

**Whose Public Action?
Analysing Inter-sectoral Collaboration for Service Delivery
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**Discussion Paper 6: Initial Draft Sanitation Sector
Comparative Paper**

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Drawing on papers by Nurul Alam, Masooda Bano and Padmaja Nair

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Initial Draft Sanitation Sector Comparative Paper

1. Introduction¹

This paper provides an initial comparative review of the three sanitation cases in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. Further analysis of the field material and comparisons with the literature will be needed. This draft paper should be read in conjunction with the research approach paper (January 2008) by Richard Batley which sets out the objectives and approach to the research in the health, education and sanitation sectors, using selected case studies in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

The initial research team *core research argument* is that government and NSPs involved in a service delivery relationship encounter each other on the basis of institutionally and organizationally conditioned policy agendas which are likely to lead to contention about the purposes and processes of public action. Moreover, the way that their relationship is formally and informally organized (in a range from vertical contracts to agreements for co-production), by setting the rules of the game, affects the capacity of the 'partners' to assert control. Despite this potential for contention, the three sanitation case studies are clear examples of NGOs building effective and productive relationships with government.

The criteria for selection of the programmes and cases for research were:

- There are substantial state and non-state roles.
- Non-state actors are involved in direct service delivery.
- There is a range of different types of NSPs (i.e. large/small, old/new)
- There is the likelihood of (or scope for) rivalry over the means and or ends of public action.
- The programme has some continuity/history (or the NSPs within it have a history that allows us to observe change.
- Within the programme similar there are some types of relations that will allow us to choose 'typical' cases for study.

For the sanitation sector there were said to be only a limited number of potential programmes and cases that met these criteria, although there were more options in Bangladesh where NGOs are more prominent. The selected cases represent 'forefront' cases of good practice and are not necessarily typical cases, even though a limited number of similar cases can found in the region. All three cases reveal longer term horizontal – partnership type relationships between the NGOs and local government.

2. Overview of the sanitation cases

2.1 Bangladesh – UST working on the Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC)

¹ This paper draws on papers by Nurul Alam, Masooda Bano, Padmaja Nair, Richard Batley and Kelly Teamey

The Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC), where government is taking a lead on policy and targets, has emerged from the Community Led Total Sanitation Campaign (CLTSC) which has been in operation in rural Bangladesh since the late 1990s, and was piloted by NGOs such as VERC and WaterAid. It takes an approach to achieving 100% sanitation coverage that is *community based*, on the principle that the community itself has the resources and ability to address sanitation (and associated water and hygiene) problems. With appropriate external support from NGOs to identify the current sanitation situation and need for improvement, the community plans and implements solutions to meet that need.

The approach recognises that the behaviour of individuals affects the well being of others in their community. The key behaviour to be addressed in achieving 100% sanitation coverage is *no open defecation*. Other supporting behaviours include effective hand washing and hygienic rubbish disposal. In this way, the definition and focus of improving sanitation is behaviour-focussed, rather than infrastructure focussed.

With the main entry point for the CLTS being the community, baseline data is collected that will motivate the community as a whole to change their current situation in relation to open defecation and unhygienic latrine use. Motivational tools include assessing the extent of open defecation within the community. The community considers the impact this has on the health, dignity and status of the whole community and plans what they can do to improve it.

Within the approach, 3 basic criteria for a hygienic, appropriate latrine are that it:

- prevents faeces contaminating *other things* – people and the local environment,
- is free from odour and
- is free from smells.

Households, responsible for financing the infrastructure component, are offered an extensive range of latrine models, based on affordability within the community. In addition to this, many local innovations for latrine designs that satisfy the basic criteria have emerged, often at extremely low cost, so that user-safe and hygienic latrines are affordable to almost everyone in the community.

This approach is being replicated extensively by NGOs throughout Bangladesh, which are supported by INGOs and donors, in accordance with the government's national sanitation strategy. The selected NGO case (UST) falls within the category of a medium size NGO. It has been working in three districts of the country in the North and Middle of Bangladesh. In 2005, UST worked in 22 unions of 7 Upazillas, out of those 10 unions have 100% of households with latrines. The founder Executive Director of UST had previously worked with VERC which pioneered the CLTS approach.

UST established relations with Water Aid Bangladesh (WAB) to ensure safe water, environmental sanitation and hygiene promotion in the year 1999. The current programme, with a CBO focus including the Total Sanitation programme that involved working with local government, commenced in 2003. This can be considered as the beginning of a long, fruitful, multifaceted relations and network with an

INGO, local and central government. Since its inception, UST has successfully implemented two phases of Water and Sanitation programmes with WAB's support. Great emphasis is placed on the NGO's work being complimentary with government's policies and strategies and close collaboration with local government.

