EVALUATION OF STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN THE RURAL COMPONENT OF THE WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION SECTOR REFORM PROGRAMME (WSSSRP)

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"*This report has been prepared under the sole responsibility of the consultant, and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Government of the Republic of Nigeria or of the European Commission*".

Table of contents

LIST OF ANNEXES 4

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS 5

INTRODUCTION 6

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 8

1. RELEVANCE. 20

1.1. Relevance of WSSSRP rural component to identified and emerging needs 20

1.2. Alignment and responsiveness of WSSSRP rural component to overall FGN policy. 20

1.3. Overall degree of flexibility and responsiveness. 22

2. EFFICIENCY. 23

2.1. Review of the organisational and management structure of UNICEF WSSSRP team 23

2.2. Assessment of the number and expertise of project staff 25

2.3. Coordination, monitoring and review of the UNICEF Abuja team with UNICEF State representatives 27

2.4. Assessment of the spending of the financial resources 29

2.5. Linkages between the rural component and other components of the WSSSRP 33
2.5.1 Linkages of the rural component with water governance at national level (Result 1) 33
2.5.2 Linkages of the rural component with water governance at state level (Result 2) 34
2.5.3 Linkages of the rural component with Result 3 and Result 4 (60 small towns) 34

2.6. Linkages among the UNICEF implementers and relevant State and Local Government Authorities 34
2.6.1 Linkages of UNICEF implementers with relevant State Authorities 34
2.6.2 Linkages of UNICEF consultants with Local Government Authorities and WASHCOMs 35

3. EFFECTIVENESS. 36

3.1. Performance of the rural part of the programme 37

3.2. Quality of information management 41
3.2.1 Management Progress Reports 41

3.2.2 Technical manuals and reports 41
3.2.3 UNICEF WASH Consultant's reports 42
3.2.4 Management Information Systems for WS&S 42
3.2.5 WSSSRP Monitoring Reports 42

3.3. Effectiveness of programme visibility. **42**
3.3.1 Signboards in communities and schools 42
3.3.2. Visibility on WSSSRP vehicles and motorcycles 44
3.3.3 Visibility on WSSSRP provided Hand Pumps 44

3.4. Appropriateness and effectiveness of stakeholder participation **44**
3.4.1 Stakeholders at federal level 44
3.4.2 Stakeholders at State level 45
3.4.3 Water Supply and Sanitation Departments at LGA level (WASH Units) 45
3.4.4 Other Stakeholders 45
3.5.5 Community based organisations (CBOs), elected officials and CSOs 45
3.5.6 The private sector 46
3.5.7. Other cross cutting issues 46

3.5. Evaluation of the technology options supported by WSSSRP. **46**
3.5.1 Water Supply 46
3.5.2 Sanitation 48

4. IMPACT TO DATE AND POTENTIAL SUSTAINABILITY. **50**

4.1 Impact to date **50**

4.2. Potential sustainability **51**
4.2.1 Appropriation by the community and affordability 51
4.2.2 Appropriateness of the equipment and its Operation & Maintenance 52
4.2.3 Socio-cultural factors which may affect the provision of water and sanitation 53
4.2.4 Institutional capacity 53
4.2.5 Contributions to the investment cost 53
4.2.6 Replication 53

5. FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS **54**

5.1. Overall Recommendations **54**

5.2. Specific Recommendations **55**

ANNEXES **62**

LIST OF ANNEXES

Annex 1: *Terms of Reference*
Annex 2: *Methodology and Mission Schedule*
Annex 3: *List of Persons met*
Annex 4: *List of Documents Reviewed*
Annex 5: *Maps of Nigeria (UNICEF WS&S sector)*
Annex 6: *Example of an organigramme Field Office*
Annex 7 *UNICEF WASH communication and coordination*
Annex 8: *WSSSRP UNICEF cumulated expenditure end 2007*
Annex 9: *Results UNICEF Status Report March 2008*
Annex 10: *Weighted average progress as of end 2007*
Annex 11: *UNICEF Work Plan 2008*
Annex 12: *Status of achievements against targets end 2007*
Annex 13 *Technical standards*
Annex 14: *Cost and financial analysis*
Annex 15: *The 50x6 boreholes initiative*
Annex 16: *Pictures field trip*
Annex 17: *Key events and milestones*
Annex 18: *Comments received from UNICEF*

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CA	Contribution Agreement (UNICEF)
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CWIQ	Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EC	European Commission
ECD	Delegation of the European Commission
EDF	European Development Fund
FA	Financial Agreement
FO	Field Office (UNICEF)
FGN	Federal Government of Nigeria
HP	Hand pump
ILA	Irrevocable Letter of Authority
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
FMAWR	Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources
LEEDS	Local Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy
LGA	Local Government Authority
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
NAO	National Authorising Officer
NEEDS	National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPC	National Planning Commission
NPSC	National Programme Steering Committee
NWRI	National Water Resources Institute
O&M	Operations and Maintenance (costs)
OVI	Objectively Verifiable Indicators
PE	Programme Estimate
PMU	Project Management Unit
PS	Permanent Secretary
PSC	Program Steering Committee
RWASSA	Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency
SAO	State Authorising Officer
SC	Service Contract
SEEDS	State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy
SMWR	State Ministry of Water Resources
SRIP	Support to Reforming Institutions Programme
STU	State Technical Unit
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VLOM	Village Level Operation & Maintenance
WASH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene (Consultant)
WATSAN	Water and Sanitation
WSS	Water Supply and Sanitation
WSSSRP	Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Reform Programme

INTRODUCTION

As outlined in the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the present evaluation assignment, the European Commission (EC) and the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) agreed in December 2004 to support the implementation of the *"Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Reform Programme"* (WSSSRP). The ***overall objective*** of the WSSSRP is to contribute to poverty eradication, sustainable development, and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals related to water. The ***specific objective*** of the WSSSRP is to increase access to safe, adequate and sustainable water and sanitation services in the six focal states of Anambra, Cross River, Jigawa, Kano, Osun and Yobe.

The results to be achieved under the WSSSRP are:

- *Result 1: Improved water governance at federal level;*
- *Result 2: Improved water governance at state and LGA levels in the six focal states;*
- *Result 3: Improved water service delivery in urban areas in the six focal states;*
- *Result 4: Water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion services are delivered in a sustainable and integrated manner in up to 1400 rural communities and 60 small towns in 25% of LGAs in the six focal states.*

The rural water supply and sanitation component of the programme under result 4 is implemented by UNICEF through a four-year Contribution Agreement signed in July 2005. In addition, in Cross River, Kebbi and Gombe States, UNICEF works towards eradicating guinea worm in 21 communities in 5 Local Government areas. It also provides support for the National Water Resources Institute (NWRI) in Kaduna. UNICEF implements the programme in the 8 focal States through WASH consultants that are supported by four field offices (A-D) and the UNICEF HQ in Abuja.

The ***overall coordination*** of programme is performed at the federal level by Programme Management Units (PMU) while six State Technical Units (STUs) are located in the northern (Jigawa, Kano and Yobe) and southern States (Anambra, Cross River and Osun).

The ECD in Nigeria has commissioned within the Framework Contract Multi Lot 2 the consortium led by Hydroplan GmbH an evaluation of the WSSSRP rural component in the selected States.

The *objective* of the present evaluation is to *"assess the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the rural component of WSSSRP, give recommendations for the improvement of its implementation for the remaining 2.5 years of the programme and estimate what can be achieved within this time frame."*[1]

[1] Actually, as of March 2008, less than 1.5 years were left for the implementation of the WSSSRP rural component according to the provisions of the Contribution Agreement (July 2005-July 2009).

The *beneficiaries* of the mid-term evaluation are the National Planning Commission (NPC) and the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources (FMAWR). In addition, the results will benefit the eight focal State Governments, the Local Government Authorities (LGAs) the participating communities and to UNICEF.

The review has been undertaken by a team of independent short-term consultants including Dan Nicolau, Development economist/Team Leader and Frederic Mertens, Water expert. The team has travelled to Nigeria/Abuja and to the six focal states during the period 18 February-10 March 2008. The mission had meetings and has consulted with relevant stakeholders at all levels, carried out briefings and debriefings with the Government authorities and the Delegation of the European Commission and has submitted a Draft *Report* for the Reference Group review and comments.

The present document is the Final Report which incorporates most of the comments received from the Reference Group by 5 May 2008. Some of the comments received from UNICEF *which were not incorporated* into the final version are shown in **Annex 18.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overall context of the WSSSRP rural component

The specific context of the programme, the external difficulties encountered in its implementation and the issue of the FGN's failure to allocate funds in a timely manner has had a considerable impact on the programme. A chronology of the actual events compared to projected implementation schedule of the work plan and the subsequent unfavorable influence on the programme is summarized in the **Annex 17.**

The main findings of the mission with regards to the evaluation criteria are provided hereafter.

1. Relevance

The design of the WSSSRP rural component appears to be relevant to the identified and emerging needs of the populations of the rural communities, with the water sector and sanitation policies and strategies launched by the FGN, while being adequately responsive and flexible.

The design of the Programme has good provision for capacity building for government staff, LGAs and communities. It is hoped that with capacity building programmes in place, ownership and capacity would be strengthened. At the same design level however, **one of the main assumptions made, namely the firm commitment of the FGN to implement the agreed cost sharing formula and to elaborate corresponding administrative and disbursement procedures did not yet materialise and therefore represents a real risk for the programme; this has already created serious delays in programme implementation.**

2. Efficiency

Review of the organisational and management structure of UNICEF WSSSRP team

The organisational and management structure **should be improved considering the changes** that occurred during the 2.5 years, the accumulated delays, the need to speed up implementation, and the actual workload, notably at field level. The rural component programme management is ensured by UNICEF organisational structures at central and at State level. The central level WASH Section at the UNICEF HQ Office based in Abuja is made up of 1 Section Chief, 3 Project Officers, and 2 Assistant Project Officers. At State level the structure comprises four FOs covering all 36 States of Nigeria, including the WSSSRP focal states and that represents a substantial work load for the field specialists. A FO includes typically a WASH Project Officer and an Assistant Project Officer, working under the supervision of the Chief of the FO. WASH Specialists are dealing with activity planning, works and contract supervision. In addition there is a WASH Consultant hired externally in each state to provide technical support to the project at State and LGA level.

Theoretically this is in line with the provisions of the number of staff and respective Job Descriptions (Annex 1 D to the CA). **In our opinion, in view of**

the accumulated delays, of the number of areas to be covered and the magnitude of the tasks, the organigramme at HQ and field level should be increased.

Assessment of the number and expertise of project staff

The evaluation mission assesses that UNICEF Consultants in the States are **generally well qualified** to carry out WSSSRP activities (with some sensible variations between the FOs). All positions in charge with the execution of the programme appear to be individually filled by highly qualified staff on the basis of the specific requirements included in the Annex I.D to the CA. However, HQ staff specified is also covering other WSS-related projects/programmes all over the country (covering 36 States), but funded by other donors. This means that an unknown percentage of the total staff and their actual time utilisation are currently available to undertake solely WSSSRP activities. With a view to speed up implementation of the programme it is in any case the responsibility of UNICEF to assign sufficient staff so as to attain without incurring delays the anticipated results.

Coordination, monitoring and review of the UNICEF Abuja team with UNICEF State teams

Overall coordination **appears to be working**, with some exceptions. The UNICEF HQ in Abuja is the main party responsible for coordination: they should collect and receive all relevant information from the FOs, from the stakeholders and other participants in the Programme. Alternatively, it is the obligation of the FOs to provide the UNICEF HQ with all information on their activities, their planning, and end results. The FOs should receive from the UNICEF HQ all information from the other states and information stemming from the FG level. At the federal level coordination is ensured through the Quarterly Coordination Meetings that involve the Desk Officer from the coordinating line ministry (NPC) and a high level inter-ministerial committee is taking place on a quarterly basis.

Internal programme coordination activity is ensured by the Quarterly Coordination organised by the PMU on a quarterly basis. Meetings that involves the PMU, STUs, counterpart staff, EC Delegation, UNICEF, SRIP, and representatives of the focal states. The main coordination activity for UNICEF was meant to be a monthly meeting between UNICEF, FMWR, the NPC and the EC Delegation, which was set up informally by the Delegation and UNICEF. These meetings have however not been taking place for the past year.

Until recently, **the monthly meetings were not held regularly** and their effectiveness was doubtful. At state level the overall coordination is ensured through the FOs. The Chief of the FO reports to the Deputy Chief at the HQ in Abuja and has direct relation with the Chief of WASH section in Abuja, who is responsible for the overall technical supervision, quality assurance of the WS&S standards.

At UNICEF level, internal Programme Coordination Meetings (PCM) are held at Abuja HQ and involve the Chiefs of FOs and WASH unit at HQ. Country management team meetings are also held by the HQ, as needs arise.

In general, it is felt that coordination is working better at field level. However, it is unclear how and how often the state level information with regard to the overall status of WSSSRP implementation, approaches, technical solutions adopted, problems encountered, etc **is shared between the different** FOs. Moreover, information sharing seems to be a missing link in the coordination area although UNICEF institutionalizes quarterly, mid- and end year reviews.

Assessment of the spending of the financial resources

By and large the **spending of the resources during the 2.5 years has been very low** that is explained by different external and internal factors. The WSSSRP rural component -9 ACP UNI 006- is funded by the EC and implemented through UNICEF on the basis of a Contribution Agreement signed by the three parties. The duration of the EC contribution is four years (7 July 2005 to 6 July 2009). The total contribution amounts to **€ 34 448,847,** out of which **€33,283, 614 for EC** and **€1,165,233 for UNICEF** including 5% contingencies.

Based on the approved Work plans, UNICEF has received a 1st instalment of €5,494,432.50 in August 2005; a 2nd instalment of €8,380,031 was released by EC in December 2007, hence making a **total of €13,874,463.**

Total funds used as of 31 December 2007 amounted to €**8,333,034,** whereas the balance of unspent funds was **€24,475,392.**

The ratio of consolidated expenditure for the period against the total allocated budget was just **25%**. In other words, **75 %** of the funds are yet to be spent by July 2009. **This is highly unlikely to happen,** especially under the present circumstances.

Under the assumption that the draft planned budget for 2008 is kept constant in the future 1.5 years at €6,317,096 and will be 100% spent (a highly optimistic scenario), the **unspent money will still be around 30% at 31/12/2010.**

A measure of efficiency is also the **ratio of project management and project support costs to total budget/total expenditure**. The average ratio project management costs/ total expenditure cumulated for the period represents **10.71%**, which is broadly in line with this type of costs for similar large programmes.

The weight of the hard component-water supply and sanitation works- compared to the total budget represents **56%,** while the soft components makes up the balance of **44%**

If one compares the annual actual expenditure to the estimated annual works budget, the ratios are: 2% for 2005; 95% (2006) and 31% (2007). The high value of the ratio in 2006 is explained by the supply of equipment (procurement) for the water supply and sanitation works to be undertaken in 2007.

