

BRIEF REPORT OF THE 7:30 BREAKFAST DEBATE –APRIL 25TH 2013

Water Sector Budget Allocation: Is the State of the Water Sector Improving?

Water is a basic need and right for all human beings therefore it is important for the government to create an enabling environment for citizens to enjoy this fundamental right.

The Government of Tanzania has embarked on a major sector reform process since 2002. An ambitious National Water Sector Development Strategy that promotes integrated water resources management and the development of urban and rural water supply was adopted in 2006

These reforms have been backed by a significant increase of the budget starting in 2006, when the water sector was included among the priority sectors of the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty MKUKUTA.

In 2007, as the culmination of several years of sector reforms, a comprehensive sector wide plan, the Water Sector Development Program (WSDP), was launched for investing in water supply and sanitation infrastructure, with almost US\$1 billion finance over five years from the World Bank, AfDB, German and Dutch governments, and the Government of Tanzania.

Budget execution for the water sector in general is not improving. Despite the increase of Government Development budget in 2012/13 from 12% to 25%, budget execution problems have not been resolved.

This is why Policy Forum dedicated its April 2013 debate on the issue of water sector budget in Tanzania for 2013/2014, the debate is titled:

“Water Sector Budget Allocations: Is the state of the water sector improving?”

The debate had two presentations which were followed by words from a discussant. The presenters of the event were Mr. Fidelis Paul, Policy Officer of Water Aid and Mr. Gear’oid Loibh’ead Assistant Country Director Concern – Tanzania.

The Debate was facilitated by Nuru Ngailo from the Policy Forum Secretariat.

The water sector budget for the financial year 2013/2014 has been reduced to 398.4 billion Tanzanian shillings from 588.1 billion which was allocated to the sector budget in 2012/13, a reduction of about 190 billion shillings. Speaking during the Policy Forum's Breakfast Debate Mr. Fidelis Paul, said the reduction will result in the government

continuing being donor dependent. He said looking at the 2013/14 national budget 36% of the total budget will be generated from domestic revenue while 64% of the development budget will depend on donors.

Mr. Fidelis recommended that there was a need for more funds to be allocated towards the rural component to meet the access targets set. He also advised an increase in allocation for the recurrent budget to cover for operations and maintenance. This, he said, will enable government to enhance the sustainability of water projects. He also urged government to prioritise budget reconciliation between the planned budget from the Ministry of Water and the approved budget by the Ministry of Finance and reduce foreign dependence.

The second presenter at the event, Mr. Gearóid Loibhéad, presented on the state of the water sector focusing the reality on the ground. He said that some of the challenges of the National Water Policy included the policy not being too ambitious. For instance, he said that the target of walking no more than a distance of 400m to water points would be difficult to meet with the current limited resources. He also highlighted that the policy did not consider topographical challenges in rural areas where the only solution to meet this target is either through pipe network or deep boreholes.

He also mentioned that towards the end of financial year 2012/13, some districts had received 50% of the approved budgets (not requested budget). This caused the non-fulfilment of LGAs' commitments to rural communities and it creates lack of communities' trust on LGAs, he said.

He concluded his presentation by recommending that policy be reviewed to reflect reality on ground especially by considering resources and capacity. He said the walking distance of 1 kilometre can be adopted as a realistic indicator and that policy should be honored and accompanied by the political will to ensure supplied water is clean and safe by employing qualified water quality personnel with mini-labs at district levels. He also urged the government to ensure that water quality testing occurs at critical periods such as end of rains and when diarrhoea cases are reported. He urged Tanzania to adopt WHO standards and make them Tanzania permanent water quality standards

Dr. Shaaban Mgana, Lecturer of Ardhi University was the discussant of the event, he began by saying that, water has two major aspects namely equity and sustainability which operate in a vicious cycle. He said, water is a working tool to the population such as in agriculture.

He continued by saying that, of all what has been presented we should ask ourselves what is realistic, desirable and practicable.

We have a very good and ambitious water policy, he said. He referred to it as a white elephant because not all that is in the policy is achieved.

He concluded by saying that, what is in the policy is not what is actually happening on the ground in the sense that the rural communities do not benefit from it as envisioned in the Vision 2025 and the Millennium Development Goals.

Plenary Discussion and comments

- This breakfast debate is an opportunity for people to access information regarding the water sector budget since access to information is a big problem in our country.
- How do we advocate for our government to execute budget (spend the money allocated for in the budget)?
- Presenting the budget is not the final thing, there are other steps that are taken during the budget financial year.
- How do we work with the government to firmly work on the recommendations which have been raised?
- Water sources are becoming less therefore we can easily fall in the trap where we are tapping more water than the one we have.
- Sectors dealing with water should be globally empowered.
- Sustainability is the key (technical issue) in the water sector, i.e. what support are the communities getting after water supply is installed, does the district still communicate with them?
- It would be wise to reflect on to the phase one of the WSDP before going to phase two so that we get to know the success, challenges of phase one in order to learn from our mistakes and see the way forward.
- We need a bold discussion on the value for money in terms of how water is supplied.
- Are there any plans to prioritize the water sector?
- A multi sectorial presentation would be very useful for our advocacy

- Need for enough programs for rural sanitation and a need to advocate for water for livestock.
- Water is a human right issue so it needs to be addressed by the government.
- There is a need to testing the water and water treatments techniques.
- There is still an opportunity to advocate for recommendations being taken in the phase 2 of the WSDP
- Further research is needed to see if mobilize phones has worked.

Ms. Nuru Ngailo closed the discussion and welcomed again participants to the next 7:30 Breakfast Debate.



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