2.2 The Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) in Karachi

The Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) started in 1980 in the crowded Orangi settlement, Karachi's largest *katchi abadi* or informal settlement, with a population of 1.2 million. Led by Akhtar Hameed Khan, the OPP evolved into a remarkable self funded and administered grass roots movement, relying on the resources and skills of the urban poor, who used local materials and labour in building hundreds of kilometres of low cost sewers. By 2001, 92,000 families in 6100 lanes, representing almost 90% of the entire settlement (A.Zaidi, 2001). Gone were the murky stinking open sewers throughout the settlement, resulting in a much improved environment with substantial reductions in infant mortality. (Batley et al, 2004)

The OPP Research and Training Institute (OPP – RTI) emerged as one of the most influential NGOs in the region during the 1990s. It has supported replication of its approach in many towns and cities throughout Pakistan by other NGOs, including collaborating with government organisations, with varying degrees of success.

The OPP approaches have been adapted to suit local situations. Some of the distinctive features and principles used are summarised as follows (Adapted from Hasan, 1997 and Zaidi, 2001):

- Community facilitators and technicians are trained by the NGO to provide technical advice and support community groups in developing local infrastructure on a sustainable basis.
- Sufficient time should be spent on getting to know and understand the local people, their institutions, conditions and infrastructure.
- Local lane leaders are the frontline development workers who are selected by and are accountable to the residents on the lane committee, but they are supported by the NGO.
- A *component sharing approach* entails separating the *internal component*, e.g. lane sewers that are provided and funded by the community groups, from the *external component*, e.g. trunk sewers, which should be provided by government.
- The NGO responds to requests for assistance by community groups, often following the successful implementation of a nearby community infrastructure scheme.
- The NGO seeks to collaborate with government agencies to enable effective and timely development of projects, including permitting appropriate low cost designs.

Perhaps the most distinctive feature of this approach is the *component sharing*, where the community group must finance and develop their own internal component of the infrastructure, with no cost sharing or subsidy

The OPP model has now extended all over Karachi, and has been replicated in 12 other cities and a number of villages. It has come to be known as the component sharing model within development. The latrine in the homes, the lane sewers and secondary sewers known as 'internal development' are financed, managed and maintained by the people, while the trunk sewers and treatment plants known as 'external development' remain the responsibility of the government.

OPP-RTI has also established an effective relationships with city government and the Karachi Water Supply and Sewerage Boards, providing strategic advice on existing and future sanitation programmes in poorer areas of Karachi.

2.3 Shelter Associates sanitation programme in Sangli, India

The NGO 'Shelter Associates' was formed in 1993. They have a housing focus in their development projects, but have also undertaken urban sanitation work in poor communities in Pune and Sangli in Maharashtra.

In Pune they participated in the Pune Slum Sanitation project, a pioneering city wide programme initiated in 1999 by the then Municipal Commissioner, who strongly supported NGO participation and in a short span of 3 years constructed over 400 community toilet blocks with their collaboration. Shelter constructed 13 community toilet blocks, but opted out of subsequent phases of the project because of the absence of time and space for community involvement, which raised concerns about the sustainability of the toilet blocks.

Learning lessons from the sanitation project in Pune, Shelter began working in Sangli a district town in Maharashtra in 2001. Since then it has undertaken an exhaustive settlement and service survey, constructed four community toilet blocks and over 300 individual toilets and is in the process of initiating construction of another toilet block. These activities in Sangli have been undertaken in phases and while each phase has been supported by different funding agencies, continuity in the strategies and interventions and a growing relationship with SMKMC (the Municipal Corporation) is clearly visible. Currently the project is moving towards the end of its fourth phase. Key elements of the approach include:

- **Poverty Mapping** is being used to build up a comprehensive and dynamic database in a Geographical Information System (GIS) format and as a tool to mainstream low-income settlements into urban planning and development.
- **Community institution building** - Shelter's approach is based on the concept of community led interventions, organizing and empowering communities is critical to the process of provision and management of facilities. NGO-CBO partnership is critical.

- **The poor are the best judge of their own needs** - Shelter's second fundamental belief is that in spite of conditions of extreme deprivation the poor people themselves can find the most appropriate and effective solutions to their problems.
- **Construction of facilities is secondary to process** - Shelter's belief that an NGO cannot be an effective 'implementer' and a community mobiliser at the same time. In fact, for Shelter construction of infrastructure is secondary to the 'processes'. They often co-opt other NGOs to do the construction, but they ensure that the quality of construction is good
- **Developing effective relations with government** - they have carefully cultivated good working relations with all levels of the municipal corporation, including the commissioner and local politicians. They are now working with the municipal corporation on achieving targets of a 100% open defecation free city. Refer to Figure 1 in the appendices for a timeline summarizing the evolution of their relationship with the local government.

