



Supportive Environments for Healthy Communities

Issue 45 March 2, 2012 | A Focus on Multiple-Use Water Services (MUS)

Multiple-Use Water Services (MUS) is an approach to water service delivery that has emerged in recent years. It focuses on the premise that poor people's livelihoods and well-being require water for a variety of purposes, such as drinking, washing and cooking, rearing livestock, watering home gardens, or for other small-scale productive uses. While traditional systems tend to focus on improving health or agricultural productivity through single-use domestic or productive services (e.g., irrigation), the MUS approach applies a wider livelihood perspective to water services.

MUS resources included in this *Weekly* issue include 2012 MUS guidelines, a policy brief, MUS successes and failures and case studies from India, Nepal, and Zambia. Links to recent MUS videos are also included.

Please let WASHplus know at any time if you have resources to share for future issues of WASHplus Weekly or if you have suggestions for future topics. An [archive](#) of past Weekly issues is available on the WASHplus website.

REPORTS/ARTICLES

- **Guidelines for Planning and Providing Multiple-Use Water Services**, 2012. M Adank, IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre. ([Full-text](#))
The objective of these guidelines is to provide guidance on planning, developing, and providing multiple-use water services. The guidelines are targeted toward people and organizations that have an interest in MUS and wish to apply the approach. In addition to guiding planning, the document explains how to develop context-specific guidelines for MUS.
- **Life-cycle Costs of Rainwater Harvesting Systems (RWH)**, 2011. C Batchelor, IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre. ([Full-text](#))
Two of the conclusions of this review are: the use of RWH could and should be promoted as a means of improving the resilience of integrated water supply systems designed to cope with climate change; and in areas facing increasing water scarcity, a

more integrated approach should be taken to planning and implementing RWH systems.

- **Multiple-Use Water Schemes: Success Stories**, 2011. International Water Management Institute. ([Full-text](#))

In the northeastern hilly regions of India and Nepal, women are among the main benefactors of Multiple-Use Water Services (or schemes). MUS is providing more controlled and reliable water supplies for household needs and more productive agricultural activities. In this region, only 5 percent of the existing water resources is used for economic activities. The impact of MUS on household income and the status of women has been significant.
- **Multiple-Use Water Services (MUS) for Enhanced Land & Water Productivity, Gender Equity and Poverty Reduction: A Policy Brief**, 2012. Resources Centre for Sustainable Development. ([Full-text](#))

To improve the effectiveness of MUS, low-cost but effective household water treatment technologies were disseminated. Improvements in domestic water quality and hygiene have reduced illness and time spent collecting potable water by women and girls in particular as well as medical expenses at the household level.
- **MUS: A Potential Framework for Water Sector Interventions**, 2011. B van Koppen, International Water Management Institute. ([Link to presentation](#))

MUS is a participatory, livelihood-based approach to water services that takes people's multiple water needs and their own priorities as the starting point of planning and design of new infrastructure or rehabilitation in rural and peri-urban areas.
- **News from the Field: Multiple-Use Water Approach Brings Multiple Benefits in West Africa**, *Global Waters Newsletter*, Sept 2010. USAID. ([Full-text](#))

In the West African country of Niger, an MUS approach has certainly made a difference to Hadiza Ali and her husband, Ali Mohammed. The two of them and other family members live in the village of Kabori in southern Niger, and an MUS has enabled them to save not only time but to increase their crop yields and their income.
- **Opportunities Revealed by the Nepal Multiple-Use Water Services Experience**, *Waterlines*, Jan 2010. M Mikhail, Stockholm Environment Institute. ([Full-text](#))

Drawing on eight years of MUS development effort in Nepal, this paper describes the critical components of the MUS projects in Nepal and the outcomes seen at the community level from these projects. Further, it reviews some of the gaps and limitations of the projects in order to explore opportunities for future MUS implementation not only in Nepal, but globally.
- **Productive Use of Domestic Rural Water Systems: The Senegal Case**, 2012. Presentation to the MUS Group Meeting. R Hall, Virginia Tech. ([Link to presentation](#))

For the majority of systems, the theoretical financial benefits to households from additional piped-water-based productive activities are greater than the estimated system upgrade costs. Women's livelihoods are highly dependent on water-based activities--especially livestock raising and gardening. Noted benefits include reduction in workload; health, sanitation, and hygiene improvements; time to rest and participate in community affairs; improved housing; and greater school attendance by girls.

- **Project Politics, Priorities and Participation in Rural Water Schemes**, *Water Alternatives 5(1) 2012*. B van Koppen, International Water Management Institute. ([Abstract](#))| ([Full-text](#))

Four case studies, which are part of the research project *Cooperation and Conflict in Local Water Governance*, are examined: two domestic water supply projects (Mali, Vietnam); one participatory multiple use project (Zambia); and one large-scale irrigation project (Bolivia). The Zambia MUS project did recognize people's existing water management arrangements of multiple sources and their multiple water needs. The project adopted a participatory approach in which one year was taken to identify and train an implementing agency willing to pioneer this new approach. The total project budget had an overall ceiling but its allocation was left open for any identified water need, and to some extent for activities outside the water sector. As shown. This approach contributed to sustainability of investments made.

VIDEOS

- **A Kabori Story: Multiple-Use Water Services in Action**. ([Video](#)) 7 min
Ali and Hadiza are working with a USAID-sponsored MUS project to bring irrigation and drinking water to their village of Kabori, Niger.
- **Multiple-Use Water Systems - 5th World Water Forum, Istanbul, Turkey**. ([Video](#)) 5 min
This video shows examples from Kenya, India, and Zimbabwe of the productive use of water and how this helps people to sustain their livelihoods. It shows how people not only use water for drinking, but to generate income for their families by irrigating their gardens or raising livestock and poultry.
- **IDE Nepal: Multiple-Use Water System (MUS) Program**. ([Video](#)) 3 min
IDE has developed 160 MUS in Nepal. The different technologies have helped the people to generate extra income. This video provides examples of the different technologies that were designed and implemented.

Each *WASHplus Weekly* highlights topics such as Urban WASH, Indoor Air Pollution, Innovation, Household Water Treatment and Storage, Hand Washing, Integration, and more. If you would like to feature your organization's materials in upcoming issues, please send them to Dan Campbell, WASHplus knowledge resources specialist, at dacampbell@fhi360.org.



About WASHplus - WASHplus, a five-year project funded through USAID's Bureau for Global Health, creates supportive environments for healthy households and communities by delivering high-impact interventions in water, sanitation, hygiene (WASH) and indoor air pollution (IAP). WASHplus uses proven, at-scale interventions to reduce diarrheal diseases and acute respiratory infections, the two top killers of children under five years of age globally. For information, visit www.washplus.org or email: contact@washplus.org.

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