



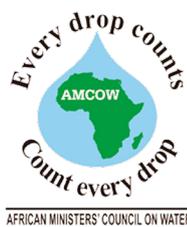
African Ministers' Council on Water

**AMCOW**

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# Building Sanitation Capacity In Africa

A Synthesis Paper



AFRICAN MINISTERS' COUNCIL ON WATER





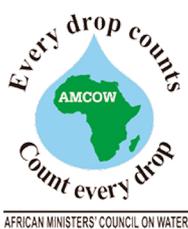


African Ministers' Council on Water

**AMCOW**

**Building Sanitation  
Capacity In Africa**

A Synthesis Paper



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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Transforming Sanitation in Africa Series comprise sets of knowledge products to share learnings from the AfricaSan5 process, under the overarching theme: “Accelerating progress towards the Ngor Commitments to achieve the SDGs”.

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A knowledge product commissioned by AMCOW to share lessons and emerging experience from the Fifth Africa Conference on Sanitation and Hygiene, Cape Town, South Africa, 2019

# Preface

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The 5th Africa Conference on Sanitation and Hygiene (AfricaSan5) was held in Cape Town, South Africa in February 2019 under the overarching theme: “Transforming Sanitation in Africa: Accelerating progress towards the Ngor Commitments to achieve the SDGs”.

AfricaSan5 partnered with the 5th International Fecal Sludge Management (FSM) Conference to provide a platform for linking practice to policy, and to deliver a uniquely rich blend of stakeholder dialogues and knowledge exchanges.

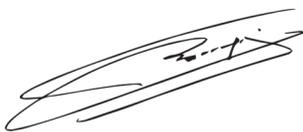
This synthesis paper on Policies, Institutions and Regulation of Sanitation and Hygiene Services in Africa is among a series of knowledge products commissioned by AMCOW to share emerging experience and latest thinking on topics addressed at the AfricaSan Conference.

The synthesis paper shares experiences in building capacities to accelerate progress towards the SDG targets and Ngor Vision and Commitments.

Other synthesis papers under Transforming Sanitation in Africa Series are:

- Financing Sanitation and Hygiene in Africa
- Policies, Institutions and Regulation of Sanitation and Hygiene Services in Africa
- Monitoring and Using Evidence to Improve Hygiene and Sanitation in Africa
- Building Sanitation Capacity in Africa

The synthesis papers can be accessed on the AMCOW  
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**Dr Canisius Kanangire**  
**AMCOW Executive Secretary**

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# Status of Human Resource Capacity for WASH

Africa needs to raise significant resources in the range of billions of dollars to fund implementation of SDG6 and Ngor Vision and Commitments. This calls for increased mobilization of technical, financial and human resources, and also a significant scaling-up of external support to cover interim gaps while national capacity and resources are under development.

## GLAAS Reporting on Human Resource Capacity for the WASH Sector

GLAAS 2018/2019 data indicate that a large majority of countries lack sufficient human resources to implement national WASH plans. The number of countries reporting that they have conducted human resource needs assessments for their national WASH plans is also considerably lower than the number of countries reporting that they have costed their plans.

**Figure 1: GLAAS Analysis of Human Resource Assessments in National WASH Plans**

Subsector	Number of countries with national plans	Percentage of countries that have conducted human resource assessments for plans	Percentage of countries that have assessed human resources for plans and reported having sufficient human resources to implement plan
Urban sanitation	94	54%	11%
Rural sanitation	90	43%	6%
Urban drinking water	95	51%	14%
Rural drinking water	91	46%	10%
Hygiene	80	41%	10%

**Of those countries with national WASH plans, less than 54% conducted human resource assessments for their plans**

\*In the GLAAS 2018/2019 country survey, sufficient human resources was defined as having more than 75% of what is needed to implement national WASH plans  
Sources: GLAAS 2018/2019 country survey.

The GLAAS 2018/2019 findings indicate that human resources to implement WASH plans are more likely to be insufficient in rural areas than in urban areas. Consistent with findings from previous GLAAS country surveys, reasons cited by responding countries include that skilled workers do not want to live and work in rural areas. While many countries have WASH training programmes or institutions to build in-country human resource capacity, GLAAS findings show that the majority of countries (62% of 106 countries) reported that these programmes are only partially sufficient or not sufficient.