The geographical distribution of expenditure between the focal states shows that there are significant disparities in terms of disbursements. Indeed, two

states only, **Cross River and Osun** (both in the South) are spending around **63%** of the total expenditures, far ahead of the third position Jigawa State with €884,134. At the other end of the ranking are the **Yobe and Gombe States** (both North States) with only €200,008, and respectively €181,261.

The comparison **actual expenditure/planned budget vs. the different components** shows that above the 25% average are the Item 2.2 Capacity building (44%) and 2.3. Surveys (27%), both soft components. A total of 15 activities did **incur 0% expenditure** (or **32%** of the total), **while 4 activities have less than 5% disbursed.**

Linkages between the rural component and other components of the WSSSRP

The linkages developed by the rural component with other components **seem to be appropriate** (with the notable exception of three northern States). The NAO is chairing the NPSC which is composed of the FMWR, SAO, SMWR, implementing partners, and CSOs. It is however unknown to the evaluation team how often the NPSC has met since the start of the project. The PMU is organising quarterly Partner/Donor Meetings focusing on issues related to water governance and coordination of water policies at national and state levels.

The PMU is also conducting Implementation Review meetings aimed at finding solutions to common implementation problems. At state level, the SAO chairs a SPSC, composed of key Ministries of the SG, LGAs, elected officials, and CSOs. However it is not specified how many times the SPSCs have met since the start of the project and what are the results of the decisions made. The STUs have the mandate to support water related policy reforms at state level, in coordination with the PMU. The designed setup appears to be adequate (water policies and strategies should be consistent with national policies). STUs and RWASSAs should normally report to the same State line Ministry.

In three northern states linkages with other components are virtually inexistent and at present there is no staff assigned to STUs in these states.[2] On the contrary, in the three southern states all STUs are operational, well staffed and there coordination, cooperation and synergy is ensured between them and RWASSAs.

Linkages among the UNICEF implementers and relevant LGAs

Cooperation between the UNICEF consultants and the RWASSAs is by and large **considered relatively adequate.** Consultants interact on a daily basis with RWASSA staff and are involved in all rural WSSSRP activities. Hence, consultants provide valuable on the job capacity building of RWASSA staff. A notable drawback however is their limited involvement in M&E activities. FO staff and WASH consultants regularly meet with the high level State officials and management. RWASSAs would need additional capacity building to ensure sustainability.

[2] The team was subsequently informed that the STUs remobilised at end of March 2008

The interaction UNICEF staff/WASH consultants with the WASH Units and the WASHCOMs is unsurprisingly much weaker than in the case of RWASSAs, due to relatively long distances from the State capital and the hefty dispersion of the self-selected LGAs.

WASH Consultants appear to have sufficient access to the LGA Chairmen and Directors for water resources and technical staff. LGAs are supervised by and report to the Federal Ministry for Local Government, whereas the RWASSAs report to a line technical Ministry (usually the SMWR). This situation may create inconsistencies in approach and strategy in relation to programme implementation in the WSS sector at LGA level.

3. Effectiveness

Performance of the rural part of the programme

The overall performance of the rural component after 2.5 years is **judged to be rather poor** even if the several reasons, external and internal, for the accumulated delays are accounted for. The evaluation was made on the basis of a *"Result Oriented"* approach at two levels: a) **at the level of activities** that contributed to the results; and b) **at the level of the results** actually achieved.

An assessment of the degree of achievement at activity level after 2.5 years of implementation, based on *UNICEF "Activity status report as of March 2008"*shows the **average weighted overall progress was around 23% and that out of a total of 46 current activities 8 activities were completed, which represents17.3% of the activities undertaken. The reported achievements are consistent with the current expenditure rate of the rural component of just 25% provided by the appraisal of the spending.**

The team has made an attempt to evaluate the degree to which the expected key results (4.a to 4.h) were achieved, based on the OVIs. The data provided aim to demonstrate the overall progress against planned results in a narrative form by using mostly qualitative criteria, unfortunately not sufficiently***" result-oriented"*** **a**nd without presenting enough substantiated evidence of the (mostly quantified) OVIs or sources of verification.

On the basis of the data supplied we may also conclude that the ***Result 4.h*** **(linked to GWE activities) was successfully completed.** Alternatively ***Result 4.e*** *"Community based model established in up to 1400 communities with a population below 5000 and increased access to safe water for about 2.1 million people" and respectively* ***4.f*** *"Formulated and tested sanitation strategies on access to sustainable basic sanitation facilities and small scale sanitation projects for 210.000 people in rural areas"***, have achieved little progress. Indeed, less than 90% as per mid term objective was achieved after 2.5 years for the results 4.a and 4.c. In addition for result 4.d it was difficult to perform an adequate assessment due to the lack of quantified data corresponding to the OVIs.**

The low level of achievements for the results 4.e and 4.f (mainly works) may be linked to the difficulties in the application of the cost sharing agreement and the absence of the administrative and disbursement procedures, which

have created serious delays in the implementation of the water and sanitation works component. **This argument is however not valid for the other several soft components.**

Quality of information management

The quality of the information management is considered **not to be fully adapted to the actual needs** of the programme management. Annual and six-monthly narrative and financial reports, as per the Contribution Agreement, have been submitted for 2005, 2006 and 2007.

Though these reports comply with the contractual obligations, they do not sufficiently respond to the real needs in terms of accuracy required for an efficient information management. They should more rigorously quantify project actual progress against annual work plans according to the planned activities and the OVIs. A six-monthly and annual reporting schedule is definitely insufficient, especially in the present circumstances, where management would need updated information on the actual performance in real time for their operational requirements. WIMS and SIMS have been installed on a computer in all RWASSA and in a few of the WASH-Units at LGA level; M&E local staff has been trained in the use of WIMS and SIMS. Nevertheless, the evaluation team anticipates logistical and capacity problems in the operation of computers at LGA level.

The UNICEF HQ in Abuja has recently recruited an M&E specialist to strengthen ongoing M&E and communication. The field offices have to join the effort and play also an important role in M&E activities.

Effectiveness of programme visibility

By and large the **visibility** of the programme **is appropriate (**sample pictures are provided in the draft report). All schools and communities which were provided with water supply and/or sanitation facilities under the WSSSRP which were visited by the evaluation team, have effective sign-boards. The information provided is sufficient and the size of the font used as well as the composition of the text is adequate, since more information would be counterproductive. The information is simple, thus easily absorbed by a large part of the literate population. All project vehicles are marked with project and donor related information. The manufacturer's identification plate fixed on hand pumps carries always prominently the UNICEF name and logo. The mission is of the opinion that if this is the case, the EC and the FGN should equally be mentioned.

Appropriateness and effectiveness of stakeholder participation

The **effectiveness of participation** of the key stakeholders [3]to the rural component of the WSSSRP is one **of the main successes of the programme.** The FMAWR is the beneficiary institution and main stakeholder and also member of the WSSSRP NPSC. It has representatives to the WSSSRP stakeholders meetings and coordination meetings. SMWR are generally

[3] It refers particularly to the State and local level, because participation at federal level and communication between FMAWR and HQ is very limited (practically non-existent).

participating effectively to the implementation of the rural component of the WSSSRP. All focal states have established RWASSA which participate efficiently in the implementation of the WSSSRP. Despite its active involvement in the project since the start, the FGN failed to transfer its share of financial contribution to the WSSSRP accounts in the states. It is hoped that the already high expectation and enthusiasm exhibited by the beneficiaries will not be allowed to diminish. LGA authorities report to the Ministry of Local Government and the MAWR is by consequence not present at LGA-level, thus not ensuring a proper communication, definition of responsibilities and line of command.

Evaluation of the technology options supported by WSSSRP

The **technologies used** by the project **are judged to be appropriate** (with the exception of the risk that the communities would not be capable of ensuring the security of the solar panels and that motorised schemes are inappropriate for the smaller primary schools). Hence, more flexibility is required for selecting the most appropriate technology, i.e. tailored amongst others, on the actually measured yield of the borehole. In addition, the design and execution of the WSSSRP- funded sanitation facilities in schools appears to be appropriate, even though their actual use is not yet ascertained.

4. Impact to date and potential sustainability

Impact to date

It is in general **difficult to assess the impact and outcomes at its mid-term.** In the case of rural component where only few activities have been completed after more than 2.5 years, it is difficult to note significant impacts or outcomes. However, the field visits undertaken by the evaluation team have been an excellent opportunity to assess a some of the areas in which the rural component after 2.5 years has **apparently already made an impact, particularly at community level:** increased part of the rural communities having access to improved quality and safe sources of water; less time spent therefore on water collection; increased number of population having access to basic sanitation, improvement in the health and hygiene conditions, increased community participation and mobilisation and willingness to pay for the O&M costs; enhancing the local capacities of LGAs and local communities to ensure full ownership and sustainability, better response to actual needs at grass root level based on a decentralised decision making at community level. Due to the current delays the high expectations and enthusiasm exhibited by the communities should not be allowed to diminish. **Unfortunately there are not yet accurate data and statistics to accurately quantify the initial impact, due notably to the limited availability of consolidated base line survey data and poor M&E systems.**

Potential sustainability

The **level of ownership** of WSSSRP activities and WSS infrastructures (notably referring to boreholes equipped with pumps and school sanitation facilities) is a **great achievement** of this programme. Communities have established WASHCOM to manage their water and sanitation related problems.

They have made their contribution of 5% of the investment cost; some even have started to collect money for O&M, in this way showing their **true**

commitment to contribute. Once works are completed, the installation is officially handed over to the community that owns it and is responsible for the water supply.

Hence, **appropriation and a true sense of responsibility and ownership** by the community are increased, which in turn enhances **sustainability.** It is anticipated that the maintenance cost of hand pumps and of solar powered pumps in schools is affordable by the communities insofar that the security of the solar panels can be guaranteed by the community. Thus, the flow of benefits to the communities is likely to continue, since infrastructure provided is affordable and appropriation by the community is proven. Technology used by the rural component is appropriate in terms of simplicity of operating and maintaining it. Acceptance of sanitation in schools however still depends on the personal preferences of the pupils. Awareness building and hygiene education need to be enhanced and the preliminary surveys should better define the type of sanitation facilities which are socially and culturally acceptable.

Increased capacity building of the WASH Units, WASHCOMS and RWASSAs is the cornerstone to institutional sustainability for the rural WSS sub-sector. One potential important threat to the sustainability of the programme is that the FGN has not yet transferred its contribution to any of the States project accounts (cost sharing formula).

5. Final Recommendations

Overall recommendations

The fact that more than 63% of the total budget-and actual expenditure-is made up by water and sanitation works and, more important, that the FGN contribution based on the cost sharing formula did not yet materialise, has certainly adversely influenced the performance of annual and cumulated expenditure ratios.

Some 37% of the budget includes soft components only, which do not require counterpart funding from the FGN/States. Accumulated delays concerning the soft component might imply that the inputs utilised were not fully appropriate compared to the actual work load and expected results.

The likely reasons for a poor expenditure record may stem equally from an overestimation in the original budget compared to actual needs and real capacity absorption, from inadequate inputs/human resources that were made available for the implementation, or a combination of the two factors.

Even with 1.5 years extension of the present agreement, based on current expenditure rates, the unspent money will be still around 30% of the funds foreseen by the Contribution Agreement.

If the annual budget is increased by 30% and supposing that it will be spent at 100% the cumulated expenditure rates will be: 48% at end 2008; 71% at end 2009; and 96% at end of 2010.

Two solutions are considered for speeding up the implementation of the work plan and the corresponding expenditures by the programme:
a) to reduce the budget (which is highly unlikely);
b) to sensibly raise the yearly budgets, and in parallel to increase the human resources *exclusively* allocated for the implementation of the rural component (UNICEF staff and external consultants to be hired). Reallocations between the budget headings or lines might be needed. This may necessitate an amendment to the FA and probably the use of the 5% contingency foreseen in the budget and subsequently a revision of provisions the CA.. Otherwise the chances for the programme to succeed are jeopardised.

Specific recommendations for key stakeholders

FMAWR

- FMAWR should urgently materialise its commitment to provide its financial contribution to the programme/States, as per the agreed cost sharing formula.
- A focal person should be designated among the senior staff to liaise and to coordinate with the rural and the urban/small towns components of the programme, to ensure technical supervision by the technical line ministry.

NPC/ NAO

- Should put in place an efficient M&E system to closely monitor on a permanent basis the programme execution against agreed targets and benchmarks (external monitoring TA may be required for an initial year, under a FWC).
- Should increase the number of staff in charge of the overall supervision of the Contract.

EC Delegation

- Should be ready to make an amendment to the original Financing Agreement, to approve a time extension, if allowed by the EC regulations by end of 2010, on the basis of a reallocation between the budget headings/lines (overall budget kept the same).
- Should proceed with an initial extension of the Contribution Agreement for one (1.5 years).
- Should be more actively involved in the M&E of WSSRP activities, jointly with the NAO.

PMU

- PMU should as a matter of urgency finalise the draft Guidelines for administrative and disbursement procedures and to disseminate it to the states for their final comments and agreement.
- Should be more involved on the dissemination of the information related to the rural component.

Federal States

- They should agree on the final "Guidelines for administrative and disbursement procedures" document and to produce without delays all required project-related documentation, based on agreed procedures.

- Should ensure that local contractors are paid in time aiming to avoid potential social conflicts and a negative impact on private sector participation in Government funded activities.

RWASSA

- Additional capacity building should be provided to the RWASSAs so that they would be institutionally strengthened as sustainable organisations aiming to ensure the replication of WSSSRP activities as a package, with the provision of the soft components as well.
- Should more actively build their capacities in close cooperation with the LGAs

Detailed recommendations for UNICEF

Reporting formats, content and frequency

Although the reports comply with the contractual obligations of UNICEF, they do not sufficiently respond to the needs of the rural component of the WSSSRP in terms of accuracy and quality required for an efficient management of information. Recommended reporting changes may also be included in the proposed rider to the contribution agreement.

Reports should allow the reader to have a snapshot of the activities and corresponding results over the period, to be included in a 1-2 pages Executive summary. The format and content should be more result-oriented (and less activity based) to facilitate a proper M&E. With regards to the work plan presentation, it is suggested to detail the work plan activities from the original log-frame in unambiguous terms and provide a more specific time frame (not only Jan-Dec for example), and prioritise the different activities/results areas. As an operational tool, an activity **bar chart (GANTT)** may be very useful tool for a better visualisation of the prioritisation, timing and duration of the activities, the milestones and benchmarks, as well as tracking on a permanent basis the actual results. In practice, it may be very well the case that for all focal states activities will be the same, but the time frames might be different.

In respect to the urgency of the situation, the programme should be managed as "crisis management" where updated information should be readily available to make informed decisions.

