



URBAN WASH GOVERNANCE IN PAKISTAN

Effectiveness Review Brief: Impact evaluation of the 'Improving Urban WASH Governance and Accountability' (IUWGA) project

EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW SERIES – 2017/18

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Oxfam GB's Strategic Evidence Framework is part of the organisation's effort to deliver on its commitments to be accountable to its wide range of stakeholders and to support Oxfam (or others) in improving practice informed by evidence.

Each year, several 'mature' projects are selected at random for an evaluation of their impact, known as an Effectiveness Review. These Effectiveness Reviews are conducted under five thematic areas; Livelihoods; Resilience; Sustainable Water; Women's Empowerment and Good Governance.

The project 'Improving Urban WASH Governance and Accountability (IUWGA), was one of those selected for the Effectiveness Reviews in the 2017/18 financial year. This summary outlines the top findings resulting from the impact evaluation which was conducted one year after the project closure.

The full technical report can be accessed [here](#).

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This Effectiveness Review brief was produced by Sarah Davies using content taken from the Effectiveness Review conducted by Adinda Van Hemelrijk (Collaborative Impact) for Oxfam GB. The Effectiveness Review can be viewed or downloaded [here](#).

For further information on the issues raised in this paper please email policyandpractice@oxfam.org.uk

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The information in this publication is correct at the time of going to press. Published by Oxfam GB.
Oxfam GB, Oxfam House, John Smith Drive, Cowley, Oxford, OX4 2JY, UK.

Cover photo: Phul Mullah, Badin, (Pakistan); Mariam, 55, pictured filling water from the nearest water pump which is a 2-3 hour walk from her home.and Khaula Jamil/OxfamAUS

The IUWGA Project:

The *Improving Urban WASH Governance and Accountability* (IUWGA) project in Pakistan explored how best to develop trust between local authorities, service providers and citizens in new urban settlements. The model was developed by Oxfam and partners (Civil Society Support Programme and UFAQ Development Organization) and pilot tested from April 2015 until March 2017 in four Union Councils (two in the City of Dadu, Sindh province and two in the City of Muzaffargarh, Punjab province).

It is a local urban governance model which actively engages new settlers as citizens and draws on mutual accountability. This was felt necessary for making investments in the provision of WASH services (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene services) to the suburban areas cost-effective and sustainable.

As increasingly more investments are needed to meet the growing needs and demands in the fast-expanding urban areas, changing the urban governance system is an essential contribution towards achieving equitable and sustainable access to WASH¹.

The project model involved the following three components:

Component	Purpose
1. Effective Citizen Groups (ECGs)	To organize communities around their citizen rights and responsibilities
2. A community-driven prioritization and resource-mobilization process	To enable local authorities to be more responsive to people's needs
3. A Participatory Monitoring & Evaluation Group (PMEG)	To promote social accountability for WASH investments and reinforces existing transparency and accountability laws and regulations.

Figure 1: Map with Project Area



Figure 2: Collaborative Rights and Accountability - Framework developed to assess the project



Results:

Effective citizenship



SUCCESSES:

- Organizing communities around citizen rights and responsibilities,
- Enabling women to engage in community planning and advocacy around WASH.
- Gender and political empowerment

CHALLENGES:

- Sustainability of the project achievements is challenged by the lack of government accountability and the prevailing gender norms and patterns;
- Citizenship and empowerment require more time, thus more and persistent effort.

Government responsiveness

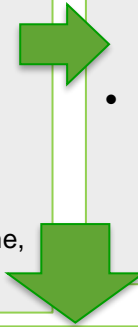


SUCCESSES:

- Making local government authorities more responsive to the requests and complaints of the communities.

CHALLENGES:

- The potential of the urban WASH governance model is undermined by a lack of capacity, accountability and transparency on the part of local government authorities.
- Other interventions and mechanisms, additional to the Effective Citizenship Groups (ECGs) and Participatory M&E Groups (PMEGs), are needed to address the issues of local government capacity and accountability.



