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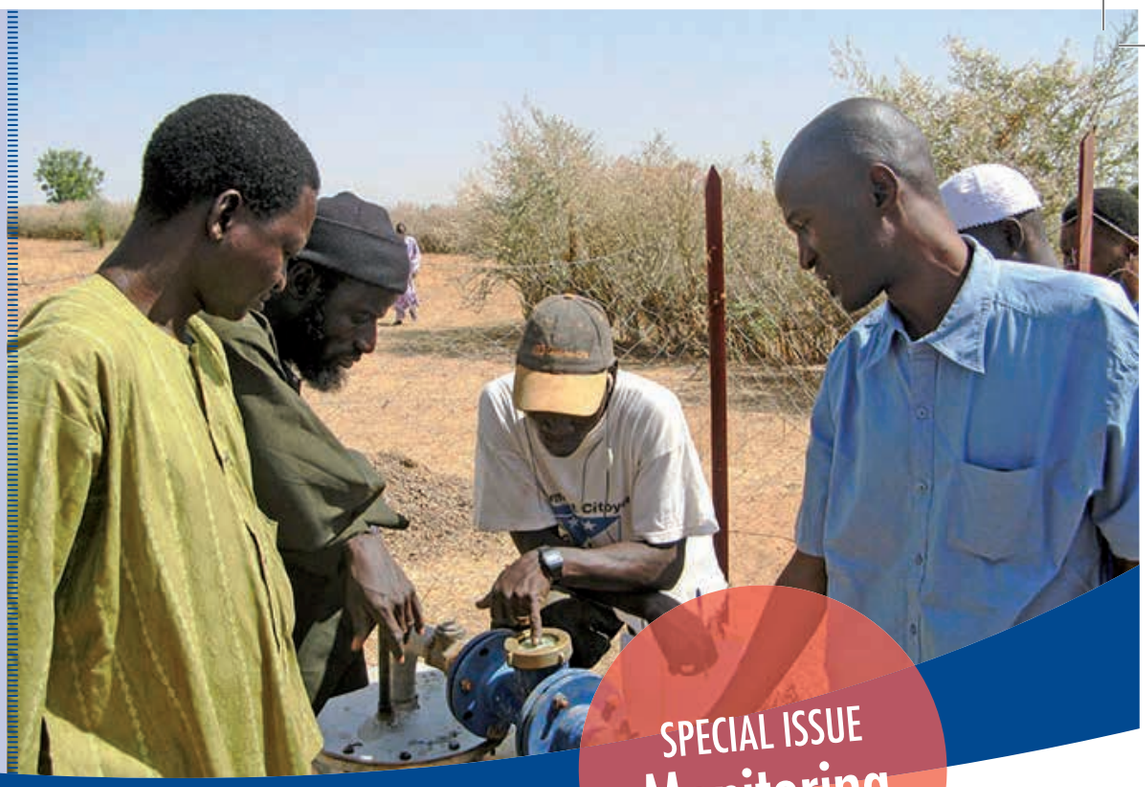

SPECIAL ISSUE
Monitoring

pS-Eau
programme
Solidarité-Eau

In this issue

Editorial

Supporting a realistic and shared post-2015 objective

This new year, 2014, is a time for finalizing achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Everyone has already started work on reviewing the MDGs and developing new, post-2015 objectives. To ensure that access to water and sanitation for all becomes a reality, it is essential that a water specific post-2015 objective is defined.

Although the General Assembly of the United Nations has recognized access to water and sanitation as a human right, we need to ensure that the aggregation of figures and use of approximate definitions do not give the impression that everyone around the world can now drink safe water and will very soon have toilets.

In this quest to recognize access to water as a worldwide objective, tools to assess, monitor and improve services are vital. Decision-makers need to change and improve the way in which they assess the progress made in providing access to services, using more precise and qualified indicators and thus also more sophisticated assessment (i.e. monitoring) systems.

Monitoring can take several forms: monitoring investment costs; monitoring operating costs; monitoring user satisfaction; monitoring the institutional and political environment; monitoring the funds allocated to the sector; monitoring user behavior, etc. We want to focus on these monitoring systems and would like to invite you to a pan-African seminar on monitoring that we are organizing with IRC and which is being held on 7 to 9 April in Burkina Faso.

As pS-Eau celebrates its 30th anniversary, René Ala, the management board and the whole pS-Eau team wish you an excellent and happy 2014. ●

Pierre-Marie Grondin

Contents

Association News

pS-Eau has a new look!

pS-Eau is 30 this year! To celebrate, and continue raising the profile of access to water and sanitation around the world, pS-Eau now has a new graphic design.

