

# **SecureWater**

## **Sri Lanka Workshop Summary**

**Club Palm Bay, Marawila, Sri Lanka**

**12-13<sup>th</sup> December 2003**



## **Introduction**

*Rajindra de S Ariyabandu (Director of Policy & Planning, Water Resources Secretariat)*

RA welcomed participants and provided a brief summary of the SecureWater project which is led by the ODI Water Policy Programme in London and funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID). Scoping studies were carried out in 5 countries in the initial phase (India, Kenya, Malawi, Sri Lanka and Sudan) but due to subsequent financial constraints in-depth case study research has focused on just two countries India and Sri Lanka. The purpose of this workshop is to discuss the findings from the Sri Lankan case study. Parallel research is currently underway in Andhra Pradesh, India and due to be completed early next year. Apologies were made for our Indian research partner Deepa Joshi who was unfortunately unable to attend.

The purpose of the SecureWater research is to build an improved understanding of the linkages between water and livelihoods into the implementation of Demand Responsive Approaches (DRA) to water supply development. There is a long and distinguished history of water development in Sri Lanka, primarily as the responsibility of the State, but it is increasingly recognised that existing arrangements are inadequate to meet current and future needs. The need for sector reform is widely acknowledged but the process of reform is often controversial (*vis* recent debate on water services reform bill). Unfortunately there is currently only limited money available in Sri Lanka for research to inform policy debates. Research such as this is therefore valuable in providing a bit of 'thinking space' to reflect critically on some of these issues. Further in-depth understanding will depend on long-term commitment to research in Sri Lanka in order to understand broader trends and form a solid basis for policy making, nevertheless this research represents an important first step.

This workshop is unusual in bringing together such a range of different sectoral stakeholders (government, policy makers, researchers, NGOs and implementing agencies) and as such represents a valuable opportunity for constructive dialogue. The workshop agenda is structured sequentially to address issues of policy, implementation, impacts and ways forward. The event is also being filmed as part of the WRS public awareness campaign on water reform and clips and short interviews may be used in forthcoming documentaries.

## **Session 1**

Chairman: *Mr W. Piyasena, Director, CWSSP*<sup>1</sup>

### **1.1 Role of DRA in Rural Water Supply & Sanitation Policy in Sri Lanka**

*Deepti Sumenesequera (Assistant General Manager (RWS) NWSDB)*<sup>2</sup>

DS gave an overview of the development of DRA policy within the framework of the national policy for Rural Water supply and sanitation sector. Sri Lanka has a notably long history of piped water supplies dating from early developments in the 1870s, primarily for elites plus the military, hospitals and railways etc. The basic approach i.e. top-down, expert-driven, using the best available technology and benefiting only a privileged few persisted from the 1870s up until independence. Policy development in Sri Lanka since has reflected global trends i.e. focusing primarily on capital investment during the 1960s, introduction of appropriate technologies in the 1970s and then focusing on the poor and 'water for all' during the 1980s. The 1990s was a period of innovation, which led to the development of DRA, but progress was slow due to a combination of economic recession, increasing population, and lack of user participation. The basic principles of DRA were established in 1992 at the International Conference on Water and Environment in Dublin, Ireland. These 'Dublin Principles' formed the basis of subsequent policy reform in Sri Lanka.

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<sup>1</sup> Community Water Supply & Sanitation Project (funded by the World Bank)

<sup>2</sup> National Water Supply & Drainage Board

The National Policy on Rural Water Supply and Sanitation dates from 2001. Important characteristics include recognising the value of water, and adopting a people-centred, demand responsive approach. The basic principles of RWSS reflect the principles of DRA and can be summarised as follows.