With regard to the reports to be produced for operational purposes, it is suggested to make a distinction between the operational/management reports that may be brief and on tabular format and submitted on a monthly basis, and the administrative and financial reports which should be submitted on a quarterly basis (all of them based on the initial work plan). To allow for a more accurate analysis of the financial performance, the financial reports should include not only the expenditure incurred (money paid up) but **also the funds committed (contracts signed**) related to the activities to be performed and refer each time to the funds disbursed for the period and total cumulated to date.

Staff level and qualifications

Without additional human resources allocated for the programme, UNICEF will certainly not being able to substantially improve its future performance during the remaining period, even if a time extension would be provided**.** In the short term it would be necessary for the FOs to have at least one more staff, a dedicated person dealing with coordination and M&E of the EC funded activities/projects in the States covered by that office. With a view of the areas to be covered, the long distances, and the magnitude of the tasks, one more external consultant would be needed, particularly on overall state coordination and M&E.

To improve the efficiency of the rural component of WSSSRP, UNICEF should inform the EC Delegation in Abuja which of the positions are part time backstopping or management positions, and which positions are full time (100%), and therefore exclusively dedicated and available to the programme implementation. In the case of part time positions, an estimate of the time availability of the staff should be provided and such time spend should be well documented.

Internal coordination and communication

Information sharing seems to be one missing links in the coordination area. The state level programme information with regard to the overall status of implementation, approaches, technical solutions adopted, problems encountered, etc. should be better shared between the different FOs. It is believed that with the recruitment of a Project Officer in charge of M&E that person will support also overall coordination and communication.

WSSSRP coordination meetings

Management of meetings and time management should be improved. Meetings should be streamlined by effectively preparing their effectively agendas, for their meetings and geared towards tangible results. The meetings should be minuted and should always end in concrete decisions and a specific task for the person in charge for implementing the decisions, accompanied by a clear timeframe for the decision to be carried out, and all necessary follow up measures.

Linkages with other components

Renewed and quick support to the STUs in the three northern states will be beneficial to the implementation of the rural component of the WSSSRP; hence, this support is a priority.

The coordinating role of the PMU should be strengthened, in particular for the rural component of the WSSSRP. UNICEF and the PMU have to develop strong links at Federal and State levels.

Monitoring & Evaluation

UNICEF FOs should segregate as early as possible M&E of the rural component of WSSSRP funded activities from the planning and monitoring documents for its activities funded by other resources (DFID, own funding).

UNICEF Consultants

UNICEF consultants should concentrate their efforts on providing additional support and capacity building to the WASH Units at LGA level, which in turn

should focus on developing and supporting the WASHCOMs. Capacity building of the WASH Units is as essential as for the RWASSAs, keeping in mind their sustainability by the end of the WSSSRP.

Technical and socio-economic standards

A fiche with typical ranges for values of technical and socio-economic standards should be adopted by the rural component of the WSSSRP.

In addition the MTR team has elaborated a number of recommendations for improving the implementation of the WSSRP rural component, particularly concerning the use of appropriate technology options for water supply and sanitation, managing an information system for WS&S, ensuring a proper visibility, stakeholder participation and sustainability.

1. RELEVANCE

Evaluation question: *Is the WSSSRP responding to the specific needs of the rural W&S sector in Nigeria; are the programme and the proposed related activities coherent with the national rural water and sanitation policies, and with the needs expressed by the rural communities?*

Key findings: The design of the WSSSRP rural component appears to be relevant with the identified (and emerging) needs of the populations of the rural communities, with the water sector and sanitation policies and strategies promoted by the FGN, while being adequately responsive and flexible. At the design level of the programme however, one of the main assumptions made, namely the commitment of the FGN to implement the agreed cost sharing formula and to elaborate corresponding administrative and disbursement procedures did not yet materialise; this has created serious delays in the programme implementation.

1.1. Relevance of WSSSRP rural component to identified and emerging needs

During the past decades, in the absence of adequate funding for the Nigerian water and sanitation sector, both at the federal and state level, the provision of water and sanitation services, notably for rural communities, has suffered decays in infrastructure and in the quality of staff who handle these facilities. Other problems of the WS&S sector concern weakness of existing institutional arrangements, absence of a regulatory framework, inconsistencies in the implementation of existing policies and lack of adequate databases.

Investment to expand services in the water and sanitation sector in rural areas was very low. Funds provided under the federal and state budgets were not used effectively, because of corruption and mismanagement. In addition to low funding and to the lack of application of the cost sharing formula, funding for O&M was inadequate. Co-ordination, planning, monitoring, and evaluation of WSS activities were poor, in part because of overlapping mandates at federal and state level. Other problems to be mentioned are the absence of a clear regulatory framework, political interference, weak management capacity, poor technical skills in many institutions, irregular power supply, etc.

1.2. Alignment and responsiveness of WSSSRP rural component to overall FGN policy

The purpose and expected results of the WSSSRP are essentially designed towards alignment to the responsive and supporting government policies, particularly the "National Water Supply and Sanitation Policy" (draft, 2004). The main objective of Nigeria's water supply and sanitation policy is the provision of sufficient potable water and adequate sanitation to all Nigerian people in an affordable and sustainable way, through a fair and participatory investment by the three tiers of government, the private sector

and the beneficiaries. Alternatively, the overall objective of the WSSSRP is to increase access to safe, adequate and sustainable water and sanitation services in six focal states.

The national WSS policy defines rural water supply scheme as a simple scheme serving a population of less than 5,000 people. This is one of the criteria for the selection of the rural communities that will benefit from the improvement in water supply and sanitation under the WSSRP rural component. Besides, the counterpart contribution requirements (the cost sharing arrangements) at Federal, States, LGAs and rural communities' level (as formulated in the WSSSRP rural component) are coherent to the rationale of FGN to promote and enhance sustainability in water supply and sanitation through an active mobilization and a participatory approach of all stakeholders.

The national policy aims to encouraging rural communities to seize full ownership of government's water and sanitation facilities located in their community, thus creating solid premises for future economic and financial sustainability. Consequently, water and sanitation facilities to be provided under WSSSRP rural component are to be handed over to the communities and to be owned by them with the obligation to ensure future O&M costs.

Enhancement of rural level capacities in the proper operation and management of water supply and sanitation facilities, provision of technical support for capacity building at State, LGA and Community levels, and strengthening of the NWRI to support the water supply operations, are all topics included in the National WSS policy which are implemented under the WSSSRP rural component.

The WSSSRP rural component is also encouraging an active private sector participation in water supply and sanitation at the State, and more important at community level (capacity building).This is in full compliance with the FGN policy to create an enabling environment for the private sector in water supply and sanitation operations, notably in rural areas.

WSSSRP rural component intends equally to enhance M&E systems at LGA and community levels and harmonise it with the M&E systems nation-wide. This is in line with government policy to enhance monitoring of the performance in the water supply and sanitation sector for sound policy adjustment and development and to actively promote community participation in M&E activities.

The institutional reforms in the water supply and sanitation sector, particularly in the rural communities, concern also a number of cross-cutting issues, such as gender mainstreaming, issues related to the selection and use of appropriate technologies, environmental issues, etc. All these issues are also encompassed in the WSSSRP Result 4.

One of the areas to which the implementation of the WSSSRP is paying attention is to identify and train NGOs for an effective role in WSS services, including capacity building in budget monitoring activities, as well as in

exposing and reporting corruption cases. Similarly, government policy in this area concerns an increase in the coverage and quality of services to an ever growing population with the involvement of important segments of society that have been traditionally excluded. The private sector, communities, as well as NGOs have a critical role to play in the planning, design, financing, implementation and operation of water supply and sanitation systems.

1.3. Overall degree of flexibility and responsiveness

WSSSRP incorporates a new type of approach-"community demand driven"- to the provision of water supply and sanitation to rural communities. After cost-estimates are prepared for the different WSS options, the communities determine themselves which scheme they prefer based particularly on their ability to cover their share of the costs of the works (5% participation) and to ensure future O&M costs. This ensures a better degree of responsiveness to the actual needs of the community, as directly perceived by the community members.

2. EFFICIENCY

Evaluation question: *Did the WSSSRP rural component's human, organisational, administrative and financial resources, including the intervention methods, favour or hamper the achievement of the rural component's expected results?*

Key findings: In general it is felt that coordination is working better at field level. However, it is unclear how and how often the state level programme information with regard to the overall status of implementation, approaches, technical solutions adopted, problems encountered, etc., is shared between the different FOs. The CA does not specifically quantify the inputs of the key staff. The MTR mission assesses that UNICEF Consultants are generally well qualified to carry out WSSSRP activities, with some exceptions. Cooperation between the UNICEF consultants and the RWASSAs is by and large appropriate. A notable drawback is their limited involvement in M&E activities. There are sufficient institutionalised meetings for enabling adequate coordination and synergy between the rural component and other components of the WSSSRP The STUs have the mandate to support water related policy reforms at state level in coordination with the PMU. This setup appears to be adequate. There is coordination, cooperation and synergy between the STUs and the RWASSAs in the southern states. Renewed support to the STUs in 3 of the northern states will be only beneficial. The coordinating role of the PMU cannot be ignored, notably for the rural component. Capacity building of the WASH Units and the RWASSAs is essential, keeping in mind that they need to be sustainable by the end of the WSSSRP.

Overall the spending of the resources during the 2.5 years has been low that is explained by different external and internal factors. The budget amounts to € 34 448,847, out of which €33,283, 614 for EC and €1,165,233 for UNICEF including 5% contingencies.
Total funds used as of 31 December 2007 amounted to €8,333,034, whereas the balance of unspent funds was €24,475,392. The ratio of consolidated expenditure for the period against the total allocated budget was just 25%. In other words, 75 % of the funds are yet to be spent by July 2009. This is highly unlikely to happen, especially under the present circumstances.
The average ratio project management costs/ total expenditure cumulated for the period represents 10.71%, which is broadly in line with this type of costs for similar large programmes. If one compares the annual actual expenditure to the estimated annual works budget, the ratios are: 2% for 2005; 95% (2006) and 31% (2007). The geographical distribution of expenditure between the focal states shows that there are significant disparities in terms of disbursements. Indeed, two states only, Cross River and Osun (both in the South) are spending around 63% of the total expenditure, due mainly by the late shifting in the focal states A total of 15 activities did incur 0% expenditure (or 32% of the total).

2.1. Review of the organisational and management structure of UNICEF WSSSRP team

The WSSSRP rural component programme management is ensured by UNICEF organisational structures at two levels: at central/national level and at State level. At the central level, the mission was informed that the WASH Section at the UNICEF HQ Office

based in Abuja is made up of 1 Section Chief, 3 Project Officers, and 2 Assistant Project Officers, that is in line with the provisions included in the TOR (Annex "*Description of the Action"*). The number of staff required and corresponding job descriptions are documented in an annex to the Contribution agreement. Nevertheless, the document does not expressly mention that these specialists would be used for the purposes of the EC Programme uniquely,

The mission has also learned that, to reinforce the team, UNICEF has recently appointed an M&E Officer at the HQ. Due to the fact that all staff is also in charge of other donor's funded programmes (e.g. DFID) and of the own UNICEF programmes, the actual percentage of time dedicated solely to the implementation of the EC WSSSRP rural component is rather unclear. Details on their qualifications and educational background are discussed hereafter at section 2.3.

According to the TORs, the UNICEF HQ office in Abuja has the responsibility for the implementation and overall management of the rural component in close coordination and collaboration with its Field Offices (FOs).

The UNICEF's organisational structure at State level includes four FOs which cover all 36 States of Nigeria, including the eight WSSSRP focal states.[4] This represents a substantial work load for the field specialists. The FOs have the following responsibilities with regard to the EC programme:

- A Field Office in Enugu — Anambra and Cross River
- B Field Office in Lagos — Osun
- C Field Office in Kaduna — Kebbi (GWE)
- D Field Office in Bauchi — Kano, Yobe, Jigawa, and Gombe (GWE)

[4] For instance the A FO covers 9 States; the B FO covers 8 States and D FO in Bauchi covers presently 10 States

The FO structure comprises typically a WASH Project Officer and an Assistant Project Officer (figures may vary between the offices) working under the supervision of a Chief of the FO. Recently due to the increased volume of tasks, some of the FOs have requested for additional specialist staff, particularly with social sciences background. WASH specialists are supported by operations, administrative, finance and supply staff. The **Annex 6** is showing an example of an UNICEF FO organigramme. It is noticeable that the majority of the specialists used have a technical background -mostly water engineers, geologists-or social science background (hygiene, community mobilisation, etc.) and there are no consultants with experience in project M&E. The present specialists are usually dealing with planning, works and contract supervision. The remark made earlier in respect to the number of staff at HQ level also applies to the FOs: the actual percentage of time dedicated exclusively to the implementation of the rural component is uncertain. In our opinion, the number of staff involved in the EC programme has been underestimated since the start, and just recently some measures are being taken by UNICEF to improve/update their organisational structure. In the short term it would be necessary for the FOs to have at least one more staff, a dedicated person dealing full-time with coordination and M&E of the EC funded activities/projects in the States covered by that office.

In addition there is a WASH Consultant hired externally with the firm Deloitte in each focal state funded under the project to provide technical and management support to the project at State and LGA level (RUWASSA). The assistance concerns especially advice and support in project planning, implementation, and works supervision. The state WASH Consultant also contributes to UNICEF's advocacy and facilitates the provision of inputs in each of the focal states. We believe on the other hand, that in view of the areas to be covered and the magnitude of these tasks, at least one more external consultant would be needed, particularly on overall state coordination and M&E.

2.2. Assessment of the number and expertise of project staff

This section complements the initial appraisal made at section 2.1. According to the Annex I.D (Profile of UNICEF Key Staff) to the Contribution Agreement, the following staff would be fielded in Nigeria to execute the rural component of the WSSSRP:

At national level (WASH Unit, HQ in Abuja)

1. Senior Project Officer - Chief of WASH Unit *(Mohammed El-Fatih):* has the overall oversight of the rural component of WSSSRP and is also specifically in charge of technical aspects and quality control.
2. Project Officer - Deputy Chief of WASH Unit *(NOD; Ajibade Olokun – Water Supply & Guinea worm):* has overall responsibility for implementing the WSSSRP rural related activities at national level.
3. Project Officer (Sanitation) *(NOC; Bisi Agberimi)*: will mainly be responsible for the development of the sanitation and hygiene education component
4. Project Officer (Hand pump Development) *(NOC; Dr Olufumi Ndububa)*: will mainly be responsible for the development of hand pump and supply chain related issues.

5. Project Officer (WASH) *(NOB; Ms Yetunde Adegoke-Diop; M&E; is now paid full time out of the EC contribution agreement):* will provide technical support to the states and LGAs (in collaboration with the Field Offices and State WASH Consultant) in the planning, implementation and monitoring of WSSSRP activities.