3. The nature of government and key conditioning factors

During the 1980s and much of the 1990s the working culture of key government institutions in the three countries could be characterised as a top down, supply driven bureaucratic approach that paid little attention to the sanitation needs and demands of different communities. This was particularly true of engineering departments, which favoured providing more expensive water and sanitation infrastructure to higher income urban areas. This emphasis was no doubt mainly due to the limitation of funds for infrastructure development, but also to the rigid procedures in government that restricted their ability to work flexibly, as is necessary when working with communities.

Government staff have also been reluctant to work in poorer urban areas because of the informal and unauthorised nature of these settlements. This is also evident in rural areas because of their remoteness. The government reluctance also extended to working with NGOs which operated in these informal or remote areas. This is in part due to the fact that the engineering departments are 'hardware' focused and NGOs place more emphasis on 'software'. During this period, the local government institutions and staff typically believed that they had the monopoly on technical capacity and the mandate to provide services to the people. There were of course some examples of government departments working with NGOs in poorer or remote areas during this period, but this was the exception rather than the norm.

More recently, many senior government staff and other key stakeholders have witnessed the effectiveness of some NGO programmes and their commitment to help the poor. They also more clearly appreciate the limitations of their own local government service providers. Increasing numbers of key government stakeholders now perceive that there are clear benefits for local government and government utilities in engaging with influential and competent NGOs, utilising their

comparative advantage. This is evident from the regular and strategic engagement that now occurs in all three sanitation cases.

A number of preliminary findings have emerged from or been confirmed by the research including:

- a) The government departments responsible for sanitation have very limited staff and resources. In each of the cases there was a growing recognition of the limited local government resources available for sanitation and the need to engage more with capable NGOs.
- b) Creating space for NGOs – government has largely withdrawn from direct provision of sanitation promotion services or is doing very little of the software aspects of sanitation, while it focuses on facilitating stakeholders, some hardware aspects and policy issues.
- c) There is wide support for national sanitation strategies and policies that focus on the elimination of open defecation and on local government working more closely with NGOs, particularly in India and Bangladesh. The Total Sanitation approach builds on NGO approaches and explicitly calls for the active involvement of local government, NGOs and other NSPs.
- d) Rivalry is evident amongst some government staff who are often reluctant to acknowledge the work of NGOs which they may see as competitors for funding. This is a common problem in South Asia but seems to be diminishing where NGOs are implementing successfully.
- e) Inter-governmental interactions positively influencing government sanitation policies. The government of Bangladesh and the state Government of Maharashtra have both benefited from sharing lessons on the Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach.
- f) Financial incentives for municipal and rural local government are said to be important in Bangladesh and India. If and when villages or towns are declared 100% open defecation free, the local council are entitled to a sizeable grant.
- g) Frequent transfers of key government staff can be critical to the Local government – NGO relationship. This was particularly evident in the Sangli/Pune case where there had been frequent transfers of commissioners.

4. Nature of NGOs and key conditioning factors

There has been a considerable expansion in the numbers and size of NGOs in South Asia in recent decades in response to inadequate public services such as sanitation.

“Many leftist leaders joined the NGOs because they realized that it is difficult to mobilize people purely on basis of ideas; it is much easier to build a relationship when you go to them with a school and a dispensary. Many therefore opted for NGOs,” argues Dr Nayyer, a prominent physicist and activist in Pakistan.’ This idea is also relevant for Bangladesh and India.

In Bangladesh, many NGOs working in sanitation have developed their own participatory methodologies and ethos, but their working methods are influenced by the nature of the donor or INGO programme they are working on. UST’s mission and vision of public action does not show a stable pattern. These have been revisited and rewritten from time to time. This was an informed decision based on the context and the changing scenario of the sources of funds. Since UST does not have any regular sources of fund, the availability of fund from few donors act as conditioning factor in determining the nature and type of activity which ultimately influenced its mission and vision.

In the India case, the present director of Shelter, an Architect by profession, follows an informal management structure . She believes in Shelter’s ‘work speaking for itself’ and, though she has recently been awarded a prestigious international fellowship, she maintains a relatively low profile. Shelter is reticent to spread its activities too thinly and instead prefers to concentrate on geographically closer and manageable regions. It also does not engage in networking with other similar, organizations in the sector. There have been some differences in the past between Shelter and other NGOs about the best means of community mobilisation and public action.