Social accountability



SUCCESSES:

- Setting up a social accountability mechanism that supports the ECGs and local government authorities in the monitoring of WASH delivery in the Mohallahs and helps to identify and address issues of ill performance and corruption.
- The PMEG was highly valued and at the time of the evaluation was still functioning in Muzaffargarh.

CHALLENGES:

- The PMEG in Dadu was no longer functioning at the time of the evaluation.
- The PMEG mechanism has proven insufficient to address the problem of lacking accountability in Muzaffargarh, while in Dadu it was too weak to generate meaningful outcomes.

Adequate WASH delivery due to effective citizenship, government responsiveness and social accountability



SUCCESSES:

- Adequate and satisfactory delivery on the WASH priorities agreed between the communities and local authorities.
- Nearly all of the approved WASH schemes in Dadu and some of the approved schemes in Muzaffargarh had been successfully completed.
- The ECG and PMEG mechanisms have enabled WASH outcomes to be achieved through increased citizen empowerment.

CHALLENGES:

- Drinking water was still lacking in one of the Union Council in Dadu, and in both districts there had been a decline in the sanitary services after project closure.
- Many Mohallahs remained underserved and government capacity and resource issues limited the achievement of better and more sustainable results.



Sustainable changes in relationships due to adequate WASH Delivery



SUCCESSES:

- Improved relationships within the communities in all four project Union Councils
- Improved relationships between the communities and local authorities in all four project Union Councils
- Increase in people's trust in leadership, equality and sensitivity to the needs of vulnerable groups in the communities.
- Positive relationships established with the different local authorities at the District, Tehsil and Council levels
- Gained access to the different departments responsible for WASH.

CHALLENGES:

- Women remained constrained in their interactions with leaders and their ability to participate and become leaders, due to cultural and religious norms and gender divisions.
- Accessibility of local authorities had declined since the ending of the project, while the newly elected Councillors and the Municipal Chairmen had not gained much importance to the communities.

Evaluation design:

The Effectiveness Review for the IUWGA project took place in March and April 2018 in order to evaluate the effectiveness and likely sustainability of its participatory governance model relative to 'equitable and sustainable access to water'.

- The objectives were:
- (a) To report on the effectiveness of the governance model in terms of WASH delivery and its contributions towards 'equitable and sustainable access to water';
 - (b) To draw lessons for making improvements; and
 - (c) To provide useful inputs to developing a rights and empowerment centred framework for assessing impact in the new global 'sustainable water' thematic area.

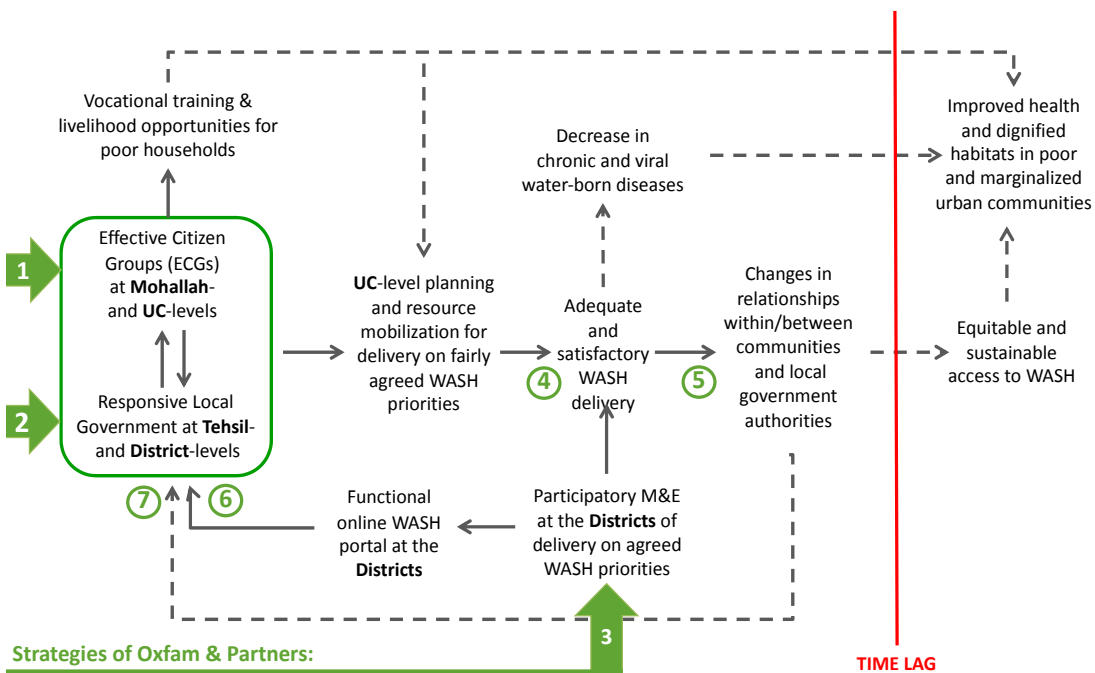
The evaluation used an approach called PIALA (Participatory Impact Assessment and Learning Approach)² which makes it possible to rigorously assess the impact of system change and engage stakeholders in its processes.