Field Offices (FO) level:

6. Project officers (WASH) *(NOC; see budget line 2.1.1)*: 4 staff
7. Assistant project officers (WASH) *(see budget line 2.1.1):* 4 staff focussing on Environmental Sanitation and Hygiene Education.

State level:

8. State WES consultants *(see budget line 2.2.1)*: 6 externally contracted staff to support the RWASSAs.

Source: UNICEF Abuja

All positions appear to be individually filled by highly qualified staff,
The position of "*WES International Professional Officer*" (44,5 man/month) is an additional position filled by Tameez Ahmed. This position is **not described in Annex I.D** of the contribution agreement of UNICEF (it was apparently added during negotiations). It is however included in its Annex III.B (budget). It is the only position assigned full time to the WSSSRP and is paid out of the EC CA.

The last column of Annex III confirms that **only a fraction of the time** of mostly unallocated staff is actually available to the WSSSRP. Moreover, it appears that only the "*WES International Professional Officer*" and the recently recruited "*Project Officer M&E*" are paid out of the EC contribution agreement.

Therefore an unknown fraction of the time of 7 NOC Project Officers (positions 3, 4, 5 and 6 described here above; 3 in Abuja and 4 in the FOs) is actually available to implement WSSSRP activities. An area of concern is that the staff specified for positions 1 to 7 are also covering other WS&S related projects, some in other states (UNICEF has a coverage of all 36 states in Nigeria). Some cover the same 6 focal WSSSRP states, but funded by other donor. With a view to ensure a proper implementation of the programme it is in any case the entire responsibility of UNICEF to assign sufficient staff so as to attain , without incurring delays all anticipated results/outputs of the WSSSRP.
The contribution agreement **does not individually quantify the inputs** of 7 NOC project officers, out of the 20 key staff whose job description and profiles are described in Annex I.D of the Contribution Agreement. The evaluation mission doubts that the inputs of these 7 Project Officers-and their 4 assistants- as quantified in the Annex III are actually sufficient to ensure adequate management and supervision of project implementation.

To improve the efficiency of the rural component of WSSSRP, UNICEF **should clarify the EC Delegation which positions are full time** and therefore exclusively dedicated and available to the programme implementation. Also the time actually spent on the programme should be well documented.

The evaluation team has found that UNICEF Consultants in the States **are generally well qualified** to carry out WSSSRP activities **(with some significant variations between the FOs**). Moreover, the mission was informed that a second consultant is planned to be recruited by UNICEF to support the first WASH consultant in each of the RWASSAs of the 6 focal States. If so, UNICEF **rightly plans to assign full time** one male consultant technically oriented and one female - hygiene and community participation - oriented consultant to each of the RWASSAs. (The UNICEF FO in Enugu is, in addition, recruiting a WASH consultant to carry out WSSSRP tasks from this office). The MTR mission anticipates that this consultant will similarly be assigned full time to EC WSSSRP activities and that he will submit the same monthly reports as the other consultants.

2.3. Coordination, monitoring and review of the UNICEF Abuja team with UNICEF State representatives

The UNICEF HQ in Abuja is the main office responsible for coordination: they should collect and receive all relevant information from the 4 FOs, from the stakeholders and other participants in the Programme. Alternatively, it is the obligation of the FOs to provide the UNICEF HQ with all information on their activities, their planning, and the end results. The FOs should receive from the UNICEF HQ all information from the other states and information stemming from the FG level. Information sharing seems to be a missing link in the coordination area. It is believed that with the arrival of a person in charge of M&E, that person will also support overall coordination of activities.

At the federal level coordination is ensured every quarter by Programme Coordination Meetings that involves the Desk Officer from the coordinating line ministry (NPC); also a high level inter-ministerial committee is taking place on a quarterly basis.

Internal coordination activity is ensured by the Quarterly Coordination Meetings that involves the PMU, STUs, counterpart staff, EC Delegation, UNICEF, SRIP, and representatives of the focal states. The last such quarterly meeting was held in early March 2008.

At UNICEF level, internal Programme Coordination Meetings (PCM) are held quarterly at the HQ and involve the Chiefs of FOs and WASH unit at HQ. Country management team meetings are also held by the HQ, as needs arise.

The main coordination activity for the UNICEF is supposed to be the monthly meeting between UNICEF, FMWR, the NPC and the EC Delegation. Until today these meetings were not held, as foreseen in the Contribution Agreement. Based on a sample of minutes of meetings provided to the team, one can realise that the efficiency and effectiveness of the majority of meetings is rather limited by the fact that the agenda focused on logistical and procedural matters. Based on the minutes, discussions concentrated not on critical issues related to the implementation of activities, such as: status of

performance of the programme, concrete suggestions for corrective measures aiming to speed up implementation.[5]

In respect to coordination at national level, UNICEF is also submitting to the WSSSRP PMU each month information on the implementation of activities of the rural component, as part of a news bulletin on the WSSSRP website that is drafted by the PMU each month.

At state level the overall coordination is ensured through the FOs. The Chief of the FO reports to the Deputy Chief at the HQ in Abuja and has direct relation with the Chief of WASH section in Abuja, who is responsible for the overall technical supervision, quality assurance of the WS&S standards.

Weekly coordination meetings are held at the various FOs with all staff having different functional responsibilities. Linkages between the different sectors of intervention are ensured particularly by the Planning and M&E specialist and a specialist who is acting as focal person for a certain state, in addition to his specific functional duties.

The FOs prepare a consolidated annual report for all donor funded WS&S activities in their state, that is being sent to the HQ for the attention of the Chief of WASH section, who reviews all FOs reports, informs the States and Federal level, and compiles the consolidated report that is presented in Abuja to the main partners on the occasion of a national review meeting.

The annual work plan is typically finalised by the end of January of that year. The activities contained for all sectors, and corresponding budgets, are codified by donor, namely EC, DFID, UNICEF own projects, and subsequently broken down on a quarterly basis. The draft document is shared and discussed with the main actors down to the level of LGAs. During the implementation phase, a monthly internal Work plan is prepared and submitted by the FO to the HQ (monthly cash flow forecast). Quarterly implementation reports are also prepared by the Chief of the FO based on the individual specialist inputs of the different units and submitted to the HQ for consolidation.

To ensure coordination and project review and supervision at field level, the external WASH consultants in the states prepare and submit their reports on a monthly basis to the FO for the attention of the Chief of FO and WASH specialist. The report is usually submitted at the end of the month on the basis of an approved monthly work plan and then is forwarded for information to the HQ. The work plans are prepared in close consultation with the stakeholders in the states. Field trips for the supervision of projects are being undertaken as required by the external WASH consultant and UNICEF FO staff.[6]

In general the feeling is that coordination is working better at field level. However, it is unclear how and how often the state level programme

[5] See detailed recommendations made at section 5 Final recommendations

[6] A graphical representation of the communication and coordination between UNICEF offices is shown in the Annex nr 7

information with regard to the overall status of implementation, approaches, technical solutions adopted, problems encountered, etc. is shared between the different FOs.

2.4. Assessment of the spending of the financial resources

Following the SEEDS[7] benchmarking exercise undertaken by EC, four of the six initial focal States, Abia, Gombe, Kebbi and Plateau, have been replaced with better-performing States, i.e. Anambra, Jigawa, Kano and Yobe, while two others, Cross River and Osun, continue to be focal States. There is no pre-allocation of funds between the six states; in other words, more resources may be directed to those states which demonstrate commitment to improve overall governance and introduce reforms in order to deliver services and reduce poverty.

The WSSSRP rural component -9 ACP UNI 006- is funded by the EC and implemented through UNICEF on the basis of a Contribution Agreement (CA) signed by the two parties. The duration of the EC contribution is four years, 7 July 2005 to 6 July 2009. The total contribution amounts to € 34 448,847, out of which €33,283, 614 for EC and €1,165,233 for UNICEF including 5% contingencies.

In addition, the CA indicates that these costs will be complemented by local contributions estimated at €17,252,949, as set out in the FA signed between the EC and the FGN and reflected into the MoUs signed between the FGN and the (initial) six focal States. It is furthermore foreseen that: "*for all activities to be co-financed by local contributions (….), UNICEF will have to receive evidence that local contributions have actually been reserved before proceeding with their implementation".* [8]

The payment arrangements stipulate that a first pre-financing of €5,494,432.50, which corresponds to 90% of the budget for the first year of implementation, will be released by the EC, and which is being covered by the first Work plan for 2005.

Further instalments to be released (equal to the remainder of the European Development Fund's part of the budget for the previous period plus a pre-financing of 90% of that part of the forecast budget for the subsequent 12-month period, and provided that at least 70% of the immediately preceding payment and 100% of previous payments, if any, has been incurred, as proven by the relevant report), are as follows:

2nd INSTALMENT	(forecast) €8,380,031.40
3rd INSTALMENT	(forecast) €9,208,922.70
4th INSTALMENT	(forecast) €9,272,934.00

[7] State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (corresponding to NEEDS at national level)

[8] As it might be seen later in the report this clause has equally had an impact on the timely implementation

UNICEF, based on the approved Work plans, has so far received a 1st instalment of €5,494,432.50 in August 2005; a 2nd instalment of €8,380,031 was released by EC in December 2007, hence making a total of €13,874,463.

Total funds used as of 31 December 2007 amounted to €8,333,034, whereas the balance of unspent funds was €24,475,392.[9] At the same date, the ratio of total cumulated expenditure against total EC released funds was 60%. Moreover, the ratio total cumulated actual expenditure compared to total planned budget expenditure for the three years (€18,951,048) was 44%, while the consolidated average expenditure for the period against the total allocated budget was just 25%. In other words, **75 % of the funds are yet to be spent by July 2009** [10]. We estimate that this is highly unlikely to happen, especially under the present circumstances.

An expenditure forecast for the remaining period is attempted below. Even if we consider that the draft planned budget for 2008[11] is kept constant as in the previous years at €6,317,096 and will be 100% spent (a highly optimistic scenario), this will make up cumulated spent funds of €14,650,130 by end of 2008, namely a ratio against total budget of the component of 42%. Under the same assumptions, **by the end of June 2009, the expenditure ratio would be around 52%,** hence leaving an unspent balance of 48% of funds. If a **one year extension through July 2010** is authorised, all conditions being equal, the **cumulated expenditure will represent 70%** of the component budget. **Even with 1.5 years extension until end of December 2010, the unspent money will be still more than 20%.** Therefore, practical solutions should be found urgently to substantially improve expenditures made by the programme. [12]

In a foot note to the last UNICEF *"Annual Narrative and Financial Report No 3*" for the period 1 January 2007-31 December 2007 dated 22 February 2008 it is mentioned that:...
" In addition, about €2 million is ***committed*** *(**"requisitioned"**) against contracts awarded for construction of water sources in communities under 50 x 6 borehole initiative and WASH facilities in schools. Most of construction work has already been completed; payment will be made soon on receipt of request for payment".*

This recalls the urgent need to find an acceptable practical solution for the proper implementation of the "cost sharing formula" at Federal level. It is believed that a satisfactory alternative will be found for all states to ensure the speeding up of the implementation rate and to catch up the accumulated delays.

For 2005 the planned budget amounted to €6,317,016, with no prior geographical allocation between the six focal states following a *"demand driven"* approach. Due to the late start in July, the expenditure rate for the six-

[9] Refer to Annex nr 8 WSSSRP cumulated expenditure 2005-2007
[10] This is fully in line with the appraisal of the WSSSRP achieved activities and results in terms of effectiveness -section 3.1
[11] See remarks on the draft 2008 budget both in terms of presentation and amount at section 3.1 Performance of rural component
[12] Some options are proposed at section 5 Final recommendations

month period was just under 5%. In 2006 the budget was identical, including a national level part of €499,104. If the national level allocation is deducted from the total expenditure (€3,427, 988), the expenditure rate for 2006 is 54% and mostly related to contracts for supply of equipment. In 2007, the overall situation was not much different, the rate of expenditure being 44% of the total allocated budget.

A measure of efficiency is also the **ratio of project management and project support costs[13] to total budget and total expenditure.** These costs made up in 2005 around 70% of total expenditure compared to approximately 12.9% of the budget, amount which subsequently is kept constant over the period. For comparison purposes, the same ratio was in 2006 19.2% and roughly 6% in 2007. The average ratio project management costs/ total expenditure cumulated for the period represents 10.71%, which is broadly in line with this type of costs for similar large programmes.

The weight of the hard component (water supply and sanitation works) compared to the total budget represents **63.8%**, while the **soft components** makes up the balance of **36.2%.** The budget for works based on the work plans was spread equally over the period (€3,250,955/year). If one compares the annual actual expenditure to the estimated annual works budget, the ratios are: 2% for 2005; 95% (2006) and 31% (2007). The high value of the ratio in 2006 is explained by the fact that it refers to the supply of equipment (procurement) for the water supply and sanitation works which were anticipated to be undertaken in 2007. This impacted also on the ratio of actual works annual expenditure vs. total yearly expenditure that represented a very tiny 6% in 2005, 80% in 2006, and around 30% in 2007. As a result, the ratio **cumulated works expenditures** vs. works budgets over the three years was around **23%.**

The fact that almost two thirds of the total budget-and actual expenditure- is made up by water and sanitation works and, more important, that the FGN contribution based on the cost sharing formula did not yet materialise, has certainly adversely influenced the performance of annual and cumulated expenditure ratios.

In late 2007, a joint decision was made on the kick off of the so called "***50x6 boreholes initiative*",** as an attempt to unlock existing (financial) bottlenecks. On the basis of the data supplied by UNICEF, as of mid-February 2008, as part of this scheme 268 boreholes were drilled, out of which 152 were installed with hand pumps, while the estimated number of rural population benefiting of an improved access to water sources was in excess of 63,000. It is perhaps too early to comment on the successes of theses measures and on the lessons to be learned for the future on the basis of the preliminary results.[14]

The geographical distribution of expenditure between the focal states shows that there are significant disparities in terms of disbursements. Thus, two states only, Cross River and Osun (both in the South) are spending around 63% of the

[13] Backstopping costs included (7%)

[14] Refer also to the detailed data and analysis provided in the Annex 15.

total expenditures, far ahead of the third position Jigawa State with spending at €884,134. At the other end of the ranking are the Yobe and Gombe States (both North States) with only €200,008, and respectively €181,261 cumulated expenditure. It has to be underlined that in 2006, due to the late reallocation in the focal states, two states did not spend any funds.

Another aspect of the assessment of the efficiency of operations is provided by the comparison **actual expenditure vs. planned budget in relation to the different components** of the WSSSRP rural component, on the basis of the FA provisions. From the **Annex 8**, we can conclude that the ratio of cumulated expenditure incurred over the period vs total budget is 26%. Nonetheless there are sensible differences between the items. Above the average are the Item 2.2 Capacity building (44%) and 2.3. Surveys (27%), both of them soft components. On the other hand, item 2.4.Various studies records 0% expenditure and the item 2.6 Schools WS&S Works, just 19%. A special case for the item 2.5 WS&S Works concerns the year 2006, when €3,052,224 were spent on supplies of W&S equipment out of the total expenditure of €3,953,199 i.e. more than 77% of the yearly expenditure and some 37% of the cumulated expenditure for 2005-2007.