#### **Principles of RWS Policy**

- Fresh water is finite & vulnerable resource
- Water is a basic human need
- Water has an economic value
- Water supply & sanitation is people centred & demand driven
- Integration of water supply, sanitation and hygiene education
- Participatory approach for each step (users, planners, & policy makers)
- Government sector to facilitate & regulate while CBO, NGO/Private Sector should be the providers of services
- Encourage users to own & manage
- Users shall share capital investment
- Users shall bear the full responsibility of sustainable O&M of facilities
- Active participation of Women - the main user
- Encourage private sector involvement
- Be in harmony with the environment

The World Bank Community Water Supply & Sanitation Project (CWSSP) first piloted DRA in Sri Lanka (1991) and other major donor-funded projects (notably ADB) followed suit. DRA is generally regarded as a success story in the Sri Lankan context but a number of important lessons have been identified. DRA has led to an increased sense of ownership and communities have generally been able to afford O&M costs, but a great deal depends on beneficiary awareness and empowerment and transparent systems for fund management. Good progress is being made in these areas, particularly through the use of PRA as a planning tool, and the challenge of ensuring decision-making processes reflect the needs of all and not just dominant groups or elites is well recognised. Nevertheless a number of so-called 'marginalised' groups (3-5%) have been identified who for various reasons have not yet benefited. NWSDB is keen to develop a strategy for reaching these groups but is wary of promoting dependence on subsidies and is looking at possible means of integration with interventions in other sectors.

Further major challenges surround the changing role of government in the context of DRA from provider to facilitator and regulator. Important issues surround the new roles and responsibilities of different agencies and their capacity for effective service provision. Institutional strengthening is likely to be required at a number of different levels before government responsibilities can be fully transferred. A specific current concern is how to create an enabling environment for increased private sector participation. The potential of the private sector in Sri Lanka, especially in urban areas, remains to be seen.

A key overall lesson from experience to-date is that the DRA planning process takes considerable time and cannot be hurried. Realising the full potential of DRA requires long-term commitment to 'process' issues.

## 1.2 Implementing process of Rural Water Supply & Sanitation projects under ADB III and its impact on livelihoods

Ananda Dissanayake (consultant COWI/NWSDB)

AD gave a presentation focusing on the question of how to ensure sustainable DRA implementation, which benefits livelihoods. The basic principles of the ADB approach were outlined in detail. The implementing process is basically divided into six phases (pre-project, social mobilisation, planning and design, construction, defect rectification and consolidation) spanning a 21-month period. PRRA is a key tool throughout, especially for assessing demand and raising awareness. Village Participatory Planning (VPP) processes are designed to involve all beneficiaries in decision-making processes and provide data and information to assist communities in 'self assessment' and arriving at a decision on the most appropriate supply option. CBOs are expected to assume full responsibility for the construction process but are trained in construction management and quality assurance.

Impact on livelihoods is a central concern under the ADB approach. This is currently addressed through emphasis on equal opportunities and ensuring influential and marginalised groups sit together and discuss their respective problems and needs. The project provides support to community decision-making processes to help them collect and analyse their own data. Capacity building and empowerment are now explicit project objectives. There are a number of requirements designed to ensure decisions are 'collective' e.g. 75% of the community must be present at planning meetings and a minimum of 50% must sign the approved plan. In addition the project monitors women's involvement e.g. gender composition of CBOs.

Other useful indicators include levels of 'satisfaction' with WATSAN facilities, and % inclusion of disadvantaged groups e.g. Samurdhi and female-headed households (see tables). Project data on community contributions (cash and labour) towards the cost of water supply and sanitation developments illustrates the high level of demand for these services.

### Community contributions under ADB III

1. Water Supply	
o Cash Contribution (common facilities)	= Rs. 70.1 mill
o Cash Investments (private facilities)	= Rs. 68.6 mill
o Labour Contribution	= Rs. 287.1 mill
1. Sanitation	
o Cash Investments	= Rs. 62.4 mill
o Labour Contribution	= Rs. 41.5 mill

A key challenge identified by the project is reducing the dominance of elite groups in community expressions of demand for different technology choices. In some cases discussions have revealed that elites are willing to pay a greater share of the costs. CBOs are also encouraged to take the initiative in providing low interest credit facilities for poorer groups. Data shows that 86.4% of households pay their tariffs regularly but the vast majority (over 95%) depend on CBOs rather than banks for credit. Building the capacity of CBOs to plan, implement and monitor WatSan interventions is a key project concern. The benefits of enhanced capacity for systematic organisation and financial management also extend beyond the immediate scheme.

