

End of Mission Report: Oliver Taylor
WatSan Project Manager/Delegate
September 1999 to April 2000

Introduction

This report covers my second mission with the Red Cross, the first I completed between January and June 1999 as WatSan Project Manager for the rehabilitation of gravity water supplies and hygiene education in Rutana province in Burundi. The intention had been to return to the same project to continue it into a second phase and expand the scope of work to include a new water management training and support programme. In preparation for this new phase I attended a training course in Nairobi in September 1999 and then traveled to Burundi to take up my post in Rutana. However on the 12th October, after just one week in Rutana, there was an armed attack on a UN convoy in Muziye just 10 miles from Rutana. The UNICEF country representative and a WFP logistics officer were both executed in the attack. In response to this rapid decline in the security of the province the entire Red Cross team had to be evacuated from Rutana, the office dismantled and the project put on hold. I evacuated by road to Bujumbura and spent the following three weeks completing planning and administrative duties for the second phase of the project. However it soon became evident that it would not be possible to restart activities in Rutana for the foreseeable future and as an interim measure it was decided to put the project on hold until January and that I move post to Tanzania. I left Burundi at the beginning of November.

Initially I was posted to a refugee camp in Kasulu, Kigoma Region where the Tanzanian Red Cross (TRCS) are responsible for the water and sanitation services to 40,000 Burundian refugees in Mtabila Extension. In addition they had recently begun a pilot project for a programme of Community Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene Education (CWSSHE) in a Tanzanian village close to the camp.

Project: Burundian Refugee Relief Operation - The main activities of the WatSan unit of the TRCS was to install a new intake and 4.5 km of 160 mm PVC gravity main to reduce the reliance on pumping. Also the provision of adequate sanitation facilities for safe disposal of human, solid and liquid wastes which included the fabrication of SanPlat latrine slabs and community construction of latrine structures, garbage pits and soakaways. Hygiene education was provided to the community using PHAST and by regular inspections of meat and food hygiene at places of food preparation and slaughter. In addition I was involved in planning and implementation of a contingency plan for an expected influx of 20,000 new refugees (4,000 in Mtabila Extension).

The project was funded by ECHO and the German Red Cross. In addition to myself there were four other delegates for Health, Finance and Administration, a Surgeon and Team Leader. At the Ngaraganza compound there were nearly 200 TRCS staff covering all disciplines.

Project: Kanazi CWSSHE Project - The project objectives were to rehabilitate the gravity water supply system, repair 3 protected springs, provide training, tools and materials for the future maintenance of the systems and to disseminate hygiene messages to the community using PHAST and provide SanPlat latrine slabs to all families. The village is situated close to

the TRCS living compound and actually shares the same water source. In total the project was estimated to benefit 7,500 people.

The project was funded by UNICEF and the Liechtenstein and Japanese Red Cross Societies. Only one expatriate, the TRCS WatSan engineer, two water and sanitation technicians and two hygiene educators were involved in the project. There was good collaboration with the Dept. of Water who provided assistance in technical aspects, tools and the management training of the Village Water Committee(VWC).

I was based in Kasulu for 6 weeks and then took some home leave with the plan to return to Nairobi in Early January when it was expected that a decision would be made on the continuation of the Rutana Project. On my return the situation in Burundi had not improved sufficiently so I returned to Tanzania where I was based at Lugufu camp. Here TRCS are responsible for the water and sanitation services to 50,000 Congolese refugees. In addition since the population in Lugufu I was reaching its limit and there was no reduction in the influx of new refugees it was necessary to complete the planning and implementation of the Lugufu II camp (Capacity 30,000).