OPP and its leadership (past and present) have a considerable reputation in Pakistan of being driven by certain core beliefs rather than material incentives. OPP’s leadership from the beginning is known for very humble living, low cost offices, and low salaries. Akhtar Hameed Khan (the founder) as well as the current leadership does not undertake donor consultancies and is very clear that material aspirations hinder formation of a trusting relationship with the government as well as the community. OPP does not charge the government for any of its services.

OPP in Pakistan has a clear development vision of working with and facilitating people and communities to help themselves, while providing linkages with the technical capacity in government agencies.

In recent years NGOs in the sanitation sector of each of the three countries have had better access to key government decision makers to engage in substantive policy dialogue. This is likely to be in part due to the lack of government resources devoted to this sector and the inadequate performance of government institutions. Increasing numbers of government staff appreciate the added value of NGOs in sanitation. In addition many NGOs have sought to achieve a wider impact and so have been willing to work with government rather than focusing on advocating against government programmes. This shift is changing the nature of such NGOs.

A number of further preliminary findings have emerged from or been confirmed by the research including:

- a) Local NGOs generally prefer that relations with international NGOs that fund them be informal with light touch accountability arrangements. However, donors and larger NGOs are increasingly looking for more output based collaboration arrangements.
- b) Rivalry – in all cases there were disputes either within or between NGOs about what are appropriate NGO methodologies for working in the field. In general terms local sanitation NGOs are working closer with government, even though they are keen to maintain a separate identity from government.
- c) The drive to make a bigger impact or the need to increase the funding for the NGO is influencing their approaches to working on a larger scale.
- d) NGOs are learning lessons from mistakes on previous programmes, adapting their methodologies and applying those lessons on new programmes.

5. Role of funding, accountability and advocacy in developing relationships

There is a widely held perception in government in South Asia that when an organisation such as an NGO is paid for services as part of a contract with government, then the NGO's main motive is making money. Such contracts also present rent-seeking opportunities for government staff. Well established NGOs have therefore often been reluctant to enter into such principal-agent contracts with government, where they would be expected to adopt a subordinate role. This is true in the three sanitation cases, although there are other instances of principal-agent type contracts with government working in India and elsewhere, particularly where more enlightened administrations operate.

The three main types of government-NGO contracts/relationships are briefly described in Box 1. Starting with the conventional written principal-agent type contract through to relational contracts which are unwritten understandings.

Box 1 – Types of government-NGO contracts/relationships

1. Principal-agent (or 'subordinated') contracts based on law and where one party is expected to execute the requirements of the other. The principal controls the flow of finance. However, some deeper and longer-term principal-agent contracts (management and service contracts, franchise and concession) give more responsibility, discretion and autonomy of action to the agent.
2. Mutual contracts or agreements or MoUs where parties take on separate tasks, probably funded by their own sources and where each expects to benefit from the other's contribution. These may be based on legal or relational contracts or agreements.

3. The term ‘relational contracts’ is used to describe unwritten understandings about obligations, built on trust, and sustained by the wish to preserve future relationships. They are likely not to depend on formal institutions for enforcement. Note that relational contracts or agreements can also be present when more formal contracts or MoUs are in operation.

These categories may overlap or a particular relationship between government and NGO(s) may have a number of different types of contracts or loose agreements.

The relationships in each of the three cases are long term and important. It is therefore surprising that there has not been more use of principal-agent contracts or MoUs to define the respective roles and expectations .

More recently, UST in Pakistan and Shelter in India are making greater use of MoUs with government and with the funding INGO (in the case of UST). It would appear that they are more confident about entering into such agreements now that they have established good working relations with government, where each party is aware the comparative advantage of the other. *[i.e. it is a vertical or subordinated contract but with an important relational element. I think that is important] I'm not sure, as I have yet to see the Sangli contract and the WaterAid MoU is still a bit woolly. But i will look into it further with Padmaja etc.*

While OPP in Pakistan has used MoUs with government in the past, it now prefers not to be confined by such agreements, which may become out of date and less relevant, and prefers the flexibility of more informal ‘relational contracts’.

OPP emphasises the importance of achieving results with the minimum of input. As an OPP RTI representative explained, ‘you have to remember that our annual running costs are quite low.’ OPP has been building reserves and its management claims to have reserves that can help it last 10 years. For an organization of OPP-RTI's scale, the annual budget of Rs.60 hundred thousand per annum reflects its low-cost policy. The model is such that the government and the community are expected to contribute the financial resources; OPP provides the technical expertise.

The running cost of OPP comes from its seed money and some selected donors who do not interfere in OPP's methods significantly. In the first instance, OPP does not take money from any donors preferring to work with like minded INGOs. It is not therefore accountable to or dependent upon government for funding. As the government agencies value OPP's contributions, their relationship ~~is~~ can be described as a longer term horizontal partnership type arrangement. Their relationships also have co-production aspects because of their working closely with the community.

