



POLICY & PRACTICE BRIEF

Building Resilience

PLANNING FOR SUCCESS

In this policy brief we explore the important roles and responsibilities that ensure the successful implementation of Small Scale Multiple Use Systems (SSMUS). Learn how communities and authorities collaborate in infrastructure maintenance, the significance of training for empowered management, and the financial planning essential for SSMUS sustainability.

Sustaining the impact of Small Scale Multiple Use Systems (SS-MUS) hinges on clear roles, effective training, and sound financial planning. Let's explore these critical aspects that pave the way for the success of SSMUS.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In South Africa the Water Services Authority (WSA) usually shoulders the responsibility for the operation and maintenance (O&M) of water services infrastructure. However, water supply for small-scale agricultural use has historically involved the Department of Agriculture (DoA). When water is used for both domestic and irrigation, roles and responsibilities for O&M must be clearly defined and documented at a SSMUS project's inception so that there is no confusion.

The downfall of numerous SSMUS projects can be attributed to a lack of maintenance and infrastructure management. Often, communities lack the financial means to cover operating expenses, like diesel costs and spare parts for mechanical equipment. Hence, selecting the right technology is paramount to meet O&M costs effectively. If the community takes responsibility for O&M for the infrastructure, the relevant authority must formalize this arrangement through an agreement in writing. A community water management committee comes into play, entrusted with the responsible stewardship of the project. The agreement between the authority and the committee should lay down the roles and responsibilities each party undertakes in terms of O&M.

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Training and Development

When the community assumes the responsibility for O&M, a structured training and skill development program must be established. This program should encompass all technical issues linked to O&M and basic financial management. Equipping the community management committee with the knowledge of budgeting for breakdowns and unforeseen challenges is critical for project sustainability.

Financial Planning

The foundation of sustaining Small Scale Multiple Use Systems (SSMUS) is careful financial planning. Ensuring a stable source of funding for O&M costs is crucial. Community involvement, clear roles, effective training, and careful financial planning are the cornerstones of a prosperous SSMUS venture. When people contribute financially they must be consulted and agreements must be negotiated.



The Giyani Local Scale Climate Resilience Programme (GLSCR) is an innovative initiative aimed at enhancing water utilization, building community resilience, and promoting sustainable economic growth in the Giyani region. Through collaborative partnerships, innovative solutions, community engagement, and rigorous monitoring, the program strives to address the challenges posed by climate change and ensure a more resilient and prosperous future for local communities.

By adopting a holistic and inclusive approach, the GLSCR serves as a model for other regions grappling with climate-related water challenges, contributing to broader global efforts toward a sustainable and climate-resilient future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Here are some recommendations for sustainable small scale multiple water use systems:

Clear-Cut Roles

Define the roles and responsibilities of Water Services Authorities (WSAs), the Department of Agriculture (DoA), and communities in operation and maintenance (O&M) clearly to avoid confusion.

Formal Agreements

When communities manage O&M, formalize the arrangement through agreements that detail the responsibilities of both parties, promoting accountability.

Technology Selection

Choose appropriate technology that aligns with the financial capacity of communities to meet O&M costs effectively.

Comprehensive Training

Implement a structured training program for community management committees, covering technical aspects, financial management, and troubleshooting.

Budgeting Power

Empower communities with the skills needed to budget for potential issues, ensuring the sustainability of SSMUS.

Financial Planning

Establish robust financial planning mechanisms to secure funding for ongoing O&M expenses, safeguarding the success of the SSMUS.

Small Scale Multiple Use Systems (SSMUS) thrive when roles are clear, communities are equipped with knowledge and skills, and financial planning is well done. These elements collectively form the foundation of sustainable, impactful, and resilient SSMUS projects.



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