

Adherence to regulated pro poor water access tariffs in low income areas: A case study for Nanyuki Informal Settlements, Laikipia County

Background

Water and sanitation are at the very core of sustainable development, critical to the survival of people and the planet. Sustainable Development Goal Six (SDG 6) targets 6.1. And 6.2 aims to achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water, sanitation and hygiene for all by 2030.

Nanyuki Water and Sewerage Company Limited (NAWASCO), like many other water companies in Kenya has a pro poor unit that targets the poor facilitating access to service delivery in compliance to Kenya constitutional right to water and sanitation for all, NAWASCO has mapped out pro – poor areas within Nanyuki town urban areas including slums/informal settlements and has installed 15 water kiosks therein to ensure effective service delivery through regulated pro – poor water access tariffs (Ksh. 2.00/20 liter of water).

NAWASCO’s strategic plan 2019-2023 is anchored towards contributing to overall universal access to water and sanitation by all, specifically targeting improved connectivity to the unserved and underserved populations.

The Challenge

There is increasing consensus that water utilities have a mandate to satisfy water services demand for both the social and commercial objectives. The unserved and underserved areas of Nanyuki lack basic reliable infrastructure, especially for water and on/off-site sanitation drainage. While clean water is inadequate, sanitation and hygiene are visibly sub-standard, the continuing expansion and densification of settlements render upgrading and service improvements altogether urgent. Proper Service provision in the Nanyuki urban and peri urban areas is hindered by numerous conventional challenges. They include lack of a formal land tenure, evolution and growth considered synonymous with spontaneous and unregulated growth and financial constraints as a result of the high cost associated with water and sanitation infrastructure

The study findings

Watershed, through KWAHO and Simavi conducted a survey to assess satisfaction levels on the prevailing pro poor water access tariffs and the efficiency of service provision, through sampling 7 of the 15 water Kiosks. The team produced a report whose results identified non adherence to the existing pro poor water tariffs, obsolescence and underutilization of the facilities by the kiosk operators. Below is a summary of the findings

NO OF KIOSKS	LOCATION	TARIFFS AND AFFORDABILITY	FREQUENCY OF WATER SUPPLY
15 KIOSKS 11 FUNCTIONAL 7 SAMPLED	-Gathagi -Kanyoni Stage -Majengo Town -Majengo Mosque -Nanyuki Market -Likii Center	-A standard rate of 5 Ksh is charged against the recommended 2 Ksh -Still exist cost variations during the dry season	-Water Rationing experienced in most of the kiosks -Rationing is rampant during the dry season

In a nutshell, the study identified other factors that contribute to non-adherent, including unconventional weather patterns and drought. The cost of establishment and the effects of inflation are also not quantified

Watershed's contribution

Cognizant of the important role of evidence and citizen empowerment in lobbying and advocacy, Watershed utilized the survey findings to lobby for adherent to the stipulated pro poor tariffs. To create goodwill, buy in and to ascertain the authenticity of findings, the study results were shared with the water company. On 2nd July, 2019. A presentation during the public consultation forum on the review of tariffs for improved service delivery, the program highlighted the survey findings through implementing partners including Simavi, Mount Kenya Ewaso Water Partnership (MKWEP) and Kenya Water for Health Organization (KWAHO). The consultation process was participatory, relying on the citizen voice by Water Resource User Associations, Community Forest Associations, Youths, Women and People Living with Disabilities backed with evidence and voice from civil society organizations. Consequently, Nanyuki Water and Sewerage Company has made deliberate efforts towards the realization of sustainable WASH for all, Random snap checks of the water kiosks indicate an improved trend in adherent to the water tariffs

Key outcomes

- To effectively enforce the pro poor water tariffs , NAWASCO, through a commitment by the Managing Director on 2nd July 2019 made deliberate efforts to ensure adherence to the pro poor rates by adopting prepaid meters
- Improving the feedback mechanism to ensure first-hand information from the customers, NAWASCO, in Partnership with Water Services Regulatory Board (WASREB) are undertaking trainings on the Maji voice feedback mechanism. Maji voice mechanism is used in the water sector for users to provide feedback to service provide son issues affecting them that need to be addressed.
- Adoption of a NAWASCO new strategic plan (2019 – 2023), which underscores the company's plans to reach the unserved and the underserved residents within the water services jurisdiction areas in Nanyuki town, Laikipia County. This include those living in urban slums.
- The water company provided outline plans to create a pro-poor policy for guided interventions



Figure 1: Survey on adherent to pro poor rates, Nanyuki



Figure 2: Proceedings during the public consultation forum for tariffs review