### Q&A session

The question and answer session focused primarily on the issue of marginalised groups. Figures on levels of 'satisfaction' and coverage depend largely on the definitions used by different agencies. Some definitions for example are based upon household perceptions and others on measurement of distance to source and level of service etc. Also the situation in specific project areas may differ substantially from the aggregate national-level figures. The importance of distinguishing between so-called 'marginalised' groups and those that opted not to join for other reasons was noted. The reasons for 'marginalisation' are complex and multiple and need to be better understood before these groups can be effectively targeted. Inability to pay or contribute labour is just one aspect, there may also be social and cultural dimensions to exclusion.

It was also noted that approaches adopted by ADB, CWSSP and others are evolving continuously. Those issues identified during 'batch 1' are now being addressed in 'batch 2' hopefully with improved results. For example, there was previously no systematic mechanism for targeting marginalised groups but projects are now looking at possibilities for cross-subsidies within communities. The problem of influential groups distorting 'community' decision-making presents a major challenge. It was suggested that it might be more appropriate to focus on demand at sub-community level through use of multiple technology options (including innovative, low-tech such as rainwater harvesting). The potential of the private sector in the context of DRA is also being investigated with a focus on creating an 'enabling environment'. PSP generally remains low in Sri Lanka but is currently being piloted in two urban areas. Important questions as to whether the private sector can be 'encouraged' to address the needs of poorer groups remain as yet unresolved.

It was emphasised that community empowerment and social mobilisation is a continuous process, which needs to extend far beyond the 4-5months allocated in the implementation phase. In the current context we are talking about project-driven DRA but long-term sustainability will depend on moving away from projects and institutionalising DRA approaches. However we should not forget that these approaches remain quite new and such a process will inevitably take some considerable time.

### **1.3 Improving livelihoods through DRA: case study of Diyabeduma and Kailapathana**

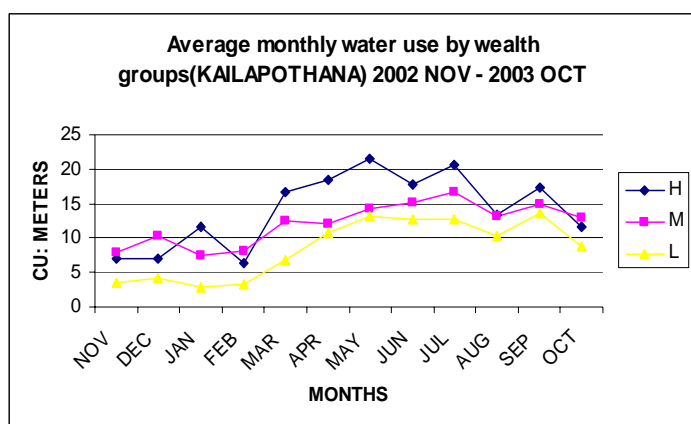
*Rajindra Ariyabandu (Director of Policy and Planning, Water Resources Secretariat)*

RA gave a summary of research findings from SecureWater case studies focusing on water supply projects in Polonaruwa and Anuradhapura districts. The presentation emphasised the importance of understanding the wider policy context in Sri Lanka. Water is recognised as a limited resource but also as a human right. The value of water is not just economic but also has social and environmental dimensions, and the right to water should be enjoyed without discrimination. Operationalising the right to water is a complex challenge. Current coverage levels are debated (ranging from 57% to 75% depending on the definition used). Even by conservative estimates the policy objective of achieving 85% coverage by 2010 would require investment of around Rs50bn. The government is unlikely to be able to generate sufficient revenue itself in the current economic climate, hence the interest in private sector participation. PSP is somewhat unknown territory in Sri Lanka but the establishment of the PUC to act as an independent regulator is an important first step. The concept of public-private-community participation is attractive and holds some potential opportunities but precisely who is the private sector in the Sri Lankan context? These are important issues which frame the SecureWater research.

