

Building Mutual Accountability in the Urban Water Sector

**Final Report
(January 2011- October 2012)**

**Activities Supported by Affiliated Network for
Social Accountability (ANSA-SAR)**

1. Introduction of Project

This report covers the interventions carried out by Hisaar Foundation in the ANSA-SAR supported project entitled "Building Mutual Accountability in the Urban Water Sector", in Saddar Town, one of the 18 Towns of Karachi mega city and a major business hub. The time frame of the project was from January 2011 to March 2012, The project emphasized the concept of mutual accountability, as a mechanism by which government user groups, service delivery agencies and other stakeholders could be brought together on a shared platform for collective action, to ensure conservation and better management of water resources, move forward together, rather than against each other and hold each other accountable for their performance in fulfilling their obligations and responsibilities towards the available water resources. The Project goal was to create a more wholistic approach to water resources amongst the stakeholders and thereby pave the way for the refinement and acceptability of the concept of mutual accountability.

The mutual accountability process would serve a twofold purpose: 1) ensure that all citizens have safe and sufficient water resources available to them for all essential purposes and 2) ensure that there are sufficient and safe water resources for future generations of Karachi citizens. The aim of adopting the mutual accountability process was to create a system of management and consumption of water resources that promoted conservation and conscious consumption between all competing users and uses in order to address the water scarcity issues. It would support ecological sustainability and the development of a safe, sufficient and environment friendly Karachi for generations to come.

Towards this end, during the first three months of the project Hisaar Foundation held a series of consultative meetings with stakeholder groups of Saddar Town, especially the Town administration, NGOs, civil society organizations and women to orient to them to the aims and objectives of the project. The need for them to join a common platform to resolve the water issues of the Town and to ensure that the availability and sustainability of safe and sufficient water for the different water user groups residing in the Town, were emphasized at the meetings.

Through these consultative meetings, the Foundation strategically streamlined and identified key water user groups, who were in positions to help alleviate the Towns water issues and play a pivotal role in changing the mindset of the water users. In this context, the Saddar Town Area Water Partnership (AWP) and Women and Water Network (WWN), with active participation of government, industries, civil society organizations, academia, media, women and citizens, were launched to spread awareness about water issues, create trust and realization among the stakeholders, address the water scarcity issues and thereby initiate the process of mutual accountability in the Town

Interventions under this project also included orientation and training of 200 teachers and students of 20 government schools and women across the Town,

on the importance of adopting water conservation and better management practices to bring about behavioral change among the citizens in relation to water as well as a pre-intervention survey at household and school level to determine current water conservation and management practices. Post-intervention survey was conducted in schools, to see what changes had occurred as a result of the awareness raising interventions during the course of the project. A series of dialogues were also conducted with stakeholder groups of the Town, to build awareness about water conservation, better management and change in attitude and behavior towards the use of water resources and a mutual accountability protocol was developed which lays out the principles, responsibilities, processes and actions of mutual accountability.

2. Section I: Overview of Activities, Results, Milestones and Deliverables

Establishment of Saddar Town Area Water Partnership (AWP) and Saddar Town Women and Water Network (WWN)

Hisaar Foundation's experience that water challenges cannot be overcome without the proactive support and collaboration of all stakeholders and that solutions to these problems can only be found if they are built around participation of the concerned water sector stakeholders, both government (service delivery agencies) and citizen groups, was the primary belief that led to the establishment of two transparent and neutral platforms in Saddar Town.

The purpose of the establishment of the Saddar Town Area Water Partnership (AWP) and the Saddar Town Women and Water Network (WWN), was to bring together for the first time, government (as legislator and/or water service provider and sewerage manager), the industries (as users and abusers of water and generators of effluence), the citizens (as users of water and generators of sewerage), civil society (as custodians of ethics of water use and water costs), women's groups (as the crucial voice of women's issues in water), on united platforms, to create an enabling environment where all stakeholder groups realized the sensitivities attached to water usage, management and conservation and their respective roles and responsibilities and were prepared to be assessed on their performance and take ownership of their scarce water resources and employ more efficient, equitable and ecologically sustainable practices and management of this resource.