The scale of the evaluation was relatively small, consisting of just four project Union Councils. This meant that a small-n design was used involving the following components:

- PIALA's Contribution Tracing for within-case analysis;
- A multi-case study comparing the WASH governance processes and outcomes in the four project Union Councils with two comparison Union Councils in adjacent districts in the same provinces.

PIALA's systematic Theory of Change (ToC) and participatory mixed/combined methods approach was used to conduct the evaluation. The ToC below was constructed based on the review of project documents and consultations with project staff. It revealed 5 important causal relations that needed to be investigated, using selective methods and tools with different groups.

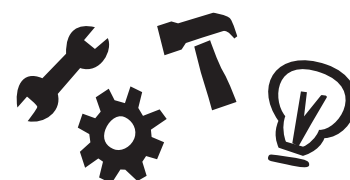
Figure 3: IUWGA Project Theory of Change













Strategies of Oxfam & Partners:

1. Organizing communities around their citizen rights & responsibilities
2. Enabling Local Government and service providers to be more responsive and responsible
3. Promoting social accountability

Below is an overview of the causal relations identified in the Theory of Change along with the methods and tools required to compare the WASH governance processes and outcomes. For each causal relation the relevant ToC links are indicated.



Causal Relations	Cross Checking Methods & Tools		
	Mohallah level	Union council level	District Level
Effective citizenship due to IUWGA interventions and outcomes (ToC links 1 + 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constituent Voice with ECG members Review of ECG meeting records 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constituent Voice with ECG leaders Review of ECG meeting records Review of Urban Participatory Influencing Development Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group Interview with local authorities Review of project M&E data 
Responsive government due to IUWGA interventions and outcomes (ToC links 2 + 6)	Not Applicable		
Social accountability due to IUWGA interventions (ToC link 3)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constituent Voice with ECG leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group Interview with local authorities Group Interview with PMEG Review of PMEG docs 
Adequate delivery on agreed WASH priorities due to effective citizenship, responsive governance and social accountability (ToC link 4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constituent Voice with ECG members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constituent Voice with ECG leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group Interview with local authorities Group Interview with PMEG Review of project M&E and design studies 
Sustainable changes in relationships within/ between communities and local authorities due to effective WASH delivery (ToC link 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship Analysis with ECG members Constituent Voice with ECG members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship Analysis with ECG leaders Constituent Voice with ECG leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group Interview with local authorities 

Oxfam's work on participatory urban governance has taken place in the context of Pakistan's recent local government reforms.