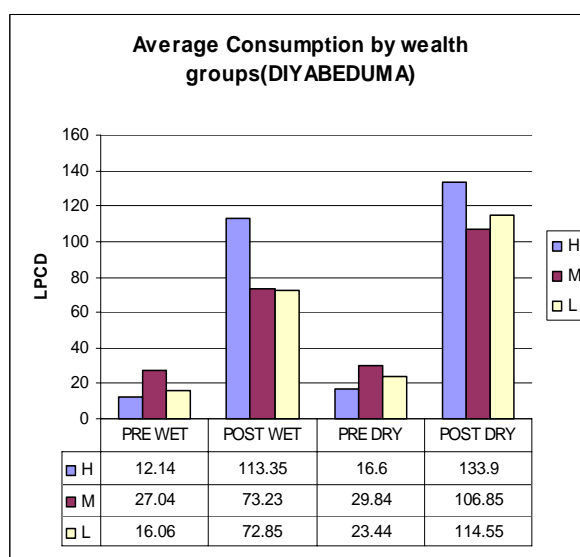
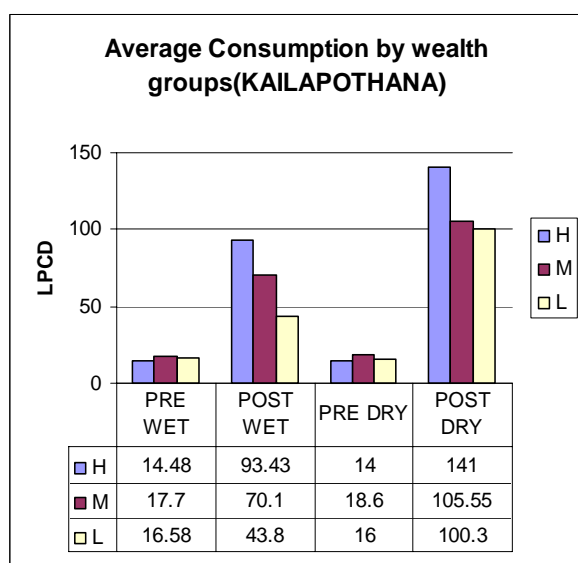
In depth case study research was conducted in 2 villages (Kailapathana and Diyabeduma). This involved detailed analysis of water and livelihoods issues and the impact of recent water supply schemes in each. Emerging issues are summarised briefly here but will be explored in more depth in the forthcoming case study reports. The villages selected are irrigation settlements and livelihoods in both areas basically revolve around agriculture and paddy production. While they each receive reasonably good rainfall (c.1500mm) irrigation canals play an important role in supplementing groundwater recharge. Prior to the schemes problems relating to both water quality and quantity were experienced, especially during the close season when there was only sufficient for drinking purposes. Other water needs were difficult to satisfy. It should be noted that (by international standards) Sri Lankans are 'lavish' water users. However the research identified a number of important livelihood impacts relating to access to water. A major use, for example, is for house construction, this is mostly carried out during the close season when labour is available but water availability is low and purchase and transport of water is a significant factor in the cost of construction. Collection of water impacts on availability of labour at household level and has adverse impacts on the health and welfare of women and children who generally bear the burden. Important social dimensions were also identified e.g. issues of status, privacy and safety surrounding sharing and use of open sources. Limited water availability is a key factor in the generally poor level of sanitation in the case study areas. Sanitation is particularly poor in small eating-houses upon which agricultural wage labourers depend and contributes to ill health among these poorer groups.

The SecureWater research highlights a number of issues surrounding DRA implementation. The presentation focused on issues of community selection and motivation. Mobilisation is a long and involved process. Success tends to be closely related to existing activities in other areas e.g. sanitation, hygiene, environment etc which help build confidence and trust within the community. Important issues surround understanding need and 'demand' at community-level and the reliability of statements of willingness to pay (cash/labour) as currently assessed/expressed. Achieving an appropriate balance between 'expert' technical advice and community self-assessment is often difficult. DRA aims to provide a choice of technology wherever possible but in reality there appears to be a bias towards piped water schemes. Important questions surround the desirability and feasibility of providing genuine technology choice and responding to demand at sub-community levels.