Coherent changes

We have not made any radical changes, but we have updated our pS-Eau image and harmonized our visual identity across all communication platforms, adding a new wave shape and using an 'illustration' design, along with bright colors and friendly emails. We also have a new logo; it is still round and still blue, but it now includes the new wave shape and has a new typographic design.

You will have noticed that the pS-Eau Newsletter is now available in color and has an updated layout. The network-related information (authors' contact details, website addresses of the organizations cited, etc.) is also more prominently displayed.

We hope you like our new look! If so, please let us know via our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/pseau

Monitoring, an indispensable tool

You can't manage what you can't measure!

Monitoring is a concept that can be applied to a variety of different areas. An indication that the sector is undergoing rapid development, monitoring has taken centre stage in discussions about water and sanitation over the last few years.

Monitoring has been on pS-Eau's agenda for several years now. In 2011, in collaboration with Acqua-Oing and with support from Gret, AFD, the Seine-Normandy water agency and Sedif, we set up and facilitated a discussion platform (www.reseaux-aep.org) on water service monitoring in small towns, which led to the development of a monitoring guide (see the review on p.16).

At the World Water Forum in Marseille in March 2013, we worked with AFD to organize a session on the different monitoring mechanisms in use around the world. This year, we are working with IRC to hold a seminar on monitoring local water and sanitation services in rural areas and small towns in Africa (see the box on the following page).

Monitoring involves collecting either qualitative or quantitative data, analyzing this and using the results obtained as a basis for decision-making and determining the type of action to be taken. In order to operate a water system, there is a minimum amount of (regularly updated) information required, whether this relate to the location of a leak on the distribution network or notification of a broken down handpump. Following the adage "you can't manage what you can't measure", monitoring is nothing new.

What is new, however, is the increase in monitoring requirements (greater precision, customization and speed) and the emergence of a new generation of digital monitoring tools: nowadays, when taking meter readings, in addition to noting these down on paper (to be logged into the computer later), some water network operators also have the option of entering the data into a cell phone (which transfers the information almost instantly to a computer server).

The need for more effective measurement tools

Monitoring is now considered far more important than it was just a few years ago. There are many reasons for this. Firstly, there is the issue of accountability, which is of key concern to governments and donors alike. In order to report on the utilization of funds allocated to development projects, there need to be high quality monitoring indicators and, thus, a robust monitoring system in place. Other possible reasons include the discussions currently underway to define the post-2015 indicators to follow on from the Millennium Development Goals, as well as to ensure access to water and sanitation, which was established as a human right in 2010. These are all

developments that require the sector's decision-makers to assess the progress made to provide access to services in a different way. Current discussions suggest that the new indicators will more qualified and precise, which means more sophisticated measurement (and thus monitoring) systems will be required.

Finally, the fact that the internet and telephony revolution is considerably speeding up the flow, and increasing the volume, of information, means our existing monitoring and control mechanisms need to be revised.

Unprecedented focus is now being placed on implementing and systematically using monitoring to manage and develop water and sanitation services. This is a significant opportunity, but one which has certain requirements attached. Specific skills and resources are required to use a monitoring system and these are not always in place. Furthermore, the institutional and strategic environments are sometimes ill-prepared to incorporate such monitoring approaches.

Initiatives in this area therefore require the utmost care: these are tools used to aid service management; thus, when implementing these, it is important to bear in mind the fact that local stakeholders and decision-makers need to take ownership of the monitoring tools put in place. ●

Service Monitoring Seminar
Ouagadougou, 7 - 9 April 2014

Monitoring local water and sanitation services in rural areas and small towns in Africa

Organized by pS-Eau and the IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, in partnership with ECOWAS, the aim of this seminar is to share and discuss the latest thinking on monitoring water and sanitation services at the municipality level.

Designed to act as a discussion platform, this seminar is for local decision-makers, sector professionals and specialists, at both the strategic and operational level.

This event will focus on the practical aspects of implementing a water and sanitation service monitoring system at the local level.