Following the same structure of the activity-based intervention logic presented in **Annex 8,** the mission has scrutinized the **number and type of specific activities having incurred 0% expenditure**: not surprisingly, a total of 15 activities are in this position making up some 32% of the total, while 4 activities have a record of less than 5% disbursed. [15] UNICEF maintained that some of these activities were carried out as part of other main activities (e.g. hydro geological and geophysical surveys, as part of the construction works for WASH facilities).

A special note for the *Item 2.2 "Capacity building"*, where 8 budget activities out of the 47 listed (two of them being not any more relevant), have payments which did not yet start (0% funds disbursed). Items 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5 have respectively 1 budget activity, 3 budget activities and 2 budget activities not spending any funds (0%). More specifically, the activity *"Support to the establishment of a WSS Sector GIS-based data base at NRWI"* has just incurred around 1% cumulated expenditure; the "*Support of existing initiatives as such as sani-centers*" has spent sensibly higher at 22%, whilst for the activity " *Develop options and financial mechanisms for supporting low cost safe disposal excreta"* has disbursed an insignificant 1%.

All of these include soft components only, which do not require counterpart funding from the FGN/States. This might suggest that the inputs used were not fully adequate compared to the actual work load and anticipated results.

It is rather unusual for an evaluation to appraise a programme having such a poor performance in terms of expenditure after more than 2.5 years and less than 1.5 years to the end in July 2009. Numbers of reasons were provided as a justification for the slow progress made and the very low expenditure incurred

[15] Results are consistent with the main findings related to the effectiveness of the activities vs. results (achievements) presented at section 3.1

by the programme[16]. The fact that more than 50% of the total budget-and actual expenditure- is made up by water and sanitation works and, more important, that the Federal level contribution did not yet materialise, has certainly adversely influenced the performance of annual and cumulated expenditure ratios.

Alternatively, the reasons for a poor expenditure record may also stem from the overestimation of the original budget compared to actual needs or actual utilisation, from insufficient inputs and human resources that were made available for the implementation or a combination of the two factors.

At this stage, **two solutions might be contemplated for speeding up** the implementation of the work plan and the corresponding expenditures by the programme: a) to reduce the budget (which is highly unlikely); b) to keep the same budget, but to increase the human resources *exclusively* allocated for the implementation of the rural component, i.e. UNICEF staff and external consultants to be hired. Reallocations between the budget headings/lines might be equally needed. This may necessitate an amendment to the original FA (and probably the use of the contingencies). In this respect, UNICEF may consider a number of adjustments/reallocations between different initial allocations.

2.5. Linkages between the rural component and other components of the WSSSRP

The WSSSRP PMU, the National PSC and each PSCs at the State level have the mandate to harmonise approaches between the programme components.

2.5.1 Linkages of the rural component with water governance at national level (Result 1)

The NAO is chairing the National PSC which is composed of the FMWR, SAOs, SMWR, implementing partners, and CSOs. The National PSC has to provide supervision and orientation; advice on key issues, including the allocation of federal resources to states, (….). It is however unknown to the evaluation team (no minutes available) how often the PSC was held, but it is believed that it has met only once. [17]

The PMU is organising on a quarterly basis a *"WSSSRP Partner/Donor Coordination Meeting"*. The number of participants to these meetings chaired by the FMAWR is steadily increasing, the last (5th) of these meetings having 78 participants, out of which 6 from the WSSSRP-PMU and 8 as UNICEF representatives. Other ministries, NGOs, donors and other stakeholders are also invited. Discussions focuson issues related to water governance and coordination of water policies at national and state levels.

[16] For details on the internal and external factors refer to Section 5 Final recommendations.

[17] The mission was informed that eventually a first inauguration meeting took place in February 2008.

The PMU is also conducting *"WSSSRP quarterly coordination meetings"* (three were held in 2007) which assemble all key stakeholders of the programme, varying between 12 and 33 participants, including 2 to 4 from UNICEF. The objective of these meetings is to find solutions to common implementation problems, to coordinate activities of the programme and share best practices and experiences

2.5.2 Linkages of the rural component with water governance at state level (Result 2)

In each of the states, the SAO chairs the SPSC, composed of key Ministries of the State Government, Local Government, elected officials, and CSOs. The SPSCs should provide overall supervision and orientation. However, information available varies from State to State and it is not specified how often the SPSCs have met since the start of the project and what the results is of the decisions made at these meetings.

The STUs have the mandate to support water related policy reforms at state level in coordination with the PMU. This setup appears to be adequate, due to the fact that reforms of water policies and strategies at state level should be consistent with national level policies.

2.5.3 Linkages of the rural component with Result 3 and Result 4 (60 small towns)

STUs and RWASSAs normally report to the same State Ministry. In the 3 northern states, Kano, Jigawa and Yobe, linkages of the rural component with Results 3 and 4 (60 small towns) are virtually inexistent, except through the SPSCs and irregular meetings of the STUs. This is due to the withdrawal of the contractor (RODECO) in charge of supporting these 3 STUs. Consequently, at present there is no permanent staff assigned to the STUs in these 3 northern states and the evaluation mission was informed that there were no permanent STU offices, at least in Yobe.

In the three southern states, the STUs are operational, well staffed and there is adequate coordination, cooperation and synergy between these and the states' RWASSAs.

2.6. Linkages among the UNICEF implementers and relevant State and Local Government Authorities

2.6.1 Linkages of UNICEF implementers with relevant State Authorities

As mentioned in the previous sections of this report, relations between UNICEF field office staff, externally recruited consultants and the STUs is weak, notably in the 3 northern states. This is mostly due to the absence of WSSSRP support to these STUs.

Cooperation between the UNICEF Consultants and the RWASSAs is by and large considered to be appropriate. These consultants interact on a daily basis with the RWASSA staff and are involved in all rural WSSSRP activities, namely planning, implementation and supervision. Hence, these consultants

provide valuable on the job capacity building of RWASSA staff. A notable drawback consists of their limited involvement in M&E activities.

UNICEF field office staff and consultants regularly meet with the management of the State Ministry of WR (Minister, Director for Water Resources,.), with the State Authorising Officer (SAO), with the Permanent Secretary to the State Government, and occasionally with the State Governor (a good example being Anambra state).

In relation to RWASSAs, they need additional capacity building in order to ensure sustainability after the WSSSRP will have ended. One illustration of their apparent lack of capacity is that some RWASSAs have started to replicate at state level WSSSRP community water supply systems, whereas they solely finance the drilling and equipment of boreholes in additional rural communities. In other words, this type of "*replication"* is not implemented in accordance with the reform model promoted by WSSSRP, and is thus not able to actively promote community mobilisation and participation, hygiene promotion, and ultimately a sense of ownership.

2.6.2 Linkages of UNICEF consultants with Local Government Authorities and WASHCOMs

The interaction of UNICEF consultants with the WASH Units in the LGAs and the WASHCOMs at community level is unsurprisingly much weaker (than with the RWASSAs) in view of the relatively long distances from the State capital and the large dispersion of the self-selected LGAs.

Nonetheless, UNICEF Consultants appear to have sufficient access to the LGA-Chairmen and/or the LGA Director for water resources and their technical staff. On the other hand, the LGA is supervised by and reports to the Federal Ministry for Local Government, whereas the RWASSAs report to a State Ministry, usually but not always the SMWR. This may create inconsistencies in approach and strategy in relation to programme implementation in the WSS sector[18].

[18] Refer also for details to Section 3.4.3

3. EFFECTIVENESS.

Evaluation question: *Is the RSSSRP specific objective of ensuring… "sustainable and integrated delivery of water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion services for 2.1 million people in up to 1,400 rural communities in 30 LGAs in the six focal states" achieved? based on the actual activities and results for Result 4, as indicated in the Logical Framework*

Key findings:
The overall performance of the rural component after 2.5 years is judged to be rather poor even if the several reasons, external and internal, for the accumulated delays are accounted for. The evaluation is made at two levels: a) at the level of activities that contributed to the results; and b) at the level of the results actually achieved. An assessment of the degree of achievement at activity level after 2.5 years of implementation shows the average *weighted overall progress* was around 23% and that out of a total of 46 current activities 8 activities were completed, which represents just 17.3% of the activities undertaken. The reported achievements are consistent with the current expenditure rate of the rural component of just 25% provided by the appraisal of the spending.

The *Result 4.h* (linked to GWE activities) was successfully completed. Alternatively *Result 4.e "Community based model established in up to 1400 communities with a population below 5000 and increased access to safe water for about 2.1 million people" and respectively 4.f "Formulated and tested sanitation strategies on access to sustainable basic sanitation facilities and small scale sanitation projects for 210.000 people in rural areas"*, have achieved little progress. Less than 90% as per mid term objective was achieved after 2.5 years for the results 4.a and 4.c. (In addition for result 4.d it was difficult to perform an adequate assessment due to the lack of quantified data corresponding to the OVIs).

The level of achievements for the results 4.e and 4.f (mainly works) may be linked to the **difficulties in the application of the cost sharing agreement and the absence of the administrative and disbursement procedures, which have created serious delays**. This argument is however less valid for the other several soft components.

Though UNICEF's annual narrative and financial reports comply with its contract, they do not sufficiently respond to the WSSSRP needs in terms of quality and accuracy. The technical manuals are in general sufficiently detailed to carry out the activities. The evaluation team anticipates logistical and capacity problems in the operation of computers at LGA level. Schools and communities have adequate sign-boards, which may be translated in local languages. Despite its active involvement since the start, the FGN failed to transfer any financial contribution to the WSSSRP accounts in the focal states. A link should exist between the WIMS databases encoded by the RWASSAs in the states and the related RBDA. Even though NWRI participation seems to be appropriate, the lack of autonomy in its decision making is reducing its effectiveness. All focal states have established RWASSAs which

participate effectively in the implementation of the rural component. LGAs report to the Ministry of Local Government and the MAWR is by consequence not present at LGA-level, thus not facilitating proper communication, definition of responsibilities and clear line of command (at LG level). Effectiveness of participation of the WASHCOMs, WASH Units and RWASSAs to the rural component is one of the main achievements. The absence of community funding for the motorised water supply schemes in the schools is creating a bias in favour of such schemes. Technologies used by the project are appropriate with the exception of the risk that the communities would not be capable of ensuring the security of solar panels and that motorised schemes are inappropriate for the smaller primary schools. Special attention should be given to the sanitation sub-sector for which related WSSSRP activities are particularly neglected (the infrastructure component, but also the awareness, hygiene and education aspects).

3.1. Performance of the rural part of the programme

The CA signed between EC and UNICEF defines as ***overall objective*** of the project "the implementation of the National RWSSP". The original ***specific objective*** of the RWSSP is the sustainable and integrated delivery of water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion services for 2.1 million people in up to 1,400 rural communities in 30 LGAs of (Abia[19], Cross River, Gombe, Kebbi, Osun and Plateau States)"[20].

A summary of the ***key results*** as presented in the original Log frame is shown below:

4a.	To increase the capacity of the National Water Resources Institute as a training and resource centre.
4b.	To put in place at state and LGA levels monitoring and evaluation systems and harmonise them with the National M&E system.
4c.	To strengthen the capacity of Rural WSS institutions at state level (RWSSA) and LGA level (WSS departments) to plan and implement WSS programmes.
4d.	To support implementation in 25% of LGAs (in 6 states) and promote State-wide strategies for community mobilization and hygiene promotion.
4e.	To establish community-based models in up to 1,400 rural communities (population below 5,000) and increase access to safe water for about 2.1 million people.
4f.	To formulate and test sanitation strategies on access to sustainable basic sanitation facilities and small scale sanitation projects for 210,000 people.
4g.	To pilot sustainable and integrated (WSS and hygiene promotion) approach in 120 schools for 60,000 children and promoted state-wide.

[19] Abia and Plateau States were replaced following the results of the SEEDS by Anambra and Yobe

[20] Source: Description of Action, Contribution Agreement EC-UNICEF

4h. To eradicate Guinea worm in 21 communities (representing 70,000 people) of 5 LGAs in Cross River, Gombe and Kebbi states.

The original implementation period as per the FA is four years (July 2005-July 2009). A mid-term objective[21] by the end of the first 24 months is defined as (ensuring) ...."*sustainable and integrated delivery of water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion services for 840,000 people (**40%)** in up to 560 rural communities **(40%)** within the 30 LGAs of Abia, Cross River, Gombe, Osun and Plateau States.* [22]. Furthermore, this mid-term objective applies to all results *except results 4.a and 4.c,* to be achieved up to a **minimum of 90% after 24 months.**

Detailed activities corresponding to the above results are described in the Logframe (activities 4.1 to 4.48[23]).

The performance to date of the component is assessed by the team on the basis of a "Result Oriented" approach at two levels: a) at the level of activities that contributed to the results; and b) at the level of the results actually achieved.

a). First, an assessment of the **degree of achievement at activity level** after 2.5 years of implementation, based on: 1) the UNICEF annual progress report at 31 December 2007[24] and 2) the document provided subsequently on 13 March 2008, i.e. "*Activity status report as of March 2008"* [25] shows two types of results and corresponding interpretations, namely the ***unweighted progress*** achieved for result 4 and in brackets the ***weighted results*** against budgets.

Remarks

I. Un-weighted averages at activity level

II. Weighted averages at activity level are shown in brackets.

Result 4.a: on average 67% of activities achieved. (on average 18% of activities achieved)

Result 4.b: on average 70% of activities achieved. (21.7%)

Result 4.c: on average 74% of activities achieved (**2 activities completed).** (31.6%)

Result 4.d: on average 73% of activities achieved (**1 activity completed)** (14.6%)

Result 4.e: on average 40% of activities achieved **(1 activity completed).** (28%)

Result 4.f: on average 20% of activities achieved. (7.6%)

Result 4.g: on average 47% of activities achieved. (204%) *

Result 4.h: 100% achieved (**4 activities completed)** (76%)

[21] See Description of Action-Contribution agreement EC-UNICEF
[22] see previous remarks on the new focal States added
[23] Two of the initial activities were not any more relevant
[24] The document is shown in Annex 8
[25] The document is presented in Annex 9

** Remark: Expenditures of €1.139.461out of total budget for 4.41 of €6.120.000. That makes up 17.7% of total budget weighted to an average progress of 55%.*

Conclusions

The overall weighted average of progress is impacted by the 204% achievement for result 4.g.