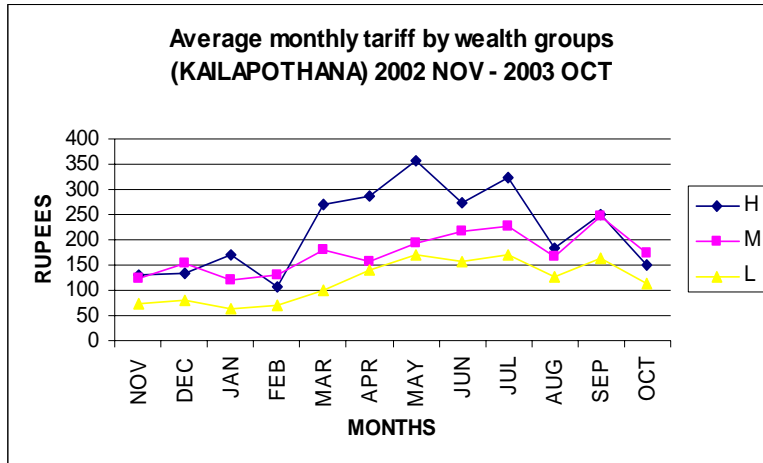
The research revealed some interesting findings on the status of water supplies at household level and aims to identify factors underlying this pattern. For example, levels of membership vary but reasons for non-membership vary widely as well, from access to alternative sources to inability to pay. Furthermore not all members have connections. It is important to understand the factors influencing decision making at household level and to build appropriate levels of flexibility into scheme implementation.



The SecureWater approach is based upon categorisation of different households according to livelihood activities and identification of broad wealth groups within communities. This enables comparative analysis of the impact of water interventions on livelihoods across different wealth groups. Emerging research findings show interesting patterns in water use. Meter records allow analysis of monthly water use by wealth which, as expected, shows much higher consumption among richer groups.



Monthly consumption can be contrasted with monthly income, i.e. consumption tends to peak in the close season when irrigation canals are dry but income is low. It is also interesting to contrast average consumption pre and post-project. The biggest difference is in dry season consumption which has increased substantially in both areas with the new schemes. Increased usage can be mostly attributed to sanitation and bathing. Average time spent on water collection was also analysed. This was disaggregated by wealth group, by water use and also by season. Significant time and energy savings can be identified with important welfare benefits but there may also be trade offs in terms of increased expenditure on tariffs. Average monthly tariff payments vary substantially between wealth groups.



Analysis of the cash contribution as a % of monthly income shows that expenditure trade-offs are likely to be greatest for poorer groups. People in these rural areas pay far more for water (almost the actual value of water) than their urban counterparts who remain highly subsidised. The fact that poorer households are willing to pay as much as 50-80% of their monthly income demonstrates the level of demand for improved water services but also suggests significant trade-offs and sacrifices which may in some cases be unacceptable. Analysis of trade-offs is difficult because there are many other variables but this research highlights a number of expenditure trade-offs among the rich and middle wealth groups (e.g. house repairs, power, furniture) and consumption trade-offs among middle and poor wealth groups (e.g. reduced agric. inputs and food intake). The impact of reduced food intake among the poor is obviously potentially very serious in the short term. A number of households were also found to be drawing on savings and selling off assets e.g. jewellery and (in extreme cases) land will have a long-term impact on the viability of livelihoods.

Research suggests a wide variety of livelihood benefits (both direct and indirect) including time and energy savings and increased water availability at critical periods e.g. during harvesting. Important social benefits surround improved sanitation and privacy for women and status associated with having clean clothes and using a private source. Economic benefits are derived from access to water for construction or income generation (e.g. pottery) but also indirectly through increases in land prices and rents associated with the improved water access. These will be examined in more detail in the forthcoming report.

A key focus of the Sri Lanka case study has been the nature and role of CBOs in different stages of planning and implementation. CBOs are central to the success of DRA schemes but their legal status and constitution remains somewhat ambiguous. They currently enjoy close relations with the water board (both top-down and bottom-up) but what are the incentives for these organisations to persist beyond the lifespan of the project? Currently most are voluntary but they have the potential to generate substantial revenue. What is their capacity to manage these funds effectively and transparently as they grow in size? Are current (informal) agreements among water users adequate in the face of future change and what authority do CBOs have to regulate users? The future sustainability of existing schemes will depend on addressing these questions. There is a need for institutional capacity building and clarification of the roles and responsibilities of CBOs *vis a vis* decentralised government structures (PS and DS level). Water supply development is a potentially useful entry point for development of a more integrated approach involving support from other sectors.