Recommendations for the project:

Some of the actions listed below have already been incorporated into the WASH Governance Model in Lahore. Others will be considered for further fund raising, scale up and the design of new projects:

- 1. Continue providing limited support to the Effective Citizen Groups (ECGs) in Muzaffargarh and Dadu**, focused on organizing the groups and further building their relationship with the new local government authorities responsible for WASH.
- 2. Make improvements to the urban WASH governance model in Lahore by:**
 - *strengthening its gender strategy*³
 - *investing more in building the capacity of the Participatory M&E Group (PMEGs)*
 - *adding an economic empowerment component*
- 3. Expand the project with:**
 - *an accountability and transparency component*
 - *a technical capacity-building component*
- 4. Build a powerful coalition** with international partners⁴ and donors⁵ that can help with these new components by providing the necessary expertise or even leading on these new components and mobilizing the necessary resources.
- 5. Test the improved and expanded model in different contexts**⁶ to learn how it can be implemented and sustained under different circumstances, and thus develop a robust and improved 'proof of concept'.
- 6. Build a movement that can further promote and support the adoption of the model in other cities**, through:
 - *building a critical mass of ECGs* as strong, sustainable, elected urban grassroots community organizations at the Mohallah and Union Council levels, centred around WASH but with clear social and economic benefits of organization on a sustainable basis (thus combining social with economic empowerment);
 - *linking the ECGs of the different urban areas into a network* and building its ECG leadership capacity to sustain the urban grassroots movement.⁷

People are more empowered to vote, speak and discuss what does or does not work.



The Effective Citizen Groups were formed and the relationships between communities and local authorities built in the period when a battle was raging for local power: Pakistan's first local democratic elections were completed in the project area in the last year of implementation.

A participatory sense-making event is a first important step in the uptake of the evaluation findings and recommendations for improving and sustaining the positive results of the IUWGA project and the governance model it developed.

Consolidation of the IUWGA project's achievements can further improve and develop the urban governance model to enable it to go to scale.

NOTES

- ¹ According to the UNDP Water Governance Facility and UNICEF (2015) as well as the Stockholm International Water Institute (Jiménez et al., 2018),
- ² PIALA offers a model for mixing different designs and methodologies to meet different learning needs, optimize the value of an impact evaluation alongside its value chain, and enable comparison at scale across contexts and even countries. For more information about PIALA, its elements, methods and publications, visit the website: <https://collabimpact.org/piala>.
- ³ It is recommended that Oxfam develops a gender-specific strategy for this project with the support of its gender experts across the organisation and assigns clear responsibilities for its implementation and management and establishes a MEL framework that can help to create greater visibility and attract more funding. Given the challenges regarding gender equality in Pakistan, extra effort and support is needed from Oxfam GB and Oxfam International. For Oxfam GB's sustainable water team, the project offers an unique opportunity to further pilot a gender-transformative model that not only creates more frequent and intensive opportunities for women to organize and meet and advocate for their water rights, but that also engages men in a dialogue to redefine their gender roles and relations in the new urban context in a way that is culturally appropriate yet also transformative, bringing real gender justice while making their communities more resilient.
- ⁴ For instance, IIED could be a strong partner. IIED's work on urban new settlements has a strong international reputation (cf. <https://www.iied.org/urban>). The director for urban settlements is David Dodman.
- ⁵ For example, DFID, USAID, SIDA, UN-Habitat and (for developing measurement and mapping tools) the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.
- ⁶ This would require putting in place a robust impact assessment and learning framework for tracking and comparing the different configurations of 'context, mechanisms and outcomes' of the model to learn how it works best in different circumstances.
- ⁷ Examples are: Slum Dwellers International which is entirely built off urban grassroots organizations in multiple countries in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa (cf. <http://sdinet.org/>); the 'Labour Qaumi Movement' of powerless workers in Pakistan, which started in Faisalabad in 2003 and has spread to adjacent districts in Punjab and KP; the RSPN in Pakistan (cf. <http://www.rspn.org/>), which takes a non-confrontational and evolutionary approach to movement building and is focused on rural areas.

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