It is important to understand that the establishment and functioning of the Saddar Town AWP was both an objective and strategy for taking forward the mutual accountability process. The aim of the AWP forum was to serve as a tool for development of trust among the service provider and the citizen groups. Towards this end, a 20 member AWP Steering Committee was constituted, comprising of Saddar Town Municipal Administration officers, representatives of traders, Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB), education department, local NGOs and media, residents, Hisaar Foundation and members of Saddar Town WWN

Executive Committee. The Steering Committee would spearhead the interventions and take collective action to ensure water conservation and better management of water resource in the Town.

The establishment of the Saddar Town WWN brought into the fold women from across the Town's Union Councils (UCs) because they as the primary domestic users of water are affected first and the worst in water related issues and can play an effective role and participate in and promote relevant action with regards to water management not only at the domestic level but also in schools. Since women comprise the largest group of stakeholders, it was therefore essential that they be involved and included in decision- making with regards to management of water resources, through this forum. Part of the strategy was to constitute a 5 member WWN Executive Committee, so that the Committee could emerge as a representative of the Town women, and not only work in collaboration with the AWP but gain support from it and also be used as a powerful force in promoting, advocating and creating awareness on conservation and better management of the water resource, among the women of their area, by actively participating in project interventions.

Pre-Intervention Survey on Water Conservation and Better Management Practices at Household Level

The Pre-intervention Survey on Water Conservation and Better Management Practices, among the Town residents, was carried out in two parts: the first was Household Survey and the second was Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) survey. Household Survey of Saddar Town was carried out to determine the current water conservation and management practices, while KAP survey was conducted with the Steering Committee members of the Partnership to measure their own knowledge, perception and attitudes. The survey covered 100 household per UC across the 11 UCs, covering a total sample size of 1100 households. In each of the 100 households covered, 1 woman (preferably elder/head of the household) was interviewed to determine their current water conservation and management practices. Two research tools were used at household level for water situation analysis Tool-A: Family Form, Tool-B: Pre Intervention Survey Form. The draft Urdu tools were pre-tested in the project area sites. This entailed pertinent changes, re-structuring and additions to the survey form that facilitated more efficient administration of the survey. After pre-testing the tool was reviewed for any final amendments on the finalized Urdu versions. The survey team consisted of a local supervisor and 22 data collectors for the 11 UCs. The data collectors were identified and selected by the members of Saddar Town WWN, while the Project Officers were hired by Hisaar Foundation for research and field related activities. The WWN members also took part in data collection. The data collectors and supervisor were extensively trained by the Project Officer in their respective UCs to carry out the household survey. They were accompanied by senior team members of Hisaar for the training sessions. The in-house training took place for duration of 2 days, while

an additional day was assigned to take the field teams into the field for tool administration. The households were randomly selected from the areas surrounding the government schools identified in each UC, where the survey would also be carried out and the school activation programme initiated. The selection of households was based on the presence of at least one woman engaged in household work. In the KAP survey 20 members of the Partnership were interviewed (See Pre-Intervention Households Survey Report of Saddar Town, for details)

Since the roll back of the elected local government system resulted in significant deterioration of the water and sanitation situation on the ground in the Town, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were designed to determine the prevailing/current water conservation and management practices. The findings of pre intervention survey on Water Conservation and Better Management Practices at the household level were supplemented and validated through qualitative data collection, to reflect the changed situation on the ground. A total of six FGDs were conducted, covering 10-12 women participants from the selected UC. Participants for each FGD were recruited from different socio-economic, ethnic and age groups. Since the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) results were used to corroborate and validate the household pre- survey data, a mix of qualitative and quantitative survey findings emerged as an outcome of this activity.

Pre and Post Intervention Surveys on Water Conservation and Better Management Practices for Schools

A pre survey amongst the public school children under School Water Conservation and Better Management Activation Programme was carried out to determine the current usage habits of the children, knowledge on the need for saving water and most importantly change their water usage habits for sustainability of the water resource. The survey was conducted in 20 schools across all 11 UCs of Saddar Town.

A post survey of schools in Saddar Town was carried out in order to get a picture of the situation before and after the activation programme was implemented so as to be able to counter the specific problems and issues affecting the schools.