## **1.4 Improving access to domestic water through partnerships: experience in working with rural communities**

*Ramitha Wijethung (Project Officer, ITDG-South Asia)*

RW gave a presentation on ITDG's experience of working through partnerships with rural communities in the dry zone of Sri Lanka. The presentation focused on the concept of 'partnership' and the conditions for success in DRA-type schemes. Definitions of partnerships emphasise cooperation and sharing of benefits in relation to the achievement of a specified goal. Partnerships are about pooling resources but maximising the potential mutual benefits depends on understanding the power dynamics between partner organisations and reaching a shared understanding of the objectives of partnership. It is important that these issues are made explicit at an early stage.

The ITDG model of partnership is as a mechanism for scaling up the development and transfer of appropriate technology, for ensuring sustainability and enabling genuine community-based development. For example ITDG is currently working in partnership with the Janaskakthi Development Centre (JDC) an NGO working in Moneragala. JDC operates a micro credit scheme which enables sustainable scaling up of ITDG's rainwater harvesting (RWH) technologies. The experience suggests that partnership is a very different relationship to normal contracting or implementing relations. The focus is not so much on implementation and more on community empowerment. This requires continuous negotiation to foster a common culture and vision among programme participants.

A number of conditions for successful partnerships can be identified: genuine agreement that partnership is necessary (as opposed to contractual agreements), building mutual respect and trust between partners, development of a shared vision and mandate, leadership, good communication, development of compatible and flexible ways of working and collaborative decision-making. Conversely characteristics of failed partnerships typically include: conflict among partners, power imbalances, hidden agendas, lack of clear purpose and goals, unrealistic financial and time commitments and incompatible ways of working.

The potential value of partnerships is undoubted but successful partnerships are relatively few. A key lesson for those seeking to replicate successful models is the need to be realistic about what can be achieved in the context of short project time-frames with their associated financial constraints and ambitious targets/goals. In particular the following questions must be addressed:

1. What do we really expect from partners?
2. Do we have a clear idea about the capacities of the partner?
3. What do we mean by 'sustainability'?
4. Are there proper 'exit plans' in place?

### **Q&A session**

The question and answer session focused mainly on the roles and responsibilities of CBOs and relations to decentralised government structures; in particular the need to develop means for assessing capacity and monitoring and regulating performance. The CBOs in the two case study areas were found to be highly competent and generally very effective but how far is this typical in the Sri Lankan context and what are the prospects for long-term sustainability beyond the life of the project? It was noted that it is generally easier to mobilise around a single issue like water, especially in water scarce areas, but that CBOs originally established for water supply development often diversify their activities into other sectors.

There was considerable interest in the case study results and devising means for more systematic monitoring of impacts on poverty and livelihoods in the long-term. There was some discussion as to the appropriateness of tariff structures. They are generally designed to enable accumulation of sufficient funds for pump replacement after 10 yrs (typical lifespan of the pump) rather than according to capacity to pay. However it was noted that tariffs are generally not prohibitive. The main problem for poor households is generating a lump sum to cover the connection fees. Some schemes provide credit or allow payment over an extended period but because DRA in Sri Lanka is projected

subsidies are often only available during a short funding window (2-3yrs). Important questions around the rights of newcomers or latecomers to receive a subsidised connection remain largely unresolved. While most schemes are designed to allow for increased demand due to population growth, there is generally little evidence of organic growth without additional donor funding.