INFO

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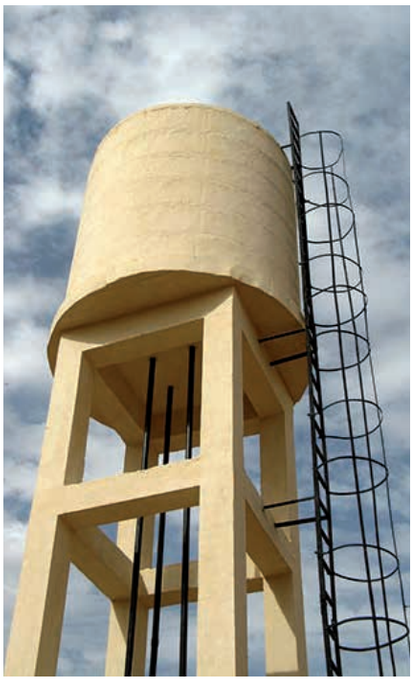
- www.pseau.org/ouaga2014
- www.fr.irc.nl/page/82346



Small-piped water schemes in West Africa

Sharing monitoring costs to improve cost-effectiveness

In Francophone Africa, small towns (of between 20,000 and 50,000 inhabitants) do not have the skills and experience of a national water distribution company. However, the challenges they face are the same: ensuring the smooth running and sustainability of equipment; maintaining the service's financial stability; respecting the need for transparency; meeting social and environmental requirements.

Small towns in Africa have proven local water scheme management expertise available. Nevertheless, there are recurring weaknesses: the operator lacks the requisite skills (this is usually a private status company or association operating under a delegation contract); the contracting authority (usually the local authority) struggles to manage its delegated contractor effectively; there is insufficient cost recovery from some users; the contractual framework fails to include a sufficiently precise definition of each stakeholder's responsibilities; the service's financial accounts lack transparency, etc. Ultimately, water services in small towns are often fragile, which threatens their sustainability.
With a view to improving the quality and sustainability of water services, a number of countries have put robust monitoring mechanisms in place that involve:
– collecting service management-related technical, economic, financial, organizational, institutional, etc. data (once or twice a year);
– analyzing the network management performance using robust and objective criteria;
– and, lastly, presenting the findings of this analysis and accompanying recommendations.
These findings are presented to the users, the operator and the contracting authority. However, each of these stakeholders has specific and sometimes contradictory expectations.
To ensure impartiality, these three monitoring activities (data collection, analysis and presentation of findings) are usually assigned to an external service provider, either public or private, depending on the country.

A cost-saving factor

Extensive technical and financial expertise is required to monitor water services and it is also necessary to make regular monitoring trips to small towns located in sometimes highly remote areas. Monitoring thus costs money.

Service monitoring reduces the number and duration of supply interruptions.

In Mali, Chad and Niger, the three countries with the most sustainable mechanisms and which have been conducting water service monitoring the longest, this cost of between €0.03 and €0.09 per m^3, or between 5 and 10% of the cost of the service, is passed on to users through the water tariff.

The, initially additional, cost of monitoring almost always translates into a saving for users as regular service monitoring leads to a reduction in operating costs. Operators and communes, who consider monitoring to be of clear value, have been quick to see the advantages. To arrive at an acceptable cost for monitoring (less than 10% of the overall cost of the water service), a single provider is responsible for monitoring all the water schemes within a given area. This cost-sharing principle is one of the keys to ensuring financial viability of the monitoring service, regardless of how it is funded.

Water service monitoring has many benefits. The main advantage is that it helps reduce the number and duration of service interruptions.

The technical audit recommendations enable the delegated service managers to improve equipment care and maintenance; furthermore, in the event of a breakdown, the monitoring body can conduct a remote diagnostic and facilitate or expedite the delivery of spare parts.

Monitoring has the further advantage of being able to improve the financial stability of the water service, both by reducing operating costs and improving the collection rate of user charges. The monitoring of water services in small towns is a systematically profitable investment that saves more than it costs.

A capacity-building tool

In precarious rural areas, where local authorities have limited fiscal capacity, the water network is often the only production system that generates substantial financial resources. Small-piped networks' reserves for equipment renewal can soon become both highly coveted and the source of tension. In these situations, monitoring helps increase and secure reserves held in bank accounts, which often require a dual signature (from the contracting authority and delegated water service manager).

Monitoring is also a powerful tool for providing information on the water service: by presenting information to each stakeholder, it improves understanding of the water service and the challenges faced. In particular, as far as the users are concerned, it provides a regular reminder of the need to pay for water consumption at a fair price; it explains how money received from the users is subsequently used (to finance operating and renewal costs) and facilitates the acceptance of any price increases.

Monitoring can also empower the users both to voice their expectations for service improvements and, in conjunction with the contracting authority, impose penalties on the operator for any breakdowns or abusive practices.

Lastly, monitoring is a tool that assists with transparency and conflict resolution. Public reporting serves to remind each actor of their respective responsibilities and obligations and the resulting dialogue is based on indisputable performance indicators, helping to streamline and focus the inevitable debates.

