



WATER OPERATORS' PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN

Belize Water Services

(BWS) – Belize

Contra Costa Water District

(CCWD) – California, USA

TARGETED IMPROVEMENTS ON

Safety | Operations | Customer Services | Engineering | Finance

MENTEE

MENTOR

Belize Water Services Limited

BWS — Belize

National urban water and sanitation utility

Contra Costa Water District

CCWD — California, USA

Public urban water district

GENERAL DATA (2015)

55 710

WATER CONNECTIONS

(Length of water network: 1 400 km)



61 330

WATER CONNECTIONS

(Length of water network: 1 298 km)

24 %

NON-REVENUE WATER



6.7 %

NON-REVENUE WATER



262

EMPLOYEES

(Staff per 1000 connections: 4.7)



188

EMPLOYEES

(Staff per 1000 connections: 3.1)

MOTIVATIONS

Build staff capacity to increase operational efficiency

Adopt good practices to strengthen organizational capacity

Increase staff motivation and commitment

Increase motivation and develop professional staff

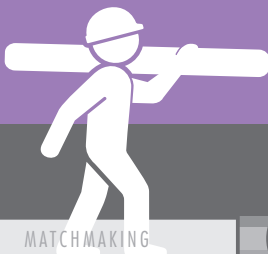
Exercise social responsibility

Improve public visibility and broaden international networks

SUPPORTING THIRD PARTY

The Inter-American Development Bank and GWOPA/UN-Habitat, through the WOP-LAC regional platform: facilitation, formalization and guidance of the WOP. 1st phase funded by the WOP-LAC platform; 2nd phase funded by the Public-Private Infrastructure Advisory Facility and GWOPA.

TIMELINE



2009
-2010

MATCHMAKING

2010

Staff from the operators meet at two workshops (2009 and 2010)

September
1st MoU signed between BWS and CCWD

November 2010
Planning visit in Belize

March 2011
BWS managers to CCWD to draft work plan

July 2011
BWS staff to CCWD to decide implementation strategies

FORMATION

2012
-2015

IMPLEMENTATION

2010
-2011

IMPLEMENTATION

February 2012 CCWD to BWS for on-site training

July 2013 2nd MoU signed

March 2014 BWS to CCWD for job-shadowing

March 2015 CCWD to BWS for follow-up training and recommendations

August
Final report submitted



BWS becomes a mentor with the support of CCWD

2015

FOLLOW-UP

2016

COST



PHASE 1 2010-2012

WOP-LAC (GWOPA AND IADB)

TRAVEL

US\$ 47,800

BWS

STAFF TIME & ADDITIONAL TRAVEL

US\$ 54,000 & US\$ 32,000

CCWD

STAFF TIME

US\$ 50,400

PHASE 2 2013-2015

PPIAF

TRAVEL

US\$ 37,600

GWOPA

TRAINING EXPENSES

US\$ 12,000

BWS

STAFF TIME & ADDITIONAL TRAVEL

US\$ 12,600 & US\$ 21,800

CCWD

STAFF TIME

US\$ 29,400

APPROACH



Two consecutive phases with different funding and under separate agreements.

Phase 1: identify improvement tracks, create action plan and initiate work.

Phase 2: continue work on action plan and incorporate further action to sustain progress. Classroom training, job-shadowing, information sharing and on-the-job guidance approaches used.

IMPROVEMENT TRACKS



Safety

- 🎯 **Improved worker safety:** Health and safety corporate culture changed (e.g. use of safety gear, safety committee); Working days lost to incidents reduced by 75 % and US\$ 350,000 earmarked to purchase new safety gear

Operations

- 🎯 **Operator Certification Program:** 119 employees enrolled in Sacramento State University program, 215 courses; Staff motivation and career opportunities improved
- 🎯 **Water meter:** Service life of meters extended from 5 to 10 years on average; Contributed to NRW reduction from 34% to 24% since 2009; Improved revenues and reduced meter replacement costs by US\$ 3M
- 🎯 **Leak detection:** Adoption by BWS of techniques and detection tools used at CCWD, increasing average system pressure countrywide by 12% between 2010 to 2016

Customer Services

- 🎯 **Call center:** New phone system purchased and in use; More efficient management of users calls and shorter response time for requests

Engineering

- 🎯 **SCADA system:** infrastructure developed and installed in all major systems internally, enabling BWS to save an estimated US\$400.000 (compared to outsourcing)

Finance

- 🎯 **Electronic payments and time sheets:** Monitoring and accountability of revenues streams more rigorous. Online payments increased by 15% between 2010 and 2015; Time saved by cashiers allowed BWS to outsource their collection agents to the Belizean Electricity company. Since 2014, BWS earned around US\$220.000 in commissions
- 🎯 **Purchasing and stores:** More efficient management of stocks and assets, e.g. vehicle tracking system saved around US\$60.000 in fuel expenses. Increased vehicle efficiency by 14% and 7% reduction in maintenance

CHALLENGES



Need for guiding tools: Despite support in the creation of the partnership, readily available tools could have supported the implementation of activities

Exhausting visit schedule: Greater use of distance communication tools could have reduced the work load during visits

Hindering contextual factors: The Belizean context posed challenges to the implementation of certain recommendations, namely the nonexistence of regulatory framework for safety and the difficulty of purchasing specific equipment in Belize

SUCCESS FACTORS



Alignment with strategic planning: Initial analysis of needs aligned WOP activities with ongoing operational interventions and priorities of the mentee, creating greater management and political buy-in

Mentee's ambition to become regional leader: BWS aptly used the WOP to fulfil its vision of becoming a leading regional utility and mentor

Cost-effectiveness: the gain in efficiency enabled BWS to save money, beyond the staff time invested. CCWD also considers the approach cost-effective in terms of staff development and motivation

WHAT THEY SAID



"The WOP struck me as a very cost-effective way of delivering technical assistance, compared with the alternative of having consultants."

Stephen Gaull, Senior Operations Advisor, on staff detail to USWP from Millennium Challenge Corporation

"We want to become the leading water and sanitation provider in our region and no doubt, the twinning boosted us to head in the right direction."

Rashida Castillo, Chief Financial Officer at BWS

"You can learn things fast without reinventing the wheel from scratch in these types of partnership."

Sanjay Keshwani, Technical Services Manager at BWS

"It was more than mentoring, we learnt a lot. It allowed us to re-examine our management style and ways to retain good employees."

Gayle Ross, Chemist-Microbiologist at CCWD



UNESCO-IHE
Institute for Water Education

WATER OPERATORS' PARTNERSHIPS

WOPs are peer-support arrangements between two or more water and sanitation operators, carried out on a not-for-profit basis with the objective of strengthening operator capacity.

BEWOP

Boosting the Effectiveness of Water Operators' Partnerships (BEWOP) is a 5-year research, operational support and outreach initiative aimed at boosting the effectiveness of Water Operators' Partnerships around the world.

Launched in September 2013, BEWOP is a collaboration between leading water sector capacity development institute, UNESCO-IHE, and UN-Habitat's Global Water Operators' Partnership Alliance, the organization leading the global WOPs movement.

This project has been made possible by the support of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DGIS).

This factsheet is part of a series summarizing WOPs cases being studied in order to draw lessons and guide better practice.

FIND OUT MORE

BEWOP.org | [#BEWOP](https://twitter.com/BEWOP)

GWOPA.org



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Netherlands