In Bangladesh UST is governed by the MoU with their funder Water Aid Bangladesh (WAB). The first agreement or MoU between them was quite vague. More recently WAB wants its partner NGOs to buy into the policies and targets of the GoB. A new MoU between UST and WAB appears very comprehensive and goal-directed and to reflect the mechanism through which WAB wants to engage with UST. The agreement mentions several policies, strategies and guidelines of the government of Bangladesh (GoB) and UST agrees to work in line with these policies.

In addition, there has been growing confidence in the success of the collaboration between UST and local government in Bangladesh. Recently an MoU has been signed between the Chairman of the two UPs (upazilla parishads) and UST. The MoU, which has been endorsed by WAB and the upazilla parishad, delineates the specific roles, responsibilities and accountability of the UP. This is an agreement between three parties where the NGO is acting as the facilitator and collaborator with local government (i.e. UP and upazilla parishad) with support from INGOs. However, some government staff are still resistant to working collaboratively with INGOs.

In Sangli, Shelter has been funded by a number of donors that were willing to go along with Shelter's own methodologies. But by having a number of relatively small donor funded programmes, Shelter has lacked the funds and interest to scale up their work in a substantial way. Perhaps it is better for NGOs to operate in a more focused way within their capacities rather than over-stretching themselves.

For most of their work in Sangli, Shelter has not had a financial relationship with the municipal corporation. But in the fourth phase of the programme, the municipal corporation is contributing to capital costs and it has specific roles on the project as defined in their joint MoU/contract. There have been some tensions reported when SMKMC was late in reimbursing its agreed share of the construction costs. Cost sharing no doubt increases tensions in NGO-government relationships and raises issues of who is accountable to whom.

More formal MoUs are replacing informal arrangements, at least in the Bangladesh and India cases, as the parties develop shared and larger scale commitments. Such agreements are between NGOs or between local government and NGOs. They represent more comprehensive and output based relationships, but open up the prospect of increasing tensions if money transfers are involved

6. Evolution of NGO – government relations

Figures 1 to 3 in appendix 2 summarise the evolution of NGO-government relations over a number of years in each case. The figures highlight how the parties relate to each other and how this has changed over time. They also show key NGO outputs and achievements that have built NGO credibility and positively influenced the relationships. In all three cases there was tension and contention about the means and ends of public action, but considerably less than one would have been expected to find say 10 to 20 years ago.

It would seem that when government become familiar with NGO technical competence and comparative advantage, e.g. in computer based community mapping, community mobilisation and sanitation promotion, government is much more willing to co-operate with such NGOs.

The importance of building relations with officials at different levels within the concerned government offices, rather than just the top officials, was evident in all three cases. This has been critical as people in lower government ranks are the ones who implement the policies and, if they are not convinced of an idea, can create many hurdles. Such government staff would also typically want to be convinced that they won't lose out personally.

In Bangladesh the National Sanitation Strategy (NSS 2005), the roles of NGOs, local government institutions and other stakeholders have been clearly stated. Indeed the NSS provides the policy framework for the involvement of NGOs in the sanitation programme. NGOs such as UST are funded by the DFID funded ASEH project that is led by Water Aid. The project document developed with NGOs specifically includes key government policies that the partner NGOs will follow.

In Pakistan OPP, which originally opposed the government approaches to sanitation programmes because of their high costs, now works closely with government agencies. In 2005, Karachi Water and Sewerage Board, which for a long time was a strong supporter of mega projects and foreign loans has also started to support OPP-RTI's low cost model. Parveen Rehman, Director of OPP adds: 'We are now making a water plan with Karachi Water and Sewerage Board. It is a water supply plan to the city. We will put it to the government, politicians, and NGOs. For every issue we try to provide a situation analysis, list the issues, and provide solutions.'

In 2007, OPP's relationship with the government is very strong. In recent years, the partnership has expanded from Orangi town to Karachi city level where OPP-RTI is working with the city government to develop plans for water drainage around natural 'nalas'. There is evidence of close collaboration with the officials with the city government as well as the Karachi Water and Sewage Board. Also, the partnership involves working with the entire tier of government officials within the organisation starting from the Executive Officer to fieldworker level. OPP's in-depth knowledge of communities is an important factor.

In the early years of OPP RTI some members of their team took a more adversarial advocacy approach, criticizing government and donors about their approaches and high cost of government/donor programmes. 'In recent years the leadership of OPP have been keen to gain credibility and influence with government, but they do not openly criticize government, which would diminish their influence and potential impact.' Government officials were very positive about OPP and their relationship.