The overall progress is around 23%, which is consistent with the rate of 25% in terms of cumulated expenditure rate.[26]

Source: UNICEF "Activity status report as of March 2008"

Note:

It was not possible to accurately establish the degree of completion of these activities due to the presentation of the data in the UNICEF progress reports. The figures shown in the box and used by the team are estimations made by UNICEF. Concerning the sources of verification produced and provided by UNICEF, the 2005 progress report does not include a Work programme and the document annexed "Achievements against 2005 work plan objectives (OVIs)" as shown in the annex to the CA. For 2006 the evaluation team has received the document *"Work plan 2006-Objectives and results"* (but not including corresponding budgets) and the document "*Achievement against 2006 work plan objectives and results",* which unfortunately does not compare actual achievement of objectives against the quantified OVIs. For 2007 the *"EU annual Work plan"* contains the listing of activities, anticipated results and specific OVIs, but it does not include the annual budgets. A draft document prepared in February 2008 by UNICEF: "*EU annual work plan 2008-objectives & results"* was also provided. (This is presented in Annex 11). The document is based on the template incorporated in the Annex C of the CA. It contains a description of the log frame activities, the estimated budget, expected results, and the implementation schedule, not broken down on a quarterly basis, and a reference to the OVIs from the Logical Framework. The annual report for 2007 does not explain the achievements against work plan objectives and results based on the agreed template and again, these are described only in a narrative form.

In a nutshell, based on the data made available by UNICEF by 14 March 2008, out of a total of 46 activities scrutinised[27] as of March 2008:

- 8 activities are completed (17.3%)
- 16 activities are achieved between 70%-95% (34.8%)
- 8 activities are achieved between 30%-65% (17.3%)
- 14 activities are achieved at less than 30% (30.4%)

If the logic of the mid-term objective that concerns the results *4.a and 4.c* over the first 2 years is observed, then less than 90% of the activities have been achieved after 2.5 years. The evaluation team has found it difficult to assess the degree to which the objective for the other result areas, particularly that of ensuring "*sustainable and integrated delivery of water*

[26] Refer to the data provided in Annex 11

[27] For coherence purposes with the financial reporting, we should have showed the status of activities/achievements at 31 December 2007

supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion services for 840,000 people (making up 40% of the total target population of 2.1 million) in up to 560 rural communities (or 40% of the total target of 1,400 communities) within the 30 LGA"...was actually achieved. The information supplied does not provide a synopsis, particularly in quantitative terms, of the progress made at its mid term.

b) The team has made an attempt to evaluate the **degree to which the expected key results (4.a to 4.h) were achieved,** based on the OVIs ("Objectively verifiable indicators") as presented in the Logical framework. The exercise proved however rather difficult to be undertaken on the basis of the "*Narrative UNICEF Progress Report to the NAO and EC as of 31 December 2007"*. The document is attempting to demonstrate the overall progress against planned results, by using mostly qualitative evaluation criteria, such as "excellent/good/little progress", but unfortunately not being sufficiently*" result-oriented"* and without presenting substantiated evidence or sources of verification for the accomplishment of the key results. The document contains a detailed description of the activities carried out during the period , but does not contain concrete references on the mostly quantified OVIs.

In the majority of cases, the required data, i.e. numbers, percentages, etc. was not supplied, thus making an appropriate appraisal quite a challenge for the evaluation team. Additional information contained in the document *"Result status report as of March 2008"* produced by UNICEF at mid-March 2008 was submitted to the evaluation team; this was used also for the analysis performed at result level. On the basis of this document that is shown in **Annex 8** a summary of the team's appraisal of the key results (4.a-4.h) achieved so far by the WSSRP compared to the OVIs is presented below:

Achieved	Good progress	Some progress	Little progress
Result 4.h	Result 4.a* Result 4.c**	Result 4.b Result 4.g Result 4.d ***	Result 4.e Result 4.f

* Less than 90% as per MT objective achieved after 2.5 years.
** Less than 90% as per MT objective achieved after 2.5 years.
*** Difficult to assess due to the lack of quantified data.

The table above shows that the ***Result 4.h*** **(linked to GWE activities) was successfully completed.** Alternatively ***Result 4.e*** *"Community based model established in up to 1400 communities with a population below 5000 and increased access to safe water for about 2.1 million people" and respectively* ***4.f*** *"Formulated and tested sanitation strategies on access to sustainable basic sanitation facilities and small scale sanitation projects for 210.000 people in rural areas"*, **have achieved little progress**.
Special attention should be given to the sanitation sub-sector, i.e. Result 4f, for which related WSSSRP activities seem to be particularly neglected.

The low level of achievements for the results 4.e and 4.f may be linked to the difficulties in the application of the cost sharing agreement, which has created serious delays in the implementation of the water and sanitation works component. This argument is however not valid for several of the other (soft) components.

The apparent reasons (external and internal) for the delays in the implementation are discussed next at Section 5.

3.2. Quality of information management

3.2.1 Management Progress Reports

The Annex I, section 4.1 of the CA specifies the following reporting requirements:

- *"A bi-annual narrative update of maximum 10 pages will review achievements against objectives (….),*
- *An annual narrative and financial utilization report (…) will review achievements, milestones and challenges following the WSS review conducted by UNICEF (…).*
- *A final narrative and financial report will be produced at the end of the implementation period."*

These annual reports narrative and financial and bi-annual updates have been submitted for 2005, 2006 and 2007. Though these reports comply with the contractual obligations of UNICEF, they do not sufficiently respond to the needs of the rural component in terms of accuracy and quality required for an efficient management of information.[28]

Firstly,concerning their content and presentation. They should more rigorously quantify project actual progress against annual work plans according to the planned activities and the OVIs defined in the logical framework attached to CA (Annex 1.A). Not quantifiable terminology like "*ongoing", "good progress", "started",…* are not very useful for the adequate appraisal of the results achieved.

Secondly, with regards to their frequency, a six-month and annual reporting schedule, as per Annex 1 to the CA, is definitely insufficient, especially in a crisis situation where project management would need updated information on the actual performance in real time for their operational requirements.

3.2.2 Technical manuals and reports

Technical manuals and reports have mostly been produced, partly by the NWRI. They are not yet available publicly on the web, because NWRI has not yet developed its WSS website. These technical manuals are of sufficient quality to carry out the activities of the rural component of the WSSSRP.
Standard drawings and technical specifications for Water Supply and School Sanitation options have also been produced, including Bills of Quantities (BoQs) and confidential cost estimates.
As mentioned at section 3.5, a fiche with typical ranges for values of technical standards should be developed and used by the rural component, especially for selecting the most appropriate technical options.[29]

[28] Refer equally to comments on the content and quality of data contained in the reports provided at section 2.4 and 3.1
[29] An example is provided in the Annex 12

3.2.3 UNICEF WASH Consultant's reports

UNICEF WASH Consultants are reporting monthly their achievements for the past month as well as their work plan for the coming month to the respective UNICEF FO. In addition they also report monthly progress to PMU through their respective STUs in the States. UNICEF at national level shares similar progress reports for two guinea worm states and activities undertaken at Federal level. The quarterly Programme Coordination meetings in Abuja also review the performance of the WASH – Consultants. The team however was not able to asses their content and quality.

3.2.4 Management Information Systems for WS&S

WIMS and SIMS have been installed on a computer in all 6 RWASSAs and in a few of the WASH Units at LGA level (e.g. Cross River State). M&E staff has been trained in the use of WIMS and SIMS, but the evaluation team anticipates logistical and capacity problems in the operation of computers at LGA level. None of the RWASSAs has yet started to encode the data stemming from the baseline surveys into WIMS and SIMS and none of them appeared to be fully familiarised with the use of a GPS.

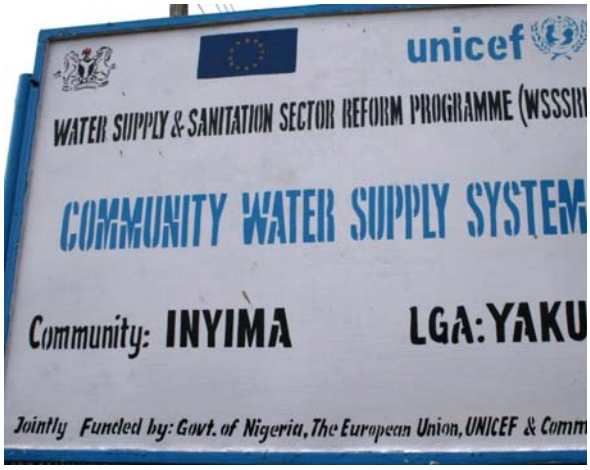
3.2.5 WSSSRP Monitoring Reports

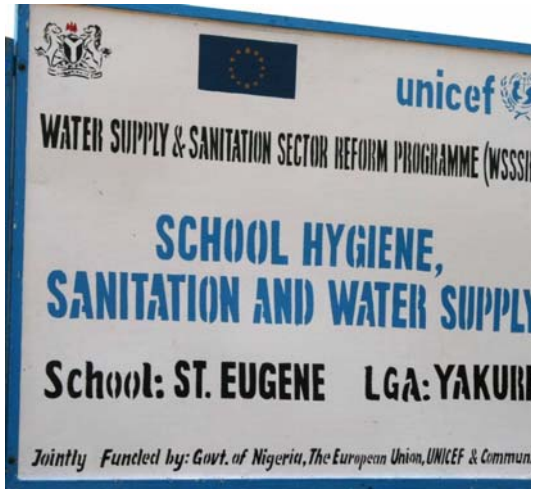
In line with Annex I of the CA, the rural component of the WSSSRP is monitored at national, state, LGA and community levels, on the basis of the logical framework. The UNICEF HQ in Abuja has recently recruited an M&E specialist to strengthen ongoing monitoring activities. The FOs have to join the effort and play an important role in M&E activities.

3.3. Effectiveness of programme visibility

3.3.1 Signboards in communities and schools

All schools and communities which were provided with water supply and/or sanitation facilities under the WSSSRP and which were visited by the MTR team, have adequate sign-boards. A good example of the front side of signboards, one for community-based and one for school- based infrastructure, are shown below:





The information provided is sufficient and the size of the font used as well as the composition of the text is adequate. More information would be counterproductive.[30]

A first risk is however that the visibility requirement of the funding and implementing organisations is reducing the appropriation by the community: this could be improved by moving the 4th line (community/school and LGA) up to the top of the board. A second risk is that most village people do not understand Standard English and/or are illiterate. This could partly be addressed by translating the information in the local language.

A good example of the back-side of signboards is shown below:

The content of this side of the signboard is sufficient; more information would mostly not be absorbed. Fonts and layout of the text could be better harmonised between states. The most important part of this side of the board is the educational message. Hence, the WSSSRP may consider moving this part up to the top of the board. More importantly, the message would be more widely understood in the local language. A translation of the educational message with pictograms could be provided on a separate board, not to promote visibility, but primarily for educational and awareness purposes.

[30] Note: The EC visibility guidelines recommend the EC flag to be on the left hand side of the board followed by the Nigerian flag and the UNICEF flag. There is however no contractual obligation of UNICEF to follow the guidelines.

3.3.2. Visibility on WSSSRP vehicles and motorcycles

All project vehicles are marked with project and donor related information. A good example of visibility on vehicles is shown below:

Again, information is simple, thus easily absorbed by a large part of the literate population.
The sticker on top with the EC and UNICEF logos should for appropriation purposes also carry the logo of the FGN.

3.3.3 Visibility on WSSSRP provided Hand Pumps

The manufacturer's identification plate fixed on hand pumps carries always prominently the UNICEF name and logo. The mission is of the opinion that if this is the case, the EC and the FGN should equally be mentioned.

3.4. Appropriateness and effectiveness of stakeholder participation

3.4.1 Stakeholders at federal level

The FMAWR is the beneficiary institution and the main stakeholder. Its representative is also a member of the WSSSRP PSC and it has up to 6 representatives to the WSSSRP stakeholders meetings and coordination meetings. (There is little evidence of the active participation of the Federal Ministries of Environment and Health in the WSSSRP).

Regarding the participation of the River Basin Development Agencies (RBDAs) to the rural component of the WSSSRP, a link should exist between the WIMS databases encoded by the RWASSAs in the 6 focal states and the related RBDA. The RBDAs have indeed the mandate to plan the use of water resources at River Basin level. The MTR team has not been informed of any such linkages even though the WSSSRP PMU has awarded a contract for water resources planning in the Hadeja-Jama'are River Basin and the Cross River Basin. And the WSSSRP PMU recently reports on its visit and discussion with the Cross River Basin Development Agency (CRBDA). It is stated in its mission report "*that the present isolation of RBDA from state WSS agencies is not advisable from an IWRM perspective and needs to be changed, possibly*

through a Liaison Officer. Osun state's practice of organising monthly informative meetings with all water agencies, including the OORBDA, was recommended as a possible option. (.....)

The National Water Resources Institute (NWRI) participates in project activities focussed on increasing its capacity as training and resource centre (result 4.a). Even though NWRI participation to the programme's rural component seems to be appropriate, the lack of autonomy in its decision making is reducing its effectiveness. [31]

3.4.2 Stakeholders at State level

SMWR are generally participating effectively to the implementation of WSSSRP. All focal states have therefore established RWASSAs[32] which participate effectively in the implementation of its rural component.
The MTR mission has no information that the State Water Boards (SWBs), State Water Councils (SWCs) and State Environmental Protection Agencies are involved or have established a link with the rural component of the WSSSRP. The need for WSSSRP's rural component to have such link needs to be confirmed.

3.4.3 Water Supply and Sanitation Departments at LGA level (WASH Units)

WASH Units are all actively involved in the implementation of the rural component of the WSSSRP. In order to be more effective, they may require additional logistic support and capacity building. However, the LG authorities report to the Ministry of Local Government and the MAWR is by consequence not present at LGA-level, thus not facilitating proper communication, definition of responsibilities and clear line of command. There is nothing that the project can do about this institutional setup (except to continue strengthening the LGAs WASH Units).

3.4.4 Other Stakeholders

WASHCOMs have been created and strengthened in the self-selected communities under the rural component of the WSSSRP. Their members actively participate to and are responsible for mobilisation, financial management and operation & maintenance at community level. They are elected through a generally accepted informal procedure.

3.5.5 Community based organisations (CBOs), elected officials and CSOs

They effectively participate to the implementation of their part of the rural component through their membership to WSSSRP organisations, SPSC or WASHCOMs. In some of the states visited, even the State Governor is well acquainted with the rural component of the WSSSRP.

[31] In addition, it is apparent that UNICEF does not sufficiently support the NWRI to develop its capacity to provide adequate support. (e.g the report production of national water forum proceedings and website)

[32] Gombe is actually not a focal state, but included in the GWE component.

3.5.6 The private sector

Private sector is actually a project partner, and not a stakeholder. It is nevertheless involved as contractors, suppliers and/or artisans for works and for providing operation and maintenance services.

3.5.7. Other cross cutting issues

These issues, such as gender and environment are effectively addressed by the rural component of the WSSSRP. Women are represented in the WASHCOMs, even though their membership is on average limited to approximately 30%. In the three northern states, cultural and old traditions still prevail: women have to meet separately from man, where after they send their leader to the leaders of the male group to convey their opinion or decision.
Even though rural WASH activities have only positive impacts on the environment, the WASHCOMs and the school "Environmental Health Clubs" are addressing issues related to environmental safeguard of their immediate surrounding.

