 1,167 water points, Round 2 – 1,162 water points and Round 3 – 1,167 water points).



- 163 new and rehabilitated water points were built, 22 of which were partially supported through a co-contribution from iWASH and Nestlé. All quality assurance data has been digitally tracked and include technical specifications, user information and water quality data.
- 33 broken or abandoned water points were fixed, providing a further 8,250 people with access to water.

KEY LESSONS

Slow uptake of the service and thin profit margins from subscription revenue meant that MSABI's original business model for this project did not prove sustainable. MSABI has drawn on the following lessons to adapt the model moving forward:

- Clarify user perceptions early on:* Although the system was considered of value, the majority of clients were either unwilling to pay the premiums or paid late. There was also a general expectation that the water would be supplied at no cost – particularly in communities used to receiving services free of charge from local NGOs and donors.
- Use digital payment services:* In some instances cash payments proved difficult to track and some of the money collected went missing. By allowing subscriptions to be paid via mobile money, MSABI was able to give clients a transparent and safe way to hand over their money.
- Make time to understand the local context:* A feasibility study conducted at the start of the project could have raised potential problems and helped MSABI prepare for dealing with them.

NEXT STEPS

MSABI is looking to extend the Pump4Life initiative to hard-to-reach communities using solar power and is exploring partnerships with firms developing quality and affordable solar technologies that could support this. The NGO is also working with project partner Visible Solutions to understand how it can sell their water point mapping system to others as a means of raising revenue.

- Enforce penalties for non-payment:* Stricter application of the initiative's terms and conditions would have helped avoid revenue issues; instead services were still being supplied to clients who had not paid for up to 90 days.

GENDER EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

Women responsible for fetching water for domestic use often have to walk far to find it. The water points have helped reduce the burden of water collection and freed up women's time to engage in other productive economic activities. The model has also created jobs for women (as well as men) to run and maintain the pumps.

PRINCIPLES FOR DIGITAL DEVELOPMENT

Be data driven: MSABI has developed a mapping system to capture data including water point distribution and functionality, usage and maintenance. The information collected is used to monitor the uptake and success of the water points and to help develop real-time responses to problems as they arise. Data for other types of hand pump technology has also been collected to assess overall durability and the cost of spare parts.



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