Both the surveys covered the same sample size for comparison of pre and post intervention situation. The school surveys covered 20 students and 5 teachers including school head/in-charge from each school, covering a total sample size of 400 students and 92 teachers/heads that were interviewed. The 20 public sector schools were selected from different educational levels i.e. primary, secondary, lower secondary and higher secondary and to give a gender desegregated data, out of 20 schools; 10 girls and 10 boys schools were selected across the 11 UCs of Saddar Town. The study used a mix of qualitative and quantitative survey methods.

All the questionnaires involved a combination of quantitative and qualitative questions designed to conduct a comprehensive analysis, with one survey created especially for the students and the other for the teachers and heads of schools. Both the questionnaires covered three areas: drinking water, sanitation/waste management and water conservation and management practices (See Post-Intervention School Survey Report of Saddar Town, for details).

Stakeholder Dialogues

To understand and build awareness about water conservation and management and change the attitude and behaviour of the stakeholder groups towards water resources usage, dialogues were conducted with different stakeholder groups, including Women and NGOs, Government Representatives, Traders and Electronic and Print Media of Saddar Town.

The purpose of the dialogues was that as partnerships are formed it is essential to bring on board all the relevant stakeholders and involve them in the partnership process and engage them in dialogue, so that they play an integral part in building the knowledge of the residents on the Towns water issues and to make them aware of the grave dangers of water scarcity and highlight the urgent need of conservation and conscious consumption and the role that they can play in finding solutions to the problems.

The dialogue with school teachers were conducted in conjunction with the school activation programme.

Water Advocacy and Better Management Activation Programme for Women

As part of project interventions, a Water Advocacy and Better Management Activation Programme for Women was conducted across the Town. Based on the findings of the pre-intervention household survey, small group meetings were held in all 11 UCs to sensitize the women on the issues faced not only in the Town but in Karachi mega city as a whole, by introducing Hisaar Foundation's water facts and household water saving guidelines. The aim of the meetings, facilitated by the WWN members, was to educate and motivate the women, who are the main managers of water, on the importance for adopting better water conservation and management techniques at the household level and inculcate in them the need for not only taking ownership of the water resources and their own responsibility as citizens but also come forward and play a pivotal role in advocacy and awareness raising on water issues among other women in their area.

School Water Conservation and Better Management Activation Programme

The school water activation programme was carried out in 20 government schools across the Town. The main objective of the activation programme was to educate the children on the importance of the need for water conservation and adoption of better management practices, through Hisaar Foundation's water saving guidelines and water activities. It was aimed that as result of this programme in each school, while the children would themselves better understand the importance of water conservation and need for better management , they would also emerge as agents of change in their own homes.

Development of Mutual Accountability Protocol

A Mutual Accountability Protocol comprising on a set of seven modules was developed encapsulates the experiences of establishing AWP and WWNs as institutional mechanisms for the conservation and management of water resources; and developing and adopting principles of cost synergy and mutual accountability within the institutional mechanisms.

This set of seven modules is designed to provide a methodology for planning, launching and establishing AWP and WWNs and standardize follow-up actions based on government-citizen collaboration and citizen-based activism for collective action on water conservation and management.

While each of these modules has been packaged individually, as it is meant for a different context and different level, and has been pitched accordingly, they are all, however, all linked with each other to form a continuous process .The modules have been designed in a simple and user-friendly manner for the convenience of both trainers and trainees.

Section II: Report on the Results, including Grant Milestones & Activities

The **AWP and WWN platforms** provided the basis to build mutual trust and stakeholder ownership of water resources in terms of improved water supply by the service delivery organizations and water conservation and better management practices by water users to ensure safe and sufficient water for all essential purposes for all the different water user groups in Saddar Town. These groups were encouraged to come forward and engage in dialogue with each other and cohesively develop committed action plans as part of their obligations, duties and responsibilities, for improvement in water supply and adoption of better water management in their own capacities and make their Town a place where safe and sufficient drinking water is available to all.

The Saddar Town AWP Steering Committee and WWN Executive Committee members welcomed the mutual accountability concept. The Town Municipal Administrator (TMA) vowed to spearhead the AWP, signed a Memorandum of Understanding and took forward the AWP forum as a tool for developing trust among the service provider and the citizen groups and facilitate the accountability process. The Saddar TMA demonstrated the administration's commitment to and acceptance of the mutual accountability process and ran Hisaar Foundation's Public Service Announcements (PSAs) on water conservation and better management practices on local cable channels and also provided continued support of its premises, its staff, and facilitation for conducting of project activities.