## **Concluding remarks**

*Chair: Mr W. Piyasena, Director CWSSP, RWS division, NWSDB*

Mr Piyasena noted that the workshop and discussion of these issues is very timely as improving water and sanitation remains a centrally important factor in poverty reduction in Sri Lanka. The goal of water projects is not just providing water supplies but rather alleviating poverty. Recent consensus suggests the current level of coverage is around 66%, that the unserved are also generally the poorest and that lack of access to water is a factor in around 80% of ailments. This not only affects the welfare of the poor but the socio-economic development of the entire country. The importance of the issue is undoubted. The challenge at hand is clear. RWS has recently proposed decentralisation of water supply development to PS and DS level and proposes to provide 40% of available funds to CBOs in advance for mobilisation. It is also looking at ways of providing legal support to CBOs. The preferred option for CBO status is as a 'trust' which is a legal entity accountable to its stakeholder members, although some remain classed as private sector. The success of water supply development in Sri Lanka depends largely on CBOs which provide services to rural areas i.e. 70% of the country. Of the Rs 9bn availed by donors for RWS 50% will be allocated to CBOs. The solution for urban areas is different. There is less donor money available, hence the need for PSP. This is controversial and presents a difficult challenge. Sustainability remains the key challenge in both rural and urban areas. This may eventually require transformation of CBOs into productive organisations and the government is encouraging further debate on these issues. This workshop represents an important first step and a valuable contribution to this process.

## **Session 2**

### **2.1 Integrating Research and Policy: the way forward**

*Alan Nicol and Tom Slaymaker (Water Policy Programme, ODI)*

The final presentation focused on the essential research-policy linkage which emerged as a key theme during the workshop. AN provided additional background to the SecureWater project which emerged in response to some of the issues and challenges associated with the global shift in water policy in the mid-1990s towards DRA. It is interesting that these issues, which until a few years ago remained quite contentious, are now being discussed openly and frankly in workshops like this. It is equally encouraging to note that the focus of debate is gradually shifting away from the resource itself towards an understanding of water as a poverty issue.

A number of key themes have emerged during the workshop. Firstly that of institutions and partnerships and the importance of attention to the changing roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders and the need to support the process of institutional transformation. Sri Lanka is a very 'rich' policy environment with a number of important lessons for other countries in the region. Secondly the issue of livelihoods and their complexity; more specifically, the issue of trade-offs and the uneven distribution of costs and benefits between different social groups. Livelihoods analysis is key to understanding the strategies of poor households and the risks and liabilities associated with investing in water supply schemes. Thirdly several of the presentations have highlighted the need for greater attention to process issues, particularly participation. Perhaps the term marginalised is unhelpful and certainly has a different meaning—for example in India—but the process of making water supply development more inclusive and reaching those groups which have to-date remained elusive remains a key concern. The issue of creating an enabling environment for service providers is complex and varies enormously between rural and urban areas. Finally the issue of networks and communication, sharing lessons between agencies operating at different levels and scaling up successful examples has emerged as a key theme.

A central focus of the SecureWater project is to promote lesson learning and support decision-making processes at different levels, and to link research and policy together in a collaborative way. To this end the project aims to develop a set of 'decision support tools' (DST) to assist decision-makers in enhancing DRA's capacity to address the needs and priorities of the poor. An important aim of the workshop therefore is to identify and agree priority issues emerging in the Sri Lankan context and suggest possible ways forward and action points.

A number of emerging issues and challenges associated with DRA have been identified in the previous presentations. Specifically understanding the nature and dynamics of 'demand' for water and on the basis of better understanding, devising more appropriate service options for the poor (that are both manageable and affordable), financial sustainability (including assessing capacity and willingness to pay for different services, decision-making processes in planning various 'responses' (institutional roles and responsibilities in implementation – for instance how does legal status affect or constrain capacity for service delivery?), and monitoring performance/impact (a scheme may be outwardly 'sustainable' but what are the impacts at the hh level?). The challenge is to identify appropriate forms of decision-support to address these issues.

What do we mean by decision support tools? The common perception of DSTs is of *data-* or *model-driven* computer programmes where data is inputted and a solution derived. There are many examples but they are notoriously difficult to apply in real world decision making processes due to their inherent inflexibility. Instead we are interested in a new generation of *knowledge-* or *document-driven* DSTs. These are not the kind of systems that give you an answer but rather help you come to an answer by drawing on existing information and experience from elsewhere. The key objective is to support decision-making processes at different levels by highlighting issues and challenges and identifying possible approaches to dealing with them. Such a DST will need to be relatively simple and user-friendly. It will probably be html-based allowing use of multi-media and rich in worked case study examples, and will be 'data-lite', flexible and adaptable rather than prescriptive. While the main focus will be on DRA planning and implementation processes the DST should be understandable (and potentially useful) at all levels from policy makers down to communities. As such it needs to be developed iteratively and piloted and tested by end-users at an early stage.