Ultimately, in the structurally fragile environments of small towns, monitoring helps build the capacities of all water service stakeholders: the knowledge and skills of the service operator are progressively improved; the local authority's understanding of the performance indicators is enhanced, enabling them to detect service failures and impose sanctions; and those paying to use the service are more aware of the viability of the service they receive. ●

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S. Münzer

In the region of Kayes in Mali, the savings made in 2012 through use of a robust monitoring system amounted to 1 billion CFA Francs.

An overview of experiences from three countries in the Sahel

Monitoring small-piped water systems

A number of countries in sub-Saharan Africa have put monitoring mechanisms in place on small-piped water systems. These include Mali, Mauritania and Chad, each of which has adopted a specific approach.

Mali: increased professionalism within the sector

In Mali, under the terms of the national strategy, management of the water service is to be delegated to an operator (users' association or private operator) and technical and financial monitoring is to be conducted by an approved monitoring body. At the national level, this provision covers some 700 water schemes. The water schemes in the western region of Kayes are supported by the monitoring body Assistance aux Adductions d'Eau Potable (2AEP), whereas those across the rest of the country are supported by the Groupe de Conseil et de Suivi des AEP (GCS-AEP).

2AEP has been working in the region of Kayes since 2004, when it began monitoring 14 water systems constructed or rehabilitated by the state. Since then, there has been a significant and consistent increase in the number of other towns using their services. At the end of 2012, 2AEP was providing monitoring support to 69% of the region's water schemes, approximately 180 networks. In 2012, the savings made by these networks across the region amounted to 1 billion CFA Francs.

Discussions are currently underway to create a federation of water scheme operators and develop mutual assistance mechanisms for local financing of the sector.

The communes utilize the technical and financial monitoring reports as a consensual basis for setting the local water tax (these taxes are only raised on those water schemes that undergo technical and financial monitoring).

In communes that contain several water systems, presentation of the technical and financial monitoring reports is an opportunity to provide extensive information on the state of the service within the local area and generates great competition between operators.

In order to increase professionalism within the sector and expand the number of water schemes in place, 2AEP has developed an application to start computerizing water system management.

Entitled GINFO_AEP (gestion informatisée des adductions d'eau potable), this program is already being used in 25 of the region's towns. Discussions are underway with the National Directorate of Water to expand use of this program to other towns in the region and across the country.

Mauritania: promotion of the local private sector

The review of the regulatory framework that took place in Mauritania in 2005 led to

S. Münzer

In Mauritania, the delegated managers need to be made more accountable.

far-reaching changes in the water sector. Not only did it result in the public administration withdrawing from its operator role, the review also helped promote the local private sector through the outsourcing of public services. An independent regulatory body, Autorité de régulation (AR), is responsible for implementing the delegation procedures and assessing operator performance. Given the increase in the number of public services under delegated management, this authority has now set up a support tool in the form of an information management system.

This system, known as Observatoire des délégations, consists of two complementary tools: 1) an application called LAG (logiciel d'aide aux délégataires) to assist the delegated contractors with their commercial, technical and financial management of the services; and 2) SIDE, a delegated contractor monitoring program aimed at helping the regulatory authority to centralize all delegated public service management information. This decision-making tool has been designed to aid not only the regulatory authority, but also the contracting authority and delegated contractors. Its aim is to facilitate preparation of the regulatory authority's reports and build the contracting authorities' service monitoring capacities, at the same time as improving the information provided to users. Ultimately, this tool will enable the technical, financial and social quality of services to be assessed on a more objective basis and one which is recognized by all the stakeholders involved.

Using this information management system, the regulatory authority publishes an annual report on each of the services under delegated management that includes an overall review of the year and of the delegated contractor's performance. The reports' findings are then discussed at a meeting attended by the contracting authorities, their delegated operator and the users' associations. The latest report produced by the regulatory authority (with support from Gret) shows that, overall, the 13 services currently under delegated contracts are well-managed. This means that pricing and management rules, namely continuous service provision, are being respected; money is being collected from users and standpipe attendants; routine maintenance is being carried out on equipment and breakdowns are being repaired; money is being set aside for provisions, depreciation and amortization, etc.

The financial situation of these outsourced public services is mixed, however. Whilst break-even has been reached and operational equipment has been replaced, continuous fuel price rises mean the delegated contractors are struggling to manage energy costs and maintain water tariffs at the levels set out in their contracts. Their gross margins increased slightly in 2012. However, the net results were negative and measures need to be taken to make delegated contractors more accountable.

Chad: a successful initial experience

In 2010, Initiative Développement (ID), Sèves (a French NGO) and Agir (a Chad NGO) launched a project to develop public water services in the regions of southern Chad. In addition to building infrastructure (notably to extend the water networks), the aim of this project was also to implement a technical and financial monitoring system to ensure the sustainability of the service provided through the small-piped water schemes.