The WWN Executive Committee not only acted as a lobbying group to convince the government to take necessary action with regards to provision of sufficient and clean and safe water to consumers in the Town but also played a vital role in promoting, advocating and creating awareness on water conservation and better management amongst the women at the household level and thereby making them (women) accountable for their attitudes and behavior towards the management of available water resource.

An important outcome of the **Pre-Intervention Household Survey** validated through the findings of the focus group discussions, was that, while the findings highlighted that majority of the Town residents were aware of the water shortage issues, water was being wasted at the household level. The reckless use of water, it was observed, was a result of lack of information sharing and general awareness on water conservation and better management required at household level.

Based on the findings, it emerged that there was not only an urgent need to sensitize the women on sense of responsibility pertaining to water conservation and better management, through information dissemination but also inculcate in them the techniques of home based water conservation and promotion of efficient use and better micro management techniques. As a result of the findings of the pre survey, the women activation programme was thus conducted in the Town.

The **School Post Intervention Survey** findings present an encouraging picture of school heads/teachers and students knowledge regarding the importance of water conservation and better management, in their daily life had greatly improved through the school activation programme conducted by Hisaar Foundation. All school students and heads/teachers who received knowledge about the importance of water conservation and better management, felt it was important to save water for the future, that water is essential for survival, water is life, and to save water resources and water is a basic need of life.

An overall increase in the knowledge also indicates that Hisaar Foundation's awareness raising interventions played an effective role in sensitizing both students and teachers/heads on the need for adopting improved water conservation and management practices.

A positive change seen in the post-survey data analysis was that, the unnecessary usage and wastage of water had minimized. A drastic increase was found in the judgment of children and teachers/heads on the ways through which water was being wasted in their surroundings. While the pre-survey showed that wastage of water was not considered a major issue, the findings of the post survey highlighted that awareness as well as practice of conservation and better management of water was on the increase amongst school children and teachers/heads, as a result of the school activation programme.

Through the series of **Stakeholder Dialogues**, which focused on urban water issues, challenges, problems and solutions from an urban perspective, the four diverse stakeholder groups, were encouraged to accept and play their role in changing not only their own mindset and behavior but also actively take on the responsibility of creating public awareness on water issues within the Town.

A positive and encouraging outcome of these interactive dialogues was that the stakeholder groups realized that each one of them had a social obligation towards creating public awareness on the water issues facing Pakistan and inculcating among the citizens the urgent need of adopting a more wholistic approach towards the available resource and take measures for water conservation and better management practices.

Separate **School Teachers Dialogues** were held with the heads and faculty of each school. As result of the dialogues 130 teachers across the 20 schools, understood their role and responsibility and also realized that since they control the day to day running of the schools they can play a positive role in sensitizing the children on improved water conservation and management practices and thereby change their mindset and behavior in relation to water use and water consumption.

The important outcomes of the **Saddar Town Women Activation Programme** were that women were not only trained in water conservation, management and orientated on their roles at the household level, they also accepted and agreed to adopt the practical solutions on water conservation, management within their homes and further spread this message amongst other women in their neighborhood.

Through **School Activation Programme**, over 1200 students were oriented and educated on the importance of water conservation and better management of the resource through water presentations, water saving guidelines. Prizes were distributed to children who speech or spoke on importance of water, and water

conservation and improved management practices. Hisaar Foundation also distributed school water conservation guideline amongst the school teachers that accompanied the students.

Through this interactive intervention the children teachers learnt the importance of water conservation and management, realized the need of changing their own use and behavioral towards water and adopting water conservation and better management techniques, in their daily lives. An encouraging outcome of the activation programme was that the school children committed that they would also convey this message in their homes and among their friends.

The **Mutual Accountability Protocol** emerged as a document which provides a methodology for planning, launching and establishing AWP and WWNs and standardize follow-up actions based on government-citizen collaboration and citizen-based activism for collective action on water conservation and management. It lays out the principles, responsibilities, processes and actions for a mutual accountability protocol designed to show a way forward for other towns.