3.5. Evaluation of the technology options supported by WSSSRP

3.5.1 Water Supply

Review of traditional water sources
Traditional water sources-before WSSSRP intervention- reported to the MTR team were typically:

- **Ponds** (with water harvesting): the MTR observed situations with water supplied by ponds in Gombe state (eg. Duku LG), where no water table could be reached by deep tube wells and where a creek/river was located at an excessive distance (30 km); they were typically located at approximately a km from the community settlement, in a dry creek-bed, preferably at a location with high clay content (so as to minimise infiltration). Some of these ponds dry out a few months after the rainy season; hence, they are often not permanent. One of the ponds visited by the evaluation team was: (1) perennial and with its capacity increased through excavation; (2) protected by a fence to prevent cattle and goats contaminating the water; (3) divided in 2 parts, one for animal consumption and a second part for human consumption. A floating platform to prevent users from stepping into the pond while fetching water (guinea worm contamination) had disappeared. In another, more accessible community, the pond dried out during the dry season and villagers then purchased water from a water boozer for their own-, as well as for animal consumption. Villagers appear to pay 6,000-7,000 Naira/m^3 for the water. There may be a way to reduce this high cost of water by reserving the purchased water for cooking, drinking, or other purposes which require clean water; and to improve the location of the pond so as to increase water-harvesting and storage and to reduce evaporation losses. Infiltration losses could be reduced through a chemical adjuvant to the soil or plastic lining. This increased pond water could then be used for livestock and for the population (not for drinking, but for washing, etc…).

- **Rivers and creeks:** a woman typically has to walk for 1 to 3 hours/day to fetch water from rivers or creeks.
- **Hand dug wells**: skills to build traditional wells exist locally and there is also ample scope for improving the safety of these wells.
- **Water tankers**: as mentioned above, the most deprived but still sufficiently accessible communities are provided with clean water by private, State or LGA owned and operated trucks. Villages are then equipped with a concrete reservoir (approx. 10 m³) to store the water delivered wholesale. These suppliers of tank-water may lose their income if the WSSSRP would provide water by other means (deep tube well); hence, such possible conflict of interest has to be addressed.

Deep tube wells equipped with Hand Pumps for communities
Deep tube wells equipped with hand pumps are suited for smaller communities where the water table is not deeper than approximately 60m. If deeper, a motorised pump may be more appropriate. The average number of people served by one hand pump should vary from 250 to 500 with an average consumption of 5 to20 litre/person/day and an investment cost of up to 25 €/user.[33] The MTR team found that there were often more people served by one hand pump, because this was the first to be installed in the community.

Motorised schemes for schools, possibly with a reticulation to the community
The financing agreement specifies that self-selected schools should be equipped with motorised schemes. The MTR team has however met situations where small primary schools, with one teacher, no text-books, no benches and crumbling buildings are equipped with a solar powered borehole with 20 m³ overhead tank (investment cost of at least 5,5 million Naira, as illustrated in the table below). The evaluation team is of the opinion that such imbalances should be avoided and sees no reason why boreholes in schools should not be equipped with hand pumps whenever the water table depth does not exceed 50 to 60 m.

An indicative estimate of the investment cost for different types of boreholes equipped water is provided in the following table:

Type of Borehole Water System	Borehole Depth		Unit Cost[34]		%
	(m)	(Naira)	(US$)	(€)	
Borehole with hand pump	50	750.000	6.250	4.167	14%
Motorised borehole (Tif-Tif; single Phase; 2hp)	60	3.230.000	26.917	17.944	60%
Motorised borehole (7,5KVA Lister diesel Gen.)	60	7.360.000	61.333	40.889	137%
Motorised borehole scheme (Solar;2-3 hp)	60	5.362.000	44.683	29.789	**100%**

Considering that a borehole equipped with hand pump is seven times cheaper than a solar powered borehole and four times cheaper than a "*tif-*

[33] Detailed computations and data are provided in **Annex 13**
[34] Exchange rate used: 120 Naira=1US$, respectively 0,667 US$= 1€

tif" motorised borehole with single phase generator and submersible pump, there is no economic reason to install motorised boreholes in smaller schools; a static water-level at more than 60m depth may however be a reason.. Regarding the maintenance of such a school hand pump, the Parent-Teacher association of the school should be in a position to organise it together with the WASHCOM.

If a motorised scheme in a school is reticulated to the community, it should still be financially viable, with 200-350 people served / stand post and a cost within the €25-30/user bracket. The evaluation team is however of the opinion that the absence of community funding for the motorised water supply schemes in the schools is creating a bias in favour of such schemes, because the villagers quickly understand that 5% contribution to the cost of reticulating the motorised scheme to the community is much less than 5% contribution to the cost of a community borehole equipped with a hand pump.

Sustainability issues
The MTR observed in a particular community that the WSSSRP provided hand pump was actually the 3rd generation of water supply infrastructure. The first system was a small reticulated inter-community system and the second was composed of improved open dug wells; both these systems failed. Hence it is essential that the WSSSRP funded borehole with hand pump is sustainable; this is likely to be the case because the community has financially contributed 5% to the investment cost, because it has been mobilised socially to form a WASHCOM and because awareness has been build on the importance of maintenance. Moreover, the start up of private maintenance shops is planned for support by the WSSSRP[35]. The maintenance of motorised schemes, whether equipped with solar panels or with the cheaper *"Tif-tif"* diesel engines, should also not be a problem. But there is a substantial risk that solar panels may be stolen, considering that they are light, easy to dislodge and expensive.[36]

3.5.2 Sanitation

a) Traditional sanitation
Traditional sanitation consists of open defecation (*"skat"*) or open pit latrines.

b) VIP's in schools
The MTE team has visited a number of schools where VIP latrines were constructed separately for boys and for girls, together with urinals and hand-washing facilities. The VIP latrines were normally equipped with the double squat slabs, but exceptionally, when the ground water table was high and with apparent success, also with a *"Pour and flush"* system.

c) Rural Communities

[35] Refer also to the sani-centres and to section 4.2 hereafter
[36] A board of 6 panels - 450 W – has a value of 372,000 Naira or equivalent to around €2, 000.

Single squat slabs have been subsidised in the past by the WSSSRP as a promotional activity in communities, but this activity has been cancelled for the rest of the project.

4. IMPACT TO DATE AND POTENTIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Evaluation question: *Is the WSSSRP rural component central objective of « Sustainable and integrated delivery of water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion services for 2.1 million people in up to 1,400 rural communities in 30 LGAs of 6 states likely to be achieved and the intermediate results are they likely to be sustainable over time without the EC support?*

Key findings:
It is in general difficult to assess the impact and outcomes at its mid-term. In the case of WSSSRP where just few activities have been completed after more than 2.5 years, it is difficult to note significant impacts. Nevertheless, the MTR team was able to assess a number of areas in which the rural component after 2.5 years has apparently made an impact, particularly at community level.
Self-selected communities have elected members to establish WASHCOMs for managing their water and sanitation related problems. They have opened bank-accounts on which the community has deposited a contribution of 5% of the investment cost. The level of ownership of WSSSRP installed boreholes equipped with pumps is a major achievement. The flow of benefits to the beneficiaries is likely to continue because the infrastructure provided is affordable and appropriation by the community is of a high standard. The technology used by the rural component of the WSSSRP is appropriate in terms of simplicity of operation and maintenance. It is a priority to develop a privatised maintenance system for all rural water supply pumps to be installed by WSSSRP in the focal states, and more generally for all rural water supply pumps all over the country. The supply chain of spare parts for water supply systems should be developed further as a matter of priority.

4.1 Impact to date

This section assesses WSSSRP rural component within the broader context of its relationship between the purpose and the overall objectives, and the extent to which the benefits received within the six focal states have had a wider overall effect on rural water supply and sanitation provision.

It is in general difficult to assess the impact and outcomes at its mid-term. In the case of WSSSRP where very few activities have been completed after more than 2.5 years, it is difficult to note significant impacts or outcomes.

The field visits undertaken by the evaluation team have been an excellent opportunity to assess a number of areas in which the rural component after 2.5 years has apparently made an impact, particularly at community level. Among these areas, the following are highlighted: an increased part of the (mostly poor) rural communities having access to improved quality and safe sources of water; less time spent on water collection that allows more productive work time and better conditions for child education; increased number of population having access to basic sanitation (notably through the school latrines already built); improvement in the health and hygiene conditions, especially for the children; community participation and

mobilisation and their willingness to contribute 5% of the investment cost and to pay 100% the O&M costs; enhancing the local capacities of LGAs and local communities to plan, operate and manage water supply and sanitation services, capacity building being fundamental to ensure full ownership and sustainability. The project is also making an impact on decentralised decision making to better respond to actual needs at grass root level.

At this stage, however, there are no accurate data and statistics yet to quantify the impact in these areas, due notably to the limited availability of consolidated base line survey data and poor M&E systems.

4.2. Potential sustainability

4.2.1 Appropriation by the community and affordability

The level of ownership of WSSSRP activities and WSS infrastructures referring mainly to the boreholes equipped with pumps and school sanitation facilities is the major achievement of this programme. This is due to the soft components of the programme (such as awareness building and community participation) being implemented in advance of the construction activities. The soft components, partially achieved so far, have been implemented comprehensively.

The rural component of the WSSSRP is based on a demand driven approach: 6 states have been selected on the basis of their willingness to reform their institutions while LGA's and communities have been self-selected in a similar way. These communities have established a WASHCOM to manage their water and sanitation related problems by electing members to it. They have all opened a bank-account on which the community has deposited its contribution of 5% of the investment cost. In addition, some of the communities visited have started to collect money for the future O&M costs, which will be their responsibility; in this way they are showing their real commitment to ensure these costs in the future.

Once the WSS infrastructure has been completed, it is officially handed over by the project. The following certificate formally states that the community now owns and is responsible for the water supply system:

WATER SUPPLY & SANITATION SECTOR REFORM PROGRAMME (WSSRP)

HANDOVER CERTIFICATE

This certificate is awarded to Inyima Community, Yakurr LGA, duly represented by Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Committee (WASHCOM) to formally take over the ownership of the community water supply system completed with joint funding from Federal Government, State Government, LGA, The European Union, UNICEF and Community.

The community through WASHCOM will be responsible for the security and overall management (operation and maintenance) of the community water supply system being handed over today.

Mr. Patrick E. Emori
Director Water Supply,
CRS RUWATSSA

Chief Fidelix Alegu
Community Leader
Inyima Community, Yakurr LGA

Mr. Lawrence Elemi
WASHCOM Chairman
Inyima Community

Witnessed by: Pastor Joseph E. Ekpata
LGA WASH Coordinator, Yakurr LGA

Hence, appropriation and a true sense of responsibility and ownership by the community is increased, which in turn enhances sustainability.

It is anticipated that the maintenance cost of hand pumps and of solar powered pumps in schools is affordable by the communities (insofar that the security of the solar panels can be organised by the community). According to the benchmarks listed in **Annex 13** the cost of water to the user should be between 0.25 and 1.25 €/m³, which at an average consumption of 10 l/pers/day (or 0.1 m³/hh/day; or 3 m³/hh/month) would represent between 0.75 and 3.75 €/hh/month. In order to be affordable, this cost should be less than 5% of the monthly income of the household. This means that households in the beneficiary community should have an income between 15 and 75 €/month (equivalent to between 1,800 and 9,000 Naira/month).

4.2.2 Appropriateness of the equipment and its Operation & Maintenance

The technology used by the rural component of the WSSSRP appears to be appropriate in terms of simplicity of operating and maintaining it. The rural component of WSSSRP has started by developing community managed maintenance centres, but this was reported as an unsustainable option. Support is being provided to establish sustainable VLOMs (Village level Operation and Maintenance) and water quality surveillance teams.[37] Hence, it is believed private entrepreneurs would maintain the installed water supply

[37] Some 94 local artisans have been trained for VLOM. A VLOM system pilot programme is operational in Takai LGA in Kano State and in 3 LGAs in Jigawa. 21 Artisans were trained on supply chain in Osun State. UNICEF has developed a partnership with the NGO TULSI on supporting VLOM: an international consultant was expected to be fielded by the end of March to support the FMAWR to establish an effective maintenance system based on private mechanics, specialised and equipped to maintain hand pumps.

systems. The supply chain of spare parts has however to be developed further.

4.2.3 Socio-cultural factors which may affect the provision of water and sanitation

Acceptance of sanitation in schools depends on the personal preferences of the students in terms of sanitation.

4.2.4 Institutional capacity

As analysed in section 2.6, capacity building of the WASH Units and RWASSAs is the cornerstone to institutional sustainability for the rural water supply and sanitation sub-sector. This does not mean that capacity building of the WASHCOMs is less important; nonetheless, WASHCOMs are not part of the government institutions.

4.2.5 Contributions to the investment cost

The fact that all levels of Nigerian society contribute to the investment cost of the WSSSRP provided water supply infrastructure, is enhancing the chances for an increased sustainability. Indeed, not only does the community contribute 5% of the investment cost, the LGA and the State Authorities contribute another 22.5% and the Federal government should also contribute an identical share. One threat to the sustainability of the programme is, as mentioned earlier in the report, that the Federal government has not yet transferred any contribution to any of the State's project accounts.

4.2.6 Replication

The provision of water and sanitation infrastructure to the self-selected rural communities under the WSSSRP is likely to be replicated to other communities and other LGAs and other States in Nigeria, provided that:

- The cost sharing problem is resolved,
- WASH Units and RWASSAs are sufficiently capacitated
- Continued political, institutional and financial support by the Authorities, and
- The whole approach, inclusive all activities of the WSSSRP, is replicated as one package.

5. FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Overall Recommendations

Based on the TOR for the evaluation mission, the global objective of the exercise is to "assess the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the rural component of WSSSRP, give recommendations for the improvement of its implementation for the remaining 2.5 years of the programme and estimate what can be achieved within this time frame". Considering the timing of the evaluation mission, i.e. February-March 2008, the remaining period by 7 July 2009, is actually less than 1.5 years.

A non exhaustive list of the **factors (**external and internal) that have had an adverse impact on the WSSSRP implementation is shown below.

External to UNICEF

- Earlier provisions of the Contribution Agreement *(.."evidence that local contributions have actually been reserved before proceeding with their implementation")* has produced initial delays;
- Delayed take off of the implementation due to the results of the SEEDS 2005 benchmarking exercise and shift in the focal states (four states were replaced;
- Late signature of the MoUs with the States (end 2006) ;
- LGAs self selection process finalised very late (2007);
- Lack of a clear definition of the role of the FMAWR as overall supervisor to the Contribution agreement;
- Limited knowledge of EC EDF procedures and requirements by the stakeholders;
- Unclear definition of the breakdown of coordination and supervision responsibilities between PMU/UNICEF;
- Absence of appropriate communication channels between main stakeholders, notably between the Federal and States level;
- Lack of clear and comprehensive guidelines on contracting and disbursement procedures of the FGN (not finalised as of March 2008);
- Difficulties in implementing the cost sharing agreement (not yet used by FGN at mid-March 2008);
- Absence of an external M&E on a permanent basis.

