

REVISED FRAMEWORK FOR IMPROVED MONITORING OF POTABLE WATER SERVICES IN BURKINA FASO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Globally, safe drinking water is one of the foundations for the prevention of waterborne diseases such as diarrhea, cholera and typhoid. However, sustainable access to safe drinking water in rural areas remains a challenge in Africa. Rural Burkina Faso is no exception to this trend as shown by the low rate of access to clean water at 58.5% in the rural areas. This situation persists despite the government reforms of the regulatory system to improve the water services. The reforms specifies the responsibilities of the drinking water service providers (municipalities). Further, the reforms introduced the operational framework for the managements of the water points at the village level through the water users associations (WUA). In Burkina Faso, the USAID WA-WASH Program through its partner IRC supported the Ministry of Water Resources of Burkina Faso to revise and pilot the monitoring of the drinking water framework in rural and peri-urban areas. This activity contributes to the primary goal of the Program of increasing sustainable access to safe water and sanitation in West Africa.

In 2007, the General Directorate of Water Resources (DGRE in French) developed a framework for monitoring the national water and sanitation program (PN-AEPA in French) at the national level. However, the framework does not effectively monitor the performance of public drinking water services in rural and peri-urban areas. This is partly because there are no local monitoring mechanisms within the framework despite the decentralized role of the municipalities to provide and monitor the drinking water services. Consequently, the national water and sanitation program was reviewed in 2013 by the USAID WA_WASH Program through IRC to provide input and changes that should be made to take into account the lack of a monitoring mechanism. One of the recommendations based on the findings of the review was to revise the national framework for monitoring and evaluation of public water services in order to enhance the sustainability of the drinking water services.

The overall objective of the revised monitoring framework is to periodically monitor the performance of the public drinking water services in the municipalities. The specific objectives are: (1) to specify the roles and responsibilities of the actors such as the central government, the municipalities, the water users associations, and other service providers; (2) to strengthen the skills of the municipalities' WASH committee and technicians; (3) to reduce the costs of monitoring and evaluation by using the existing structures of the municipality to monitor the performance of the water services; and (4) to improve water service delivery by having public authorities and water service providers use the performance monitoring information.

According to the revised monitoring framework, monitoring information is collected at the municipal level as opposed to the regional level. Monitoring indicators are simplified for ease of water service monitoring. Data is collected by the water users associations (WUAs) and at the municipality level. The data collection mechanism is based on the principles of appropriation of monitoring and evaluation by the actors in charge of the management of the water services. In addition, the resources mobilized by the actors (user fees) should cover the cost of monitoring and evaluation.

The revised framework defines five activities during which the data on water services management is collected. The activities include: (1) annual regional review by municipalities; (2) quarterly meetings between WUAs and the municipalities; (3) quarterly meetings between the WUA executive board and hand-pump managers; (4) monthly meetings between the municipal engineer and technicians; and (5) semi-annual follow-up mission reports on water points. The annual regional review of public drinking water is led by the regional directorate of water resources. The annual review aims to ensure that municipalities organize and manage public drinking water according to set regulations. The indicators measured during this meeting include the compliance with the management models of the respective water infrastructures, the price regulations of drinking water services, and the production of annual reports.

Quarterly meetings between WUAs and municipalities are set to discuss the issues arising from the WUA quarterly and annual meetings. The quarterly indicators measured include water tariffs at hand pumps, rehabilitation of hand pumps, compliance with the hand pump operating manuals, density of users at a water points, and the satisfaction of users in relation to water quantity, quality, prices, and WUAs governance. The monthly meetings between the municipal engineer and technicians aim to gather information from the maintenance personnel on the number of breakdowns at the water points. The goal of the monthly meeting is to minimize the risk of data loss due to the lack of documentation. The monthly indicators measured include the frequency of breakdowns at each water point, the average duration of a breakdown and payment of the technicians by the municipality.

The quarterly meeting between the WUA's executive board and the water point manager aims to discuss the management of the water point particularly the issue of revenue and expenditures. It involves an audit of the financial records against the costs incurred to maintain the water point. The meeting also discusses the changes observed in the physical state of water and water-related conflicts. This information is included in a data collection sheet that is made available to the municipality. The general meetings of the WUAs are organized every six months to review the management of the water points. The general meetings offers an opportunity for the water point users to express their opinion on the water services. The municipal technician collects the data, compiles, analyzes, and presents the results to the municipality.

At the level of the municipality, a database is designed to store and manage the data collected throughout the year. The database is updated at the end of each monitoring activity. The results of the monitoring and evaluation support decision making at all levels. At the level of the WUA, the information is used to plan for the maintenance of the water points. The monthly meeting between the executive board of WUA and the water point managers compares different hand pumps in a village in terms of collection of user fees, frequency, and cost of breakdowns. The general meeting is an opportunity for the WUA to share best practices and determine areas for improvement as informed by the user satisfaction survey. The monitoring and evaluation of water services provides the information needed to develop planning documents such as an action plan and a budget. The monitoring data available in all the municipalities is relayed to the regional level and consequently to the national level to evaluate and inform the implementation of the national water and sanitation program.

The Program piloted the revised framework in two municipalities of Arbinda and Gorgadji in the Sahel region. This pilot enabled the Program, the Regional Directorate of Water Resources, and other stakeholders to assess the technical and financial feasibility of the framework in the municipalities. The pilot results confirmed the suitability of the revised framework to monitor water services with existing capacities and resources. This underscores the scaling-up of the revised framework in other municipalities to support improved water service delivery throughout the country.

The full monitoring framework report is available (in French) upon request via our website. For more details about our program activities and other reports please visit <http://wawash.fiu.edu/>.

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