Through this set of modules, organizations and institutions, staff and volunteers, executing and implementing partners will learn how to launch AWP and WWNs in any town of Pakistan. It will set them on a course of action for promoting the principles of IWRM, and provide orientation and training for delivering consensus-based solutions to challenges. The focus will be on achieving “Mutual Accountability” and generating “cost synergy” by highlighting and bringing forth the combined energy of stakeholders through their own resources, albeit in a partnership mode.

Section III: Compliance with the Program Results Framework (Mention clearly, if there have been over-runs on timelines)

During the course of the project the elected local government system was abrogated. The emerging unstable and non-functional local bodies’ governance system hampered project work, resulting in many issues that hindered the smooth running of the project, causing unavoidable delays in project completion.

The premise of the project was that a participatory partnership platform would be established, based on government-citizen collaboration and citizen-based activism, to identify and create avenues for alliance building and change the way we think about using and managing water. However, the rollback of the elected local government system in the city greatly affected the spirit of partnership embraced and taken forward by the Town administration at the inception of the project.

The project activities and plan of action, therefore, had to be revisited and redesigned and could not be conducted in the manner in which they were planned and within the original work plan timeframe.

The truncated local government system and deteriorating infrastructure adversely hampered the conducting of the women activation programme, at the level it was designed. Since the Town Municipal Administration (TMA) was to spearhead the awareness and advocacy interventions in the Town, because of the disbandment, the water conservation guidelines which were to be distributed across the Town at the cost of the (TMA), could not be distributed. As a result, the activation programme could not be carried out with a large number of women as planned.

The water conservation guidelines were the core tool to be used to raise awareness on the importance of water conservation and emphasize the need for adopting better management practices, amongst the Town women. Since the guidelines were not vastly distributed and women activation programme was not conducted in its full scale, the post intervention household survey could not be conducted, because awareness raising could not be done at the level it was designed. Since the outreach of the women activation programme and awareness raising interventions at the household level was limited, the real impact of interventions did not emerge as expected. In the light of this lack of impact, the basis on which the post survey was to be conducted was compromised.

Section IV: Problems and Issues Anticipated (if any) & Steps taken to address the same

Due to the changing political scenario and uncontrollable situation and happenings that delayed some project activities, Hisaar Foundation requested ANSA-SAR for a six months no cost extension, for completion of project interventions.

Section V: Lessons Learnt

Through the process of developing and activating a Town Water Partnership (TWP) on the basis of 'mutual accountability', it was learnt that while there is acceptability of the idea and great enthusiasm, it takes time to move from concept to actualization, and that the initial period for this needs to be at least 18 months. It was reaffirmed that water challenges cannot be overcome without the pro-active support and collaboration of the government, citizen groups and other stakeholders in equal measure. However, the very different styles of work of government, NGOs and private sector means that extensive dialogue is needed among the three stakeholders for which there is no short cut. Due to differing stakes of the concerned groups, we have found it elusive to get all the stakeholders to bind to and adopt the concept of mutual accountability at the same rate. Political stability is also essential because under unstable conditions there is less interest in mutual accountability (2 members of the Saddar Town AWP Steering Committee made by Hisaar Foundation died as a result of target killings in August 2011).

It was found that a stable local governance system is crucial to sustain collaborative town water partnership and to deliver the objectives of water conservation and management. The spirit of partnership was embraced and taken forward by the Town administration in the inception of the project, but the rollback of local government system in the city affected not only the Town administration but the Town Water Partnership (TWP) also.

By imparting training to volunteers that helps us promote water conservation and management awareness among communities, we spread our message to a wider audience and in a more effective manner. However, since the work had to be completed by volunteers, we had to conduct various activities according to their convenience and had to adjust the field activities accordingly. Implementation of field work had to adopt a flexible approach so that the volunteers were able to participate in this process.

While the commitment and practical support of the Town Municipal Administration (TMA), when the local government system was in place, generated and took forward the cost synergy spirit in the initial stages of the project, the disbandment of the political system dampened the entire concept. It was observed that, since the political scenario changed, the concept of synergy where each partner spent its own money to carry out commitments, made within the ambit of the water partnership, could not be taken forward.