Project: Congolese Refugee Relief Operation - The main activities of the WatSan unit of the TRCS was to operate and maintain the existing water system which supplies Lugufu I. This takes water from the Malagarasi and pumps through 15 km of pipes to the camp. The system is inherently weak due to the reliance on pumping and poor installation. After a detailed survey a schedule and budget for strengthening works were developed for implementation during the year. Provision of adequate sanitation facilities for safe disposal of human, solid and liquid wastes involved the fabrication of SanPlat latrine slabs and community construction of latrine structures, garbage pits and soakaways. Hygiene education was provided to the community using PHAST and by regular inspections of meat and food hygiene at places of food preparation and slaughter. The water supply and temporary sanitation facilities to be installed in the new camp Lugufu II involved construction of intake works, treatment and storage tanks, a 2 km rising main, 6 km gravity main and 10 km of distribution pipework and 40 tapstands. I was also involved with the work to complete the roads in the new camp.

The water projects were funded by ECHO and DfID and the roads contract was funded by UNHCR. In addition to myself there were three other delegates for Health, Logistics and a Team Leader. At the Ngaraganza compound there were over 200 TRCS staff covering all disciplines.

Mission Preparation

As already stated I was returning to my first mission posting and it was not thought necessary to travel via Geneva for briefing, though I did receive very useful briefings in Nairobi, Dar Es Salaam and Kigoma. A big part of the preparation for the mission in Burundi involved a course which I attended in Nairobi for which I was sponsored by the British Red Cross. The course was entitled Management for Sustainability of Water and Sanitation Projects and was run by Netwas, a Nairobi based NGO.

Mission

Assignment: As WatSan Project Manager in Burundi I was responsible for managing the implementation of the Rutana water supply rehabilitation project including, recruitment, project assessment, procurement, planning, hygiene promotion, training of community water committees and managing the project finances. In Tanzania I was to support, assist, monitor and advise the operation and maintenance of the existing TRCS water supply and sanitation systems and the implementation of new TRCS water supply and sanitation projects both for the refugees and the local community. In particular this involved technical and management support to TRCS WatSan staff to ensure that refugees had access to safe water and sanitation, that objectives were measurable, realistic and appropriate and a detailed plan and budget of implementation was prepared. To avoid future operational problems as had been experienced with Lugufu I the implementation of the Lugufu II system needed to be of a high standard. Also to redress the imbalance of services between the local and refugee populations there was a need to assess, propose and search for funding for local community water supply and sanitation systems in need of rehabilitation and improvement. New influxes of refugees were expected at both camps and planning was needed to accommodate their needs.

Actual Role: The tasks I had to perform were adequately described in the job descriptions and they were very much in line with my expectations. My past experience of working in Burundi and on similar projects in Africa was invaluable. Technically the projects were not very complex, however the advisory role in Tanzania took a little time to get used to. Due to the urgency with which the work in Lugufu II had to be completed I had to take on a more operational role than possibly had been envisaged

Counterpart relations: Relations with all counterparts have been very good throughout the projects. There was good cooperation with the *Croix Rouge de Burundi* (CRB) and TRCS though in very different ways. The CRB were very supportive of the project but had no direct input beyond the hygiene promotion and training activities. In contrast the TRCS were the operational partner in Tanzania and were responsible for all aspects of implementation.

There were no occasions when direct dealings with Geneva were necessary but I have dealt with the regional WatSan Coordinator on a regular basis for assistance on technical queries and some logistical support. Both the sub-delegation in Kigoma and delegations in Bujumbura and Dar Es Salaam have been extremely supportive and provided a great deal of important assistance. Fortunately all the delegates in the field were very easy to get along with in a very isolated situation. I had no dealings with ICRC.

In Burundi the project involved close working relations with UNICEF and Oxfam who assisted with materials and training. In Tanzania there was close collaboration with UNHCR, Oxfam, CORD, Africare and CARE who were all involved in the camps for various aspects of service provision and environmental protection. UNICEF were the principal funders of the Kanazi project and a close and fruitful relationship developed.

I also had to deal with government departments in both Burundi (Direction Générale de l'Hydraulique et des Energies Rurales (DGHER)) and in Tanzania (Dept. of Water) and Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)). These dealings were always productive and helpful to the successful implementation of the projects.