This monitoring system has had an extremely positive effect, leading to: a considerable increase in the reserves secured for equipment renewal; higher consumption and more users; better quality maintenance and an increase in the volume of water distributed through the networks. The initiative in Chad is also unique in that it has succeeded in raising finance from local operators to rehabilitate certain networks. ●

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An IRC initiative in Burkina Faso

Monitoring, a contract management tool for rural communities

Triple-S (Sustainable Sanitation at Scale) is an IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre initiative that seeks to promote sustainable approaches to water service delivery by focusing not only on the construction of equipment, but also on the provision of reliable and viable services.

In Burkina Faso, Triple-S is working with eight rural communities in the Sahel region to implement a local service monitoring mechanism.

Since 2000, there has been a new regulatory framework in place in Burkina Faso that covers the management of public water services in rural and semi-rural areas and is commonly referred to as 'La Réforme'.

Under this reform, the municipality has now become the contracting authority. It coordinates all activities at the local level and enters into contracts with service providers. It sets up delegated management agreements with water users' associations for boreholes equipped with handpumps.

In communities that have small-piped water systems, the mayor authorizes contracts with both the operators and the contractors in charge of handpump maintenance. The water users' associations sign operating protocols with the service managers. Designed to provide better services to users by making local stakeholders more accountable, this framework is struggling to prove its worth due a lack of monitoring and back-up support at the municipality level.

During the first phase of Triple-S, a diagnostic was carried out to assess the performance of the water services in the 8 communities covered: Mansila, Gorgadji, Titabé, Arbinda, Seytenga, Markoye, Tankougounadié and Dori. Research focused on:

- the performances of the bodies in charge of managing the water services: how the roles and responsibilities set out in the reform are being carried out;
- the quality of the service provided to users: the quantity and quality of water consumed, the accessibility and reliability of the facilities;
- the cost of service provision and effectiveness of the cost recovery mechanisms used.

Traditional water points are still being used

The diagnostic conducted by IRC in 2011 highlighted numerous shortcomings. From a sample of 210 water users' associations in the eight communities, only three met all the criteria for compliance with the regulations. Illiteracy was the most commonly failed criterion. The regulatory framework states that the key members of the water users' asso-

Water pump in the Bobo-Dioulasso region.

ciation executive board must be either educated or literate; however, in 163 water users' associations, this was not the case.
A study on service levels concluded that the overwhelming majority of the 3,000 users in the 24 villages of the eight communities received an inadequate water service.
Although nearly all the villages have water coverage of over 50%, the study found that the number of inhabitants receiving a service consistent with national standards ranges from between 0 and 2%.
The disparity between the quality of the service observed and the access rates cited in national statistics is mainly due to the fact that most villagers do not use the formal water points provided (continuing to use unimproved drinking water sources instead) and that the few people that do use the formal water points take only low volumes of water (less than 20 liters per person per day).
The communities' local authorities, who are responsible for ensuring the service management arrangements are delivered effectively, struggle to monitor all those involved. The water users' associations are the most affected by this. A prime example is that of the water users' association in the village of Gorgadji, where the entire management system is experiencing difficulties, resulting in a number of equipment breakdowns. The water users' associations are unable to carry out their role effectively and users have become frustrated … "According to the regulations, we are responsible for repairing the broken down pumps, but we don't have the resources. Four of our 17 boreholes are currently out of order and have been like that for many months", said Mariam Sawadogo, president of the water users' association in Gorgadji.

Adapt supply to demand

She went on: "People are supposed to pay a contribution when taking water from the borehole, but they don't always do this on a regular basis". In Gorgadji, water is sold by volume, as at standpipes in towns. Due to the multiple breakdowns, the volume of water sold is too low to generate the income required to carry out repairs.
Based on the findings of the IRC diagnostic, priority has been given to setting up a service monitoring mechanism at community level. None of the local authorities currently have a robust system in place for collecting information on water service performances or helping them make appropriate decisions in the event of problems. The only information available is that of the annual investment required to improve coverage. "The state is making an effort; it has made funding available to us to buy equipment, but its support doesn't include any monitoring and back-up support activities for those involved in implementation", said Mamadou Maïga, mayor of the commune of Arbinda.
Furthermore, the diagnostic revealed a mismatch between supply and demand. The service offer, which is highly standardized in rural areas, is very often poorly aligned to certain communities' lifestyles (seasonality, subsistence activities, irregular incomes, etc.). Only through regular monitoring will it be possible to progressively tailor the service offer to the population's needs. This is why Triple-S has committed to supporting the communities to put a monitoring mechanism in place for the water services within their area.
The second phase of the project will consist of piloting implementation of such a monitoring mechanism in two local authorities (Arbinda and Gorgadji). The regional directorate of water, hydraulic equipment and sanitation (DREAHA), the state department in charge of supporting local communes, will be involved in this pilot. DREAHA involvement will help ensure sustainability of the monitoring mechanism once the project has ended and enable the mechanism to be replicated in other communes in the region. At the same time, discussions will take place to improve understanding of the demand for water and how best to meet this demand. The findings and results of the whole project will be presented at the national level to promote inclusion of this approach in sector strategies. ●

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Telephony and Internet, is there a revolution on the way?

