



CASE STUDY

Pakistan: A Successful Model of the Urban Water Partnership in Karachi



Summary

Karachi was characterised by inadequate water and sanitation services and wasteful and injudicious use of water by consumers. To address these issues, the Karachi Water Partnership was formed as a platform for collective action by all concerned stakeholders to better manage water resources through IWRM. The experience illustrates that there can be great value in simply improving the existing delivery mechanisms as a compliment to the implementation of new ideas.

Background

Karachi is one of the largest and most densely populated cities in the world. Its current population is estimated to be about eighteen million people, and this is predicted to rise to almost double (thirty-two million) in another decade or so. Karachi is also plagued with numerous demographical, social, economic, political, and environmental problems. Of the several environmental threats faced by Karachi, access to clean water, sanitation and sewerage issues are paramount. The Karachi Water and Sewerage Board is the single largest utility that is solely responsible for both municipal water supply and the management of wastewater and sewerage in the city district. The problem of mismanagement of water and failing water services rendered by the public utilities is compounded by the wasteful and injudicious use of water by consumers. Failure to supply proper water and sanitation services leads to an obvious shortage; however, this situation is worsened due to the wasteful consumption patterns on the part of the users i.e., lack of access to water and sanitation is due to inefficiencies on both the demand side and supply side. This case study describes the formation of Karachi Water Partnership as a platform for collective action by all concerned stakeholders to better manage water resources in Karachi involving communication with stakeholders and changing behaviour patterns.

Actions taken

A water partnership for the city of Karachi to promote Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) processes. Karachi Water Partnership (KWP) was launched as an initiative of the Hisaar Foundation, a foundation working towards water, food and livelihood security issues with a vision of balancing environment with development through innovation and a mission of promoting creative, low-cost solutions and policies for conservation in Pakistan. It believes that publicprivate partnerships are essential to solve the water challenges of Karachi and that the government, private sector, civil society and citizens all have to work together for transparency, better governance, better management, improved service delivery and conservation of water.

The KWP evolved as a multi-stakeholder platform, which provided space for discussion, arguments, consensus and agreed action on the part of the stakeholder groups in the city.

During 2007-2013, KWP successfully brought in a wide range of partners (government, private sector, civil society, elected representatives, media, academia, water professionals, women and individuals), signed seven Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with city-based institutions, held several conferences, training workshops, thematic dialogues. It also developed and circulated water

conservation and management guidelines for homes, offices, schools, industries and mosques. KWP has also provided twenty government schools with clean drinking water and toilets, and three more clusters of schools are currently undergoing interventions. Water conservation training and orientation programs for teachers and students are well established.

Outcomes

During 2007-2013, KWP successfully brought in a wide range of partners (government, private sector, civil society, elected representatives, media, academia, water professionals, women and individuals), signed seven Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with city-based institutions, including Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KW&SB), held 4 partner conferences, 2 conferences on water conservation, 21 training workshops, 12 thematic dialogues, 25 management group meetings, 3 advisory council meetings and 65 stakeholder meetings and approximately 50 smaller dialogues and meetings with other groups.

It also developed and circulated water conservation and management guidelines in English, Urdu and Sindhi for homes, offices, schools, industries and mosques. In 2008, Karachi Water Partnership took forward the water partnership concept to set up a model Town Area Water Partnership (AWP) in Gulshan-e-Iqbal (GIT). As a result of the success of the public-private partnership approach in GIT AWP, KWP has now also successfully established Area Water Partnerships (AWPs) in 6 Towns of Karachi mega city.

Lessons Learned

The Karachi Water Partnership experience has shown that that through active involvement of all stakeholders, the shortcomings of established services can be overcome by simply improving the existing delivery mechanisms and suggesting ways for more efficient, equitable and sustainable services.

An innovative models of "cost-synergy" and the "mutual accountability" were established to encourage stakeholders to engage in dialogue with each other and move forward together, rather than against each other and cohesively develop committed action plans.

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Related IWRM Tools

Public sector water utilities, Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships, WASH and Gender

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