A couple of examples of DSTs from elsewhere were discussed briefly including one being developed under the Sustainable Management of the Gaza and West bank Aquifers (SUSMAQ) project – a DFID funded capacity building and support project with the Palestinian Water Authority, and one under the Community Management of Groundwater Resources in India (ComMan). SUSMAQ is knowledge-driven but computer heavy and expensive. It uses multi-criteria indicators with outputs weighted according to different priorities held by policy makers. However, given that policy directions in Palestine are often predetermined the challenge is providing options which are politically feasible. ComMan is an example of a knowledge-driven DST. It does not aim to prescribe options for groundwater management but sets out a range of possible alternatives. The aim is to increase the knowledge base and provide guidance on thinking and problem solving. The starting point is understanding the problem and the end point is assistance in solution identification.

A mock example of what the SecureWater DST might look like was then presented to illustrate how it might build on the basic process of DRA planning and implementation using a series of structured question sets to identify key issues at different stages, and providing a series of links allowing further in-depth exploration of different issues where appropriate to the needs of the user.

A general discussion followed to identify priorities for enhancing DRA in Sri Lanka, emerging issues to be addressed, action points and ways forward:

## **2.2 Emerging issues and action points**

### **Emerging issues**

1. Policy Issues (*to be addressed by policy planners*):
  - Understanding the potential role of the private sector (formal and informal)
  - Integration with approaches in other sectors

- Implementing DRA in 'disturbed areas' where donor agency priorities over-ride community demands
  - CBO identity and status
2. Institutional Issues (*to be addressed by Institutions*)
- Links to decentralised government institutions
  - Strengthening institutional partnerships
3. Issues Related to Implementation of Projects (*to be addressed by project Donors and Implementers*)
- Building transparency and accountability into decision-making at all levels
  - Ensuring decision-making processes are inclusive and avoiding short-cuts
  - Minimising planning bias in favour of powerful/influential groups
  - Building flexibility and responsiveness into existing guidelines
  - Reaching those communities/individuals who are currently unserved
  - Ensuring comprehensive assessment of service options
  - Mechanisms for service provision in difficult areas where lower cost options may not be feasible
  - Taking account of future demands and enabling scheme expansion
  - Drawing lessons for DRA in urban areas
4. General Issues (*to be addressed by Concept Developers & Promoters together with all Stakeholders*)
- Beyond willingness to pay towards an understanding of livelihood issues
  - Development of indicators for measuring performance and impact
  - Mainstreaming 'good practice' in DRA

## **Action Points**

1. Informal working lunch to present summary of issues emerging from the workshop and to agree terms/structure for development of DST in future.
2. Drafting of DST ideas and circulation to workshop participants for comment/inputs by end of January 2004.
3. Establish a suitable forum/mechanism for sharing lessons between NGOs, researchers, government, policy makers in Sri Lanka. Define specific objectives and end goals. Follow-up workshop in March 2004.
4. Piloting emerging DSTs in collaboration with existing projects (CWSSP, ADB).
5. Use of DSTs by NWSDS as a means of facilitating effective decentralisation to PS level (new approach i.e. an opportunity).

## **Concluding comments**

*Chairman Mr Lal Premanath DGM, NWDSB*

Mr Lal extended thanks to Rajindra Ariyabandu for organising the workshop, to the Water Resources Secretariat, ITDG, NWDSB and ODI for the various presentations and to UK DFID for financial support. He congratulated the organisers on assembling such a broad cross-section of water sector stakeholders and thanked all the participants and government officials for their inputs and ensuring such a rich discussion. Finally he acknowledged those who were unable to attend and encouraged participants to share and extend the discussions begun here with their colleagues and more widely.