With 650 million SIM cards already in circulation and an annual growth rate of 30%, the development of mobile telephony in Africa demonstrates that the continent is adopting Information and Communications Technology (ICT) at a very rapid pace. These technologies, far from being restricted to private use, are also finding their way into a range of different sectors, including that of water and sanitation.

A number of countries have been piloting innovative approaches using ICT to support water and sanitation service development, all of which share common aims, namely to: collect more data to improve service monitoring and feed into the decision-making process; overcome logistical challenges; and open up a direct channel of communication with the population.

Facilitating user – operator relations

The main advantage of ICT is that it makes it possible for users to communicate directly with the operator running the service via their cell phones to make him aware of any problems (leaks, broken down handpumps, service interruptions, etc.) as soon as they occur.

Without anticipating the capacity of users to "report" on each problem identified, a number of initiatives have recently been implemented. In South Africa, Lungisa is a community monitoring project that enables people living in disadvantaged areas in Cape Town to report water, sanitation, education and health service delivery problems to the service managers concerned via SMS and social media, etc.

• www.lungisa.org

In Morocco, Lydec has developed a smartphone application through which users can not only report problems, but also pay their bills.

• blog.lydec.ma

A remote payment system, which is vital for improving water bill collection, has also been developed in Kenya.

Global positioning and mapping

Used almost systematically to identify priority intervention areas and plan investment, mapping is another promising area of ICT development. Using global positioning system data, it is possible to view and analyze a region, for example, to locate infrastructure, wastewater discharge sites and open defecation areas, etc. Mapping is being made easier by the wider availability and accessibility of software and of smartphones with built-in GPS.

In collaboration with Kenya, Tanzania has thus put a citizen monitoring and infrastructure mapping project in place. The initiative has led to the collection of data from 2,600 information points and the publication of a detailed map of the Tandale area in Dar es Salaam. The map contains the geospatial coordinates of the roads, water points, sold waste collection sites, schools, clinics, businesses and houses found within the region.

• tandale.ramanitanzania.org

Gwenael Prié

Sofoco public standpipe with prepaid magnetic card in DRC.

Public standpipes and digital meter readings

ICT is also being used in service delivery with numerous applications available to

Helena Goldon, World Bank-Water and Sanitation Program

Sanitation Hackathon in Dar Es Salaam (Tanzania), December 2012.

Hackathons for water and sanitation

A hackathon (a portmanteau of the words "hack" and "marathon") is an event in which computer developers get together for a short period (usually one to two days) to collaborate on the development of software programs to meet a specific need.

This original digital innovation initiative helps generate tailored and radically new tools and approaches, and also brings together users and computer programmers who would not ordinarily meet. There are a number of different water and sanitation sector-related hackathons held regularly around the world.

• www.sanitationhackathon.org

help operators optimize some of their activities. In Morocco (with support from Veolia) and Kinshasa (with support from Sofoco), public standpipes distribute water automatically when a magnetic card is inserted by the user.

• blog.lydec.ma

In Madagascar, SeeSaw provides an application that enables small private operators to record meter readings via smartphone, resulting in considerable time savings.

A further advantage of this application is that it stores all the digital records, making it possible to analyze performances over time and ensuring greater transparency of both activities and the results that will influence future investment decisions.

• greenseesaw.com

Studies are currently underway with operators in major cities. The International Water Association has thus launched a study to identify the needs of these operators and the added value that ICT can bring to bill collection, for instance, and recording volumetric meter readings.

Tablet-based surveys

More and more project teams are using smartphones and tablets to carry out their surveys.

There are a number of advantages to swapping paper forms for digital applications: the quality of responses recorded by 'typing' is improved and certain questions can be made mandatory; data can be transferred in real time, which prevents information getting lost, speeds up analysis and eliminates the risk of data entry errors. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, Gret and SeeSaw are currently administering questionnaires using smartphones for a national survey on the country's small-piped water systems.