Internal to UNICEF

- UNICEF regulations and procedures (complex, bureaucratic, and somewhat lacking transparency)
- Limited flexibility in implementation issues
- Inadequate human resources made available exclusively for the EC funded programme, compared to actual workload (especially the soft component)
- Inefficient management of information and communication (especially information sharing).
- Reporting formats, content (administrative and financial) and frequency not responding to actual needs.
- Well-functioning internal M&E systems ("result-oriented") not in place.

The fact that almost two thirds of the total budget-and actual expenditure-is made up by water and sanitation works and, more important, that the FGN contribution based on the cost sharing formula did not yet materialise, has certainly adversely influenced the performance of annual and cumulated expenditure ratios. On the other hand some 37% of the budget includes soft components only, which do not require counterpart funding from the FGN/States. Accumulated delays concerning the soft component might imply that the inputs utilised were not fully appropriate compared to the actual work load and expected results. The likely reasons for a poor expenditure record may stem equally from an overestimation in the original budget compared to actual needs and real capacity absorption, from inadequate inputs/human resources that were made available for the implementation, or a combination of the two factors.

Financial forecast for the remaining period

On the assumption that the draft planned budget for 2008 is kept constant as in the previous years at €6,317,096 and will be 100% spent (a highly optimistic scenario), this will make up cumulated spent funds of €14,650,130 by end of 2008 or a ratio against total budget of the component of 42%. Under the same assumptions, at the end of June 2009, i.e. initial end date for the programme, the expenditure ratio would be around 52%, hence leaving an unspent balance of 48% of funds. If a one year extension through July 2010 is authorised, all conditions being equal, the cumulated expenditure will represent 70% of the component budget. Thus, even with 1.5 years extension of the present agreement, the unspent money will be still around 30% of the funds foreseen by the Contribution Agreement.

A second assumption is to increase the above annual budget by 30% at €8,212,000 (which is by the way to the initial payments forecast) and to suppose that it will be spent at 100%. In this case the cumulated expenditure rates become: 48% at end 2008; 71% at end 2009; and 96% at end of 2010.

Recommendations

At this stage, two solutions are contemplated for speeding up the implementation of the work plan and the corresponding expenditures by the programme: a) to reduce the budget (which is highly unlikely); b) to sensibly raise the yearly budgets, and in parallel to increase the human resources *exclusively* allocated for the implementation of the rural component, namely UNICEF staff and external consultants to be hired. Reallocations between the budget headings or lines might be needed. This may necessitate an amendment to the FA (and probably the use of the contingencies). This may imply a rider to the CA with the duration of the implementation extended for one (1.5 years). Otherwise the chances for the programme to succeed are jeopardised.

5.2. Specific Recommendations

FGN

- FGN/MWR should urgently materialise its commitment to provide its financial contribution to the programme/States, as per the agreed cost sharing formula.
- A focal person should be designated among the senior staff to liaise and to coordinate with the programme, to ensure technical supervision by the technical line ministry.

NAO
- Should put in place an efficient M&E system to closely monitor on a permanent basis the programme execution against agreed targets and benchmarks TA for an external monitoring may be required for an initial year under a FWC).
- Should increase the number of staff in charge of the overall supervision of the Contract.

EC Delegation
- Should be ready to make an amendment to the original Financing Agreement, to approve a time extension, if allowed by the EC regulations by end of 2010, on the basis of a reallocation between the budget headings/lines (overall budget kept the same).
- Should be more actively involved in the M&E of WSSRP activities, jointly with the NAO.

PMU
- PMU should as a matter of urgency finalise the draft Guidelines for administrative and disbursement procedures and to disseminate it to the states for their final comments and agreement.
- Should be more involved on the dissemination of the information related to the rural component.

States
- They should agree on the final "Guidelines for administrative and disbursement procedures" document and to produce without delays all required project-related documentation, based on agreed procedures.
- Should ensure that local contractors are paid in time aiming to avoid potential social conflicts and a negative impact on private sector participation in Government funded activities.

RWASSA
- Additional capacity building should be provided to the RWASSAs so that they would be institutionally strengthened as sustainable organisations aiming to ensure the replication of WSSSRP activities as a package, with the provision of the soft components as well.
- They should more actively build capacities in close cooperation with the LGAs

UNICEF detailed recommendations

Reporting

Although the reports comply with the contractual obligations of UNICEF, they do not sufficiently respond to the needs of the rural component of the

WSSSRP in terms of accuracy and quality required for an efficient management of information. Recommended reporting changes might be included in the suggested rider to the contribution agreement.

Reports should allow the reader to have a snapshot of the activities and corresponding results over the period, to be included in a 1-2 pages Executive summary. The format and content should be more result-oriented (and less activity based) to facilitate a proper M&E. With regards to the work plan presentation, it is suggested to detail the work plan activities from the original log-frame in unambiguous terms and provide a more specific time frame (not only Jan-Dec for example), and prioritise the different activities/results areas. As an operational tool, an activity bar chart (GANTT) may be very useful tool for a better visualisation of the prioritisation, timing and duration of the activities, the milestones and benchmarks, as well as tracking on a permanent basis the actual results. In practice, it may be very well the case that for all focal states activities will be the same, but the time frames might be different. In respect to the urgency of the situation, the programme should be managed as "crisis management" where updated information should be readily available to make informed decisions.

With regard to the reports to be produced for operational purposes, it is suggested to make a distinction between the operational/management reports that may be brief and on tabular format and submitted on a monthly basis, and the administrative and financial reports which should be submitted on a quarterly basis (all of them based on the initial work plan). To allow for a more accurate analysis of the financial performance, the financial reports should include not only the expenditure incurred (money paid up) but also the funds committed (contracts signed) related to the activities to be performed and refer each time to the funds disbursed for the period and total cumulated to date.

Staff level and qualifications

In line with the recommended increase in project implementation tempo, UNICEF should increase the inputs of management and supervision staff (especially project officers and their assistants), so as to optimise the achievements of WSSSRP.

To improve the efficiency of the rural component of WSSSRP, UNICEF should quantify individual inputs to WSSSRP of the 7 project officers and their 4 assistants and inform the EC Delegation accordingly. In case of part time positions, an estimate of their inputs exclusively dedicated to WSSSRP implementation should be provided and such time spend should be well documented. Moreover, in line with the recommended increase in project implementation tempo, UNICEF should increase the inputs of management and supervision staff (especially project officers and their assistants), so as to optimise the achievements of WSSSRP. Without additional human resources allocated for the programme, UNICEF will certainly not be able to substantially improve its future performance during the remaining period, even if a time extension would be provided. In the very short term it would be necessary for the FOs to have at least one more staff, a dedicated person dealing with coordination and M&E of the EC funded activities/projects in the

States covered by that office. With a view of the areas to be covered, the long distances, and the magnitude of the tasks, one more external consultant would be needed, particularly on overall state coordination and M&E.

To improve the efficiency of the rural component of WSSSRP, UNICEF should inform the EC Delegation in Abuja which of the positions are part time backstopping or management positions, and which positions are full time, and therefore exclusively dedicated and available to the programme implementation. In the case of part time positions, an estimate of the time availability of the staff should be provided and such time spend should be well documented.

Internal coordination and communication
Information sharing seems to be one missing links in the coordination area. The state level programme information with regard to the overall status of implementation, approaches, technical solutions adopted, problems encountered, etc. should be better shared between the different FOs. It is believed that with the recruitment of a Project Officer in charge of M&E that person will support also overall coordination and communication.

WSSSRP coordination meetings
Management of meetings and time management should be improved. Meetings should be streamlined by effectively preparing their effectively agendas, for their meetings and geared towards tangible results. The meetings should be minuted and should always end in concrete decisions and a specific task for the person in charge for implementing the decisions, accompanied by a clear timeframe for the decision to be carried out, and all necessary follow up measures.

Linkages with other components
Renewed and quick support to the STUs in the 3 Northern states will be beneficial to the implementation of the rural component of the WSSSRP; hence, this support is a priority.
The coordinating role of the PMU should be strengthened, in particular for the rural component of the WSSSRP. UNICEF and the PMU have to develop strong links at Federal and State levels.

Monitoring & Evaluation
UNICEF FOs should segregate as early as possible M&E of the rural component of WSSSRP funded activities from the planning and monitoring documents for its activities funded by other resources (DFID, own funding).

UNICEF Consultants
UNICEF consultants should concentrate their efforts on providing additional support and capacity building to the WASH Units at LGA level, which in turn should focus on developing and supporting the WASHCOMs. Capacity building of the WASH Units is as essential as for the RWASSAs, keeping in mind their sustainability by the end of the WSSSRP.

Technical and socio-economic standards

A fiche with typical ranges for values of technical and socio-economic standards should be adopted by the rural component of the WSSSRP.

WSSRP rural component

Appropriate technology options for water supply
The WSSSRP should carry out a financial analysis comparing the total cost (investment + O&M) over the lifetime of a solar and a "*tif-tif"* powered borehole pump.
Solar panels have to be welded not just screwed on top of the overhead tank, and cat ladders need to be provided with a security device, preventing unauthorised access.

As mostly used at present, the construction of a borehole system should be awarded on the basis of one single tender (including the geophysical and hydro-geological surveys, the drilling and the final equipment of the borehole); the equipment of the borehole will depend on the actual yield measured after the drilling will have been completed. Hence, the equipment of the borehole should form a "unit price" component in the tender and several technical options should be listed. This is valid for both community and school based water supply systems.

A 5% community contribution should also be requested for water supply schemes in the schools so as not to create a bias for motorised schemes in general and for solar powered schemes in particular. The "Parent-Teacher association" and the WASHCOMs should be in a position to collect such a contribution.

Specific technical recommendations for water supply
More flexibility should be allowed in using the most appropriate technology. The programme design provides for motorised water supply systems for the schools; but this may not be feasible or sustainable for small schools where extension to nearby communities is less likely. The provision of hand pumps in schools should therefore be included among the technical options of the WSSSRP. The single phase, generator driven water supply system ("*tif-tif pump"*) should similarly be included as a WSSSRP technical option. If NEPA power supply already exists in the vicinity of a motorised borehole, the pump should be provided with the option to run on the NEPA power; a standby generator should however also be provided. Whenever an existing water supply scheme does exist in the vicinity of a planned motorised scheme, this should be taken into consideration in the overall design of the new scheme (e.g. use of an existing borehole or overhead tank, etc). Regarding the selected location for borehole drilling, it should duly take into account the location of existing water supply infrastructures, besides the social parameters of the community, in order to reduce as much as possible the distance between pump and end-user.
Water harvesting using the tin roofs of houses and community buildings (schools, health centres, etc.) should be promoted in areas of very scarce water resources (like in Gombe state), to reduce the amount of water that has to be procured from water tankers. Improving the safety of existing hand

dug wells should be included as a standard activity of the WSSSRP rural component.

Specific recommendations for sanitation

Special attention should be given to the sanitation sub-sector, for which related WSSSRP activities seem to be particularly neglected. Even though sanitation seems to be a second priority for the communities, there is a need to focus more on hygiene promotion at community level for behavioural change, including household latrine promotion. There is currently no or little budget provision for this component and it is therefore recommended to include hygiene promotion for behavioural change at community level as one of the activities (to replace in 4.2.4 the "hygiene evaluation procedure" activity, part of community baseline surveys). Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) may be used as one of the major strategies to motivate families and/or communities towards eliminating open defecation, which will require a lot of community mobilisation. The importance of the sanitation sub-sector should continuously be stressed, and the implementation of related WSSSRP activities should be supervised through a quantified M&E system.

Appropriate technology options for sanitation

Awareness building and hygiene education may have to be improved; so are the preliminary surveys which should define the type of sanitation facilities which are socially and culturally more acceptable. These two activities should reduce the risk that the sanitation facilities will actually not be used. Single squat slabs have been subsidised in the past by the WSSSRP as a promotional activity in communities, but this activity has been cancelled for the rest of the project. The budget line for subsidising the purchase of community single squat slabs should be reallocated to other activities.

A fiche with typical ranges for values of technical standards should be adopted by the rural component of the WSSSRP.

Managing an information system for WS&S

It is recommended to develop the national level WS&S database system based on WIMS/ SIMS, including GIS, through a data transfer system from LGA, to State, and to Federal level. This will facilitate the integration of the WS&S data into a national M&E framework. The WASH Units at LG level should routinely use the GPS and transfer recorded coordinates automatically on a computer with a copy on a flash disk for the RWASSA at state level. They should initially provide the other updates of their baseline survey as well as other new WSS data on paper to the RWASSA at state level, which will feed these into the WIMS and SIMS. When this information system will be operational at state level (RWASSA), it could be decentralised in a sustainable way at LG level, giving priority to the most capacitated WASH Units.

Visibility

If it is anticipated that a majority of the target readers do not understand Standard English the information of the signboards needs to be translated in the local language.

The appropriation by the community should be encouraged by optimising the layout of the information. The three main institutions involved (EC, FGN and UNICEF) should in principle always be visible side by side.

Stakeholder participation
RWASSAs should update their related RBDA on progress with planned and executed water supply schemes in the form of their WIMS database.

Sustainability
A very large proportion of some community contributions are sometimes collected from a few rich donors, who occasionally do not even live locally. However, a minimal contribution from all direct beneficiaries, including the poor, is advisable in order to improve ownership by the local community individuals. Simple studies on affordability to pay should be carried out by the WSSSRP before embarking on a motorised scheme

It is a priority to develop a privatised maintenance system for all rural water supply pumps to be installed by WSSSRP in its 6 focal states. Private mechanics to be selected could already be established for other types of equipment requiring similar skills and could occasionally be linked to the planned *sani-centres*, whenever this would create a positive interaction.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Terms of Reference
Annex 2: Methodology and Mission Schedule
Annex 3: List of Persons met
Annex 4: List of Documents Reviewed
Annex 5: Maps of Nigeria (UNICEF WS&S sector)
Annex 6: Example of an organigramme Field Office
Annex 7 UNICEF WASH communication and coordination
Annex 8: WSSSRP UNICEF cumulated expenditure end 2007
Annex 9: Results UNICEF Status Report March 2008
Annex 10: Weighted average progress as of end 2007
Annex 11: UNICEF Work Plan 2008
Annex 12: Status of achievements against targets end 2007
Annex 13 Technical standards
Annex 14: Cost and financial analysis
Annex 15: The 50x6 boreholes initiative
Annex 16: Pictures field trip
Annex 17: Key events and milestones
Annex 18: Comments received from UNICEF