Positive and negative aspects: The successful implementation of Kanazi and Lugufu II projects were the highlight of the mission and I hope that TRCS will be able to continue this kind of work in the future.

The postponement/cancellation of the Rutana project was very disappointing especially the software project which would have made the greatest impact to the sustainability of the water systems into the future.

There was a great deal of time and money wasted on Lugufu II due to a lack of design and poor procurement procedures. This was primarily due to under staffing in the field office during the project formulation and design, a lack of professionalism in engineering design and management, and staff inexperienced in WatSan procurement. Logistics had difficulties dealing with technical orders and Finance were unable to provide any useful service in budget control and reporting.

The level of services provided in the camps far outweigh those in the surrounding populations and should be a greater concern for the future.

Personal job satisfaction: This mission has given me a much wider experience of the principles and practices of the Federation and the Red Cross movement. I have improved my skills required for the management of WatSan projects and experienced many more of the problems likely to be encountered. It has been extremely hard work but the feeling of satisfaction and achievement far outweighs the effort involved.

Working conditions: The housing and office provided for the project were very comfortable and sufficient for the needs of the delegates and the project. Communication was often hampered by the weather which did make it feel rather isolated. There is not much to do in Rutana, Kasulu or Lugufu other than read books. The satellite TV and e-mail facilities were much appreciated. I was healthy throughout my mission.

Other issues: None

Recommendations

Below I have attempted to list, briefly and in no particular order, the areas where I feel the Federation and TRCS could improve their operations and some ideas on how to achieve these improvements:

- Planning, budgeting and financial management - There seems to be no standard method of planning in the Federation resulting in every delegate doing their own thing. A standardised method such as Objective Oriented Project Planning (OOPP) and log frames should be adopted and delegates given sufficient training to develop and use them. Such plans that do exist are often only narrative and insufficient in detail or content to produce accurate BoQs and budgets. Finance departments should provide up to date financial reports for budgetary control by those in the field.
- Logistics, procurement and quality control of WatSan projects - It would be useful if the Regional WatSan Coordinator could run a course specifically for logistics delegates and national society staff to make them familiar with the particular demands of WatSan projects and some of the technical terms and materials used. A manual of WatSan

materials could be produced to standardise ordering and identifying the differences between good and bad quality items. WatSan staff in Dar should involve themselves in the procurement process to avoid purchases of substandard materials and requisitions should be completed giving greater detail in the specification of the requirements.

- Quality assurance is still a long way off in the work of the Red Cross but there are some steps that could be made to improve on the professionalism of our work:
 - a. Planning and management methods should be standardised (as above).
 - b. Communication, designing, reporting and filing procedures should be standardised and those standards adhered to throughout the various levels of field and delegation offices.
 - c. Detailed hand over notes and a hand over period are essential.
 - d. A system should be implemented for checking designs and work plans before implementation starts, particularly relevant in the design of water systems. This could be done by the Regional WatSan Coordinator and may simply consist of a check that the designs, drawings, sketches and BoQs actually exist before procurement and implementation begins.
 - e. Project audits and evaluations should not be limited to finance. At every stage of the project cycle it is important to review whether the decisions taken are meeting the original objectives of the project.
- The WatSan department should be given greater autonomy from the Health department such that the WatSan Engineer can sign requisitions and to report and have direct access to the Team Leader. Also the departmental structures and job descriptions for the two field offices should be unified.
- Logistics should recognise and act on the work priorities, particularly with respect to the provision of transport and communication facilities.
- Greater feedback should be given by Kigoma and Dar on reports provided from the field.
- The exchange of staff between the field locations should continue to promote sharing and learning of new experience.

Conclusion

I have greatly enjoyed my mission, I feel I have achieved a great deal in a limited time and I think I have been able to pass on some valuable lessons to my counterparts. I hope they will build on this experience and continue to achieve success and undertake more complex WatSan projects in the future. I hope that TRCS/Federation are successful in obtaining funding for a second phase of the CWSSHE projects. My experience with the Federation has been extremely rewarding and I hope to continue this line of my career into the future.