Encouraging hygiene promotion

Lastly, these tools can also facilitate education and promote positive behaviors. For instance, SunClean is a cell phone game that teaches people about sanitation and selected hygiene rules. This

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Collecting data via smartphone in DRC.

application was awarded a grand prize at the 2012 Sanitation Hackathon (see the box on p.12) held in Jakarta, Indonesia.
• www.sanitationhackathon.org/applications/sunclean-sanitation-games

Using ICT effectively

Experts agree that the use of ICT in the water and sanitation sector is currently in its early stages. The majority of initiatives are pilot activities, which need to be analyzed and validated prior to being scaled up.
There are frequent calls for better information-sharing on these projects, as well as for sector stakeholders to develop their skills. One of the ways in which to stimulate innovation in this area is by experimenting (by organizing hackathons or including even small ICT components in projects, etc.).
However, notwithstanding the current enthusiasm for ICT in the water and sanitation sector, it is important to remember that, as radical as they may seem, these are only tools. It appears that, all too often, more time and energy is spent focusing on the tools than on the improvements they are actually supposed to introduce. There are important human, organizational and functional issues that have to be considered when implementing ICT in the water and sanitation sector. ●

Other experiences

Monitoring is being developed on every continent

Many countries have worked hard to develop monitoring systems in order to improve service quality and sustainability. As there is such a wide range of needs, varied approaches and different scales of intervention, here is just a short – and not at all comprehensive – overview.

For many years, monitoring merely consisted of determining access rates by counting the number of water points and facilities built. However, such an approach overlooks the fact that, without the appropriate care and maintenance or proper long-term financial management, supply interruptions soon occur leading to a gradual deterioration in services. As a result, the monitoring systems developed over recent years have been considerably expanded to include analyses of service quality and performance. Initiatives are flourishing around the world, indicating that monitoring is gaining great momentum within the sector.

In Brazil, the National Water Agency has set up a geographic information system that provides information on the state of the urban water distribution systems in 5,565 of the country's municipalities. This "Atlas" also includes detailed information on projects and recommendations for long-term action. All stakeholders, from the municipal through to the state and federal level, have been involved in developing the Atlas, which now enables local people to monitor service quality and any ongoing construction work. • atlas.ana.gov.br

In Kenya, the Water Services Regulatory Board (Wasreb) oversees the water supply networks in major urban cities. The contracting authorities (WSB - Water Service Boards) and operators (WSP - Water Service Providers) use a monitoring system called Waris (Water Regulation Information System) to submit data on a yearly basis from which Wasreb produces an annual report (Impact) that presents and analyzes the results. Waris assesses the operators and contracting authorities' performance using specific indicators.
One of the features of the Wasreb report is that it uses the scores awarded for each indicator to rank each WSB and WSP based on its performance.
• www.wasreb.go.ke

In Uganda, the government produces an annual Water and Environment Sector Performance Report.
This report details the previous year's achievements with regard to the provision of water, sanitation and hygiene services in small rural villages and large urban towns and cities.
The report is based on 11 key indicators that focus on water source functionality, investment made, access to sanitation, water quality and handwashing, etc.
• www.mwe.go.ug

In Port-au-Prince, Haiti, there are over 50 committees that manage the water distribution service through public water kiosks located throughout areas of the capital not covered by the public water operator. These committees are supported by a special department within the Port-au-Prince public water utility. This support includes helping maintain accurate records of the volumes of water distributed and consumed, assisting with financial management and understanding local governance, etc. Studies are currently underway to develop processes to help committees collect data to inform water quality indicators and global positioning.

In Laos, the small-piped water system or MIREP program (Mini Réseaux d'Eau Potable), led by Gret, has made business management software available (IT Billing) to the delegated managers of small-piped water schemes.
This application provides managers with the tools required to create and manage customer accounts, produce financial operating results and generate technical performance indicators. The information recorded is regularly transferred to the water observatory, which aggregates the data to produce comparative analyses between services in areas such as customer debt and the rate of return on investment, for example. This observatory software application, which uses the information from IT Billing to inform around fifteen key indicators, makes it easier to analyze delegated manager performance. The regional technical departments are responsible for the transfer of data between IT Billing and the observatory; an activity which takes place once or twice a year.