In Sangli (India), concrete and tangible NGO interventions immediately followed surveys that provided a visual picture of the situation, helped in taking the projects and the relationship forward. A significant factor appears to have been Shelter's approach of demonstrating its concepts and taking Sangli Municipal Corporation (SMKMC) through the processes. By gradually increasing its share of the project cost, besides its non-monetary support, a process of transfer of ideas is clearly visible. In fact, SMKMC's role became more pronounced over the fourth phase: besides granting the necessary clearance and approvals, resolving disputes at the community level and providing overall oversight and budgetary contributions.

The current commissioner of SMKMC is apparently now also willing to pay the full cost of construction in Shelter's programmes. He also has a clear target of a 100% open defecation free Sangli, with clear alignment of agendas with Shelter. This is also evident from the recent development of a joint MoU/contract between Shelter, Shiv Sadan (a construction based NGO) and SMKMC, which sets out their respective roles for future work, including SMKMC's supervisory role on construction.

Shelter (India) has demonstrated apparently beneficial influence over the work of the municipal corporation in terms of aspects such as:

- a. involvement of the community and CBOs,
- b. provision of good quality individual toilets and sewers in low income areas,
- c. collaborative government-NGO working on sanitation promotion and implementation.
- d. land-use planning in informal settlements using GIS mapping
- e. local government sanitation policy development and programme design.

OPP-RTI has demonstrated similar influence in Karachi, but on a larger scale and over a longer period with both municipal government and the water and sewerage board.

UST in Bangladesh has demonstrated positive influence and collaborative working with local government at the Upazilla level in terms of similar aspects to Shelter (a to c) in the above list. But the real substantive influence over government in the Bangladesh Total Sanitation programme, is in national and local government's adoption of an NGO developed community based total sanitation approach, that is included in the national sanitation strategy and targets. A network of NGOs (Water Aid Bangladesh, VERC, NGO forum, UST and many more) have contributed to this influence over government, that appears to be ongoing, despite the normal contention about the roles and work of NGOs, by some government staff.

A number of further preliminary findings have emerged from or been confirmed by the research including:

- a) Successful NGO outputs in the field build trust and credibility with local government, which has led to more comprehensive and effective relationships.
- b) NGOs and donors have had some significant influence on government policy (if not always fully acknowledged) both at the national and local level.
- c) Government leadership and support at central and local level is important for effective government-NGO collaboration in sanitation programmes. The same applies to NGO leadership.
- d) Effective collaboration between the NGO and senior government officials is made easier because of social networks. Informal communication both between government staff and between NGO and government staff, enable programmes to develop and continue, even when key staff are transferred. However, if a key local government staff member, such as commissioner, is not sympathetic, then the programmes and relationships are likely to diminish.
- e) Extensive collaboration between the NGO and local government has occurred at the various stages of the sanitation programme cycle in Bangladesh, but less so in Sangli. However, now that Shelter Associates have signed a formal agreement with local government, a more formal project cycle can be expected. OPP-RTI provide strategic advice to government during key stages of programmes.

7. Emerging conclusions

Common patterns are emerging from the development of the relationship in each of the sanitation cases, but also elsewhere, such as in SPARC's work in Mumbai with the municipal government on community toilet blocks. Table 1 suggests that the development of long term NGO – Government relations for community sanitation have four main phases each with typical characteristics.

Table 1 - Phases in long term NGO – Government relations for community sanitation

The Main Phases	Typical Characteristics
1. Separate working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited NGO access to key government staff - NGOs and government agencies each do their own separate programmes - Some limited consultations with government for permissions and agreeing where to work. - Some rivalry over purpose and processes, or alternatively disinterest in each others perspectives and methods.
2. Exploration phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initial NGO achievements noticed by some staff in local government - Awareness about the comparative advantage of the other party amongst some key staff. - Exploring options for collaboration and working together e.g. effective community mapping (which is often a key factor) and joint projects etc - Reservations about NGO/government amongst some staff - Carefully structured consultations leading to relational contracts - Tensions or concerns about the roles of other parties evident amongst some people.
3. Shared agendas and joint working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More open and frequent communications - Relational contracts or mutual agreements emerge - Detailed joint planning and implementation - NGO providing strategic advice to government agencies - Collaboration with senior government staff and policy dialogue - Both NGOs and local government taking credit for achievements - Tensions or concerns about the roles of other parties evident amongst some people.
4. Consolidation and scaling up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More comprehensive MoUs or written contracts being considered - Developing joint coverage/access targets - Sustained and higher level policy dialogue - Developing larger scale programmes or supporting replications - Tensions or concerns about the roles of other parties evident amongst some people.

