

**PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF DOMESTIC WATER
SUPPLIES IN RURAL AREAS: THE CASE OF LUANDA DIVISION
IN VIHIGA DISTRICT, KENYA.**

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the planning and management approaches used by the various water supply agencies in Luanda division, rural Kenya. Over 70% of Kenyans live in the rural areas where less than 50% of the population has access to reliable water supplies (GoK, 1997). The overall goal was therefore to assess the planning and management approaches in use, identify constraints and problems faced and make appropriate recommendations on how to address them. The specific objectives of the study were: to identify the main sources of domestic water supply; to assess the planning and management approaches used by the various water supply agencies; to examine the level and nature of community participation; to investigate the management strategies of domestic water supplies and finally to examine the environmental management and physical maintenance state of existing domestic water points. The theoretical and conceptual framework was developed from the concept of community participation; the basic needs approach, the systems theory of planning and the Rotman's transition management theory.

Primary data was collected using three methods. First, an interview schedule which was used to collect data from a sample of 126 households and also from 14 key informants. Secondly, both non-participant and participant methods of observation were used and finally, photographs of some environmental features relevant to the study were taken. Secondary data was extracted from the GoK publications, the DDC reports, DWMP and the MWR documents. A detailed study of the water supply plans of the respective agencies was also undertaken. Both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis were used. Data was presented by use of explanations, percentages, pie charts, tables and bar charts.

The study established that the per day per capita water supply was 17 liters, which was below the UNICEF recommended amount of 38 liters. It was also noted that most water supply agencies did not use appropriate planning approaches. The appropriateness of the respective planning approaches was based on whether they took cognizance of the uncertainties of the planning process and whether there was adequate community involvement in all levels of planning. In particular, 67% of the water supply agencies did not use appropriate approaches. It was noted that inadequate human and financial

resources were the main logistical problems facing the water supply agencies. In addition, there was also inadequate community involvement. Factors hampering adequate involvement of the community included different planning and implementation approaches adopted by the various water supply agencies. The high poverty levels and low standards of formal education also hampered adequate community involvement. Some political leaders incited the community against making any form of contribution either materially or in kind. It was also noted that most water points were poorly managed. In particular, 14% of the water points were well managed, 28 % were fairly well managed while 58% were poorly managed.

To address these issues, the research recommends: The adoption of the demand-driven adaptive-oriented planning approaches, adequate community involvement in all levels of planning from problem identification, designing of goals and objectives, formulation of alternatives, choosing of the best alternative, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. In addition, a synchronised form of community participation should be adopted by the different water supply agencies to avoid confusing the community. Further, the community should be educated on the importance of hygienic maintenance of water points and also assisted to adopt Income generating activities in order to reduce high poverty levels, which limits their financial contribution in domestic water supply initiatives.