It is particularly encouraging to see so many examples of monitoring in other countries. Not only do they help improve service quality, but they also attest to the changes taking place in the way in which the water sector is being approached. After having been widely popular for many years, the "project" approach (that focuses on the infrastructure and number of water points built) is increasingly giving way to an approach that places greater importance on the quality and continuity of the service.
Initiatives undertaken over the last few years indicate that many stakeholders (local and national or development partners) have now bought into this approach. This increased interest in monitoring is, without doubt, a strong and positive sign that a new culture is being sustainably created in the water sector. ●

pS-Eau Tools

Selection of monitoring publications and resources

If you would like more information on the topic covered in this issue, pS-Eau has put together a selection of monitoring publications and resources, which are available at:

• http://tinyurl.com/naba64c

Visit the pS-Eau Facebook page

The pS-Eau Facebook page is a source of relevant, daily sector news provided to you in real time. Visit us at:

• www.facebook.com/pSEau

The pS-Eau Resources Review

Issue 1, October 2013

pS-Eau published its first issue of its new review of water, sanitation and hygiene service related publications and resources at the end of 2013. With a wealth of information regularly produced on the sector, in this issue, we have compiled a selection of the resources and articles from English and French publications that have caught our interest.

• www.pseau.org/outils/ouvrages/ps_eau_la_revue_biblio_1.pdf

Meetings

17th African Water Association Congress

17 - 20 February 2014, Abidjan

The African Water Association, in collaboration with the Côte d'Ivoire water supply agency, SODECI, will be holding its 17th Congress in February 2014. The theme is as follows: Mobilizing resources and governance of water and sanitation in Africa. This leading African event will also include a major international exhibition of hydraulic equipment and innovative technology products.

• www.afwacongress2014.org

Training

African cities: an introduction to urban planning

The federal polytechnic school of Lausanne, Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne, offers an online course in French that provides an overview of the basics of urban planning, including the technical, environmental, social and economic aspects. Course start date: 18 February 2014.

• http://tinyurl.com/q8oow8z

Low-cost online training from 2iE

2iE has launched its online training device, 'Taxi Brousse Low Cost®', which offers tailor-made, water sector-related distance learning degree and certificate programs.

• www.2ie-edu.org/en/; click on 'Training Program'.

Rural Sanitation at Scale

WEDC online course

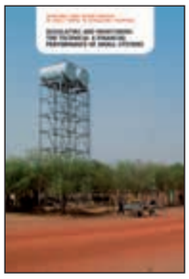
At the beginning of 2013, WEDC (Water, Engineering and Development Centre) based at Loughborough University launched a self-paced online course in partnership with the Water and Sanitation Program of the World Bank to address the challenge of scaling up rural sanitation in developing countries.

This course is a teaching unit in the WEDC MSc program, but is also available free of charge, in both English and French, for sector professionals. It consists of 3 parts, each of which takes approximately one hour to study (excluding associated reading) and is delivered using a variety of media (slide presentations, video clips, animations, photography and graphics, etc.) supported by selected online publications. A certificate is awarded upon successful completion of the unit assessment and completion of the training evaluation form.

• To register, go to:
https://wedc-knowledge.lboro.ac.uk/my-courses/fr/rss.html

Publications

Regulating and Monitoring the Technical and Financial Performance of Small Systems



Denis Désille, pS-Eau and Daniel Faggianelli, Acqua Oing

February 2013

A number of countries in Africa have set up technical and financial monitoring mechanisms to improve the performance and assess the quality of water services. This publication not only describes these mechanisms and provides a detailed analysis of the indicators used, but also outlines how monitoring can help improve both the quality of water services and regulation. This guide also includes recommendations for putting such mechanisms in place.

• www.pseau.org/outils/biblio/

L'Afrique et l'Eau

Under the leadership of Claude Jamati

Collection L'Afrique en marche, Editions Alpharès, €19.90

Is Africa threatened by water scarcity? There are 17 large rivers and 160 lakes on the African continent and many countries have names synonymous with water.

Yet, not only do 14 countries lack water, but 80% of the world's population without access to a source of drinking water live in Africa.

In this book, men and women describe what drives them in their daily work to bring water, a common good, to the people and land that need it. They are tenacious and determined. They are using their skills and intelligence to help ensure the Millennium Development Goal targets for water and sanitation will be met by 2015. Among the many managers and experts on Africa who have contributed to this book are several former leaders of the African Water Association (AfWA). Several experts, each renowned within their field and with close ties with Africa, have also collaborated on this publication. Through their experiences, the book's contributors all demonstrate that it is possible to prevent water scarcity in Africa.

Assessment of Hygiene Interventions:

Cost-effectiveness study applied to Burkina Faso

Amélie Dubé, Mélanie Carrasco, with Richard Bassono, IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, March 2013.

This study outlines the findings of a hygiene cost-effectiveness assessment conducted in two sites in Burkina Faso using a practical methodology in which the cost of awareness-raising activities was compared to the behavior change observed. This working paper includes operational approaches to help with tasks such as defining intervention methods and determining indicative costs.

• www.washcost.info/page/2755

pS-Eau

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