Note that the phases shown in Table 1 may vary particularly when a successful approach is being replicated. In this case, there may be less time spent in phases 1 and 2, with more emphasis on phase 3. For example, in the Bangladesh case, UST's work is a replication of earlier work done by VERC and WaterAid. UST is part of a wider NGO network working with government and donors on achieving the government targets on open-defecation free villages. The NGO Forum and WAB undertake much of the policy advocacy work on behalf of NGOs such as UST.

Enabling factors for effective longer term NGO – government relations

The following factors appear to enable more effective NGO – government relations in sanitation, including proceeding to phase 3 (shared agendas and joint working) and phase 4 (consolidation, scaling up and replications), as shown in Table 1.

- Increasing levels of achievement and visibility by the NGO(s) need to be apparent to local government, if the relationship is to develop.
- Supportive government policies include NGO involvement.
- NGOs seen as primarily working for the betterment of the poor.
- Effective leadership in both the NGO and government departments based on similar agendas.
- Less anti-government advocacy work by NGOs; NGOs seeking to influence government administrations make a point of being non-political.
- NGO technical competence and comparative advantage, e.g. in computer based community mapping and sanitation promotion are key to winning government co-operation. Innovation is key.
- Well-structured relationship management – dealing with sensitive issues such as the involvement of politicians.
- More open access to key decision makers in government.
- Effective relational contracts are needed wherever there is regular NGO-government engagement.
- Diplomatic policy dialogue with government, building relations with officials at different layers within the government, rather than just the top officials.
- The importance of both NGOs and government giving as well as taking credit when achievements are apparent.

Annex 1 – Key Research Project Documents up to January 2008

1. Working papers

S.M. Nurul Alam:

- Bangladesh Country Review: History of State-NSP relations, February 2007
- Identification of Programmes for Study in Bangladesh, February 2007
- Case studies on Unnayyan Shahjogy Team (sanitation), 2007 and February 2008

Masooda Bano:

- Pakistan Country Review: History of State-NSP relations, February 2007
- Identification of Programmes for Study in Pakistan: Initial Notes and Methodology, February 2007
- Case studies on the Orangi Pilot Project (sanitation), and comparative report

Padmaja Nair:

- Scoping Study of Relationships between the State and the Non-Governmental Sector in India, July 2006
- Historical Analysis of Relationships between the State and the Non-Governmental Sector in India, February 2007
- Identification of Programmes for Study in India, February 2007
- Case studies on Shelter Associates (sanitation),)

Kelly Teamey

- Literature Review on Relationships between Government and Non-state Providers of Services, June 2007

Richard Batley

- Contract research ToRs for stage 1 to 5 and guides (2005-07)
- Workshop notes (2005-07)
- The Research Approach, workshop paper, January 2008

3. User-oriented briefing papers

Briefing Papers commissioned by DFID on non-state providers in

- Sansom, sanitation services, May 2006
- Palmer, health services, June 2006,
- Rose, basic education, September 2006.

The ‘Whose Public Action?’ ESRC/NGPA papers are published at

<http://www.idd.bham.ac.uk/service-providers/nonstateprovidersESRC.htm>

Further research papers on non-state service delivery are published at

<http://www.idd.bham.ac.uk/service-providers/nonstateprovidersDFID.htm>

Papers from concurrent research funded by DFID on faith-based service providers are published at

<http://www.idd.bham.ac.uk/service-providers/faithbasedprovidersDFID.htm>

Appendix 2 – Figures 1 to 3 – Evolving NGO – local government relationships in the sanitation sector

Figure 1 – Sangli Sanitation Case: An Evolving NGO – Municipal Government Relationship

Characteristics of the relationship

USAID project:
opening minds up to
reforms and working
with NGOs

Delays before NGO-
local government meetings

Frequent mobile phone
contact with municipal staff
and local politicians

Policy dialogue

Cost sharing

Tripartite MoUs for new work

Requests for more collaboration

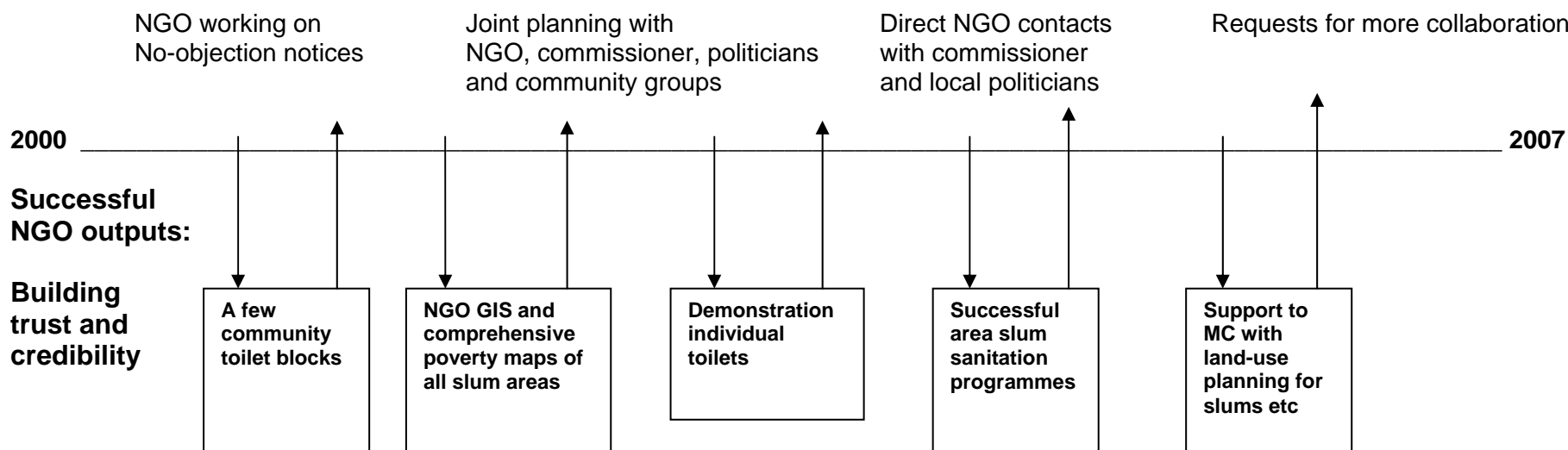


Figure 2 – Sanitation UST’s Case: An Evolving NGO-LGI-GO Relations

Features of relationship

Up to 2003

NGO more reliant on GUP project working with women – not involving Local Govt
 More simple types of agreements
 Limited collaboration with local govt up to 2003
 Water Aid (WAB’s) strategic involvement in advocacy and lobbying

After 2003

Frequent NGO contact with WAB
 Regular contact, liaison & joint working with local officials i.e. UNO
 UP (local govt) in the “driving seat”
 Participation in NSS 2005 formulation (through NGO Forum)
 Recognition of NGO’s role in national sanitation strategy 2005
 More comprehensive partnership agreements
 Good NGO access to Ministry (i.e. DS) both formal & informal

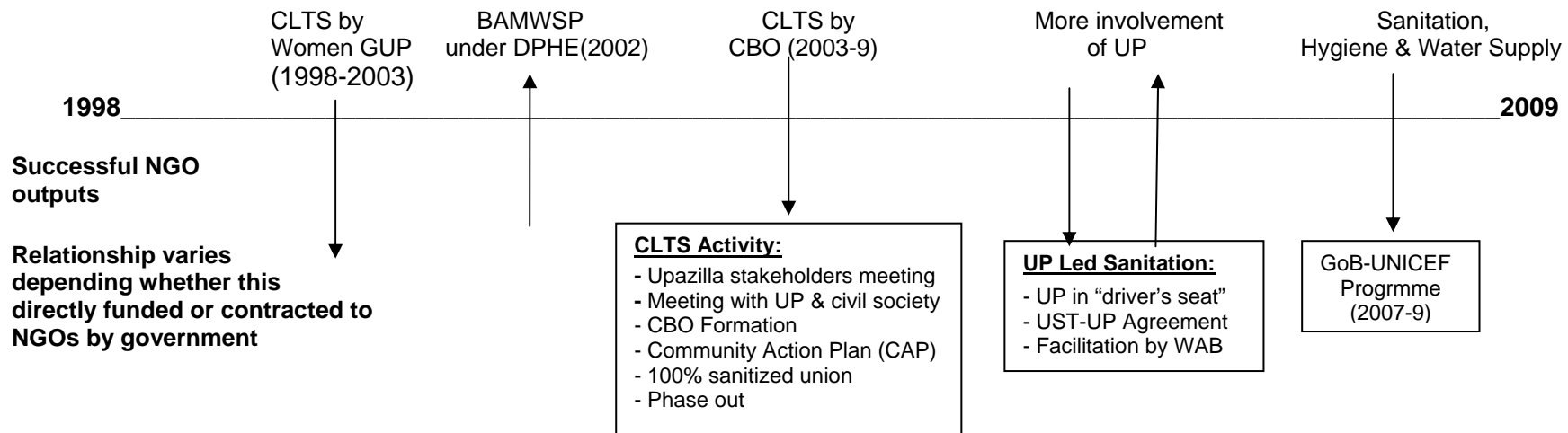


Figure 3 - Evolution of Relationship: OPP and local government in Karachi