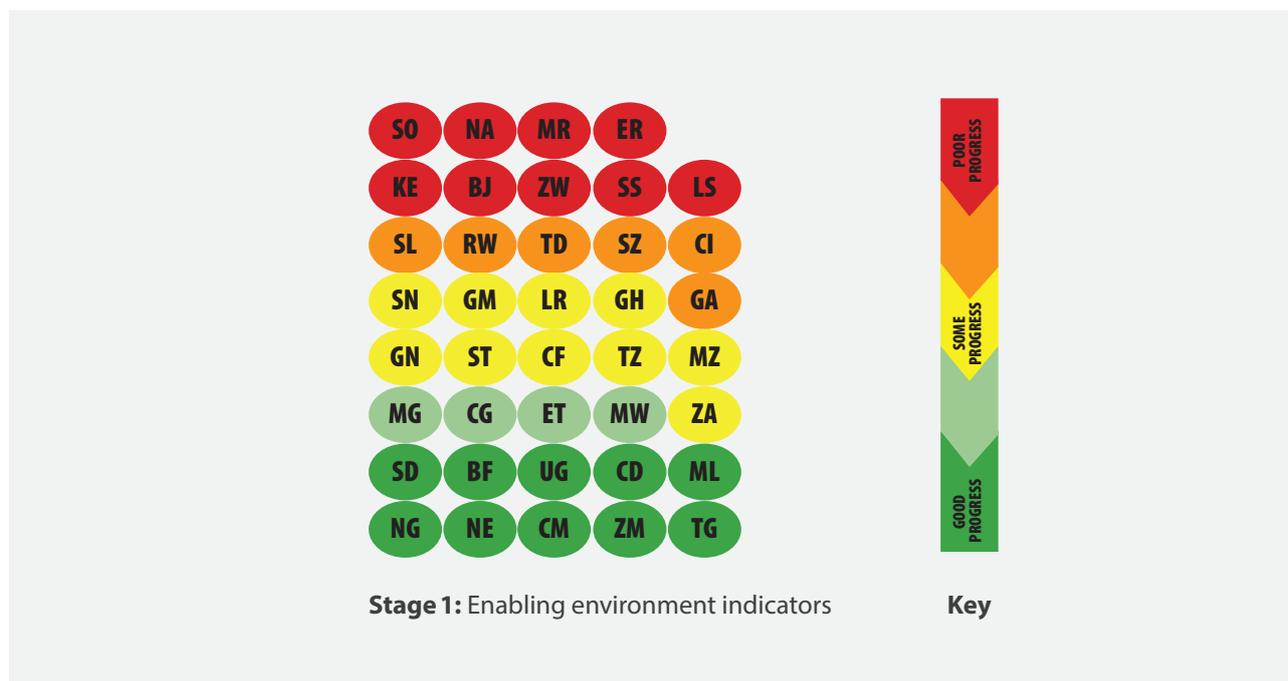
## Ngor Monitoring on Sanitation and Hygiene Capacity in Africa

According to the Ngor monitoring report, Africa has recorded some progress in addressing the sanitation and hygiene capacity gap with well-defined and funded strategies. The Ngor monitoring results are corroborated by the findings from GLAAS which reveals that national policies for drinking-water and sanitation are largely in place in Africa with over 80% of countries reported to have approved national policies (Figure).

However, the sector still faces challenges. The Ngor monitoring report findings show:

- 16 countries have not assessed sanitation and hygiene HR needs at all
- 15 countries have carried out an assessment of sanitation and hygiene human resource needs within the last three years which covered both national and sub-national needs
- 13 countries have human resource targets included in their national sanitation and hygiene strategy (or as a stand-alone HR strategy)
- 12 countries are able to report on implementation progress for Ngor Commitment 5: to “Develop and fund strategies to bridge the sanitation and hygiene human resource capacity gap at all levels”

**Figure 2: Ngor Monitoring – Country Performance of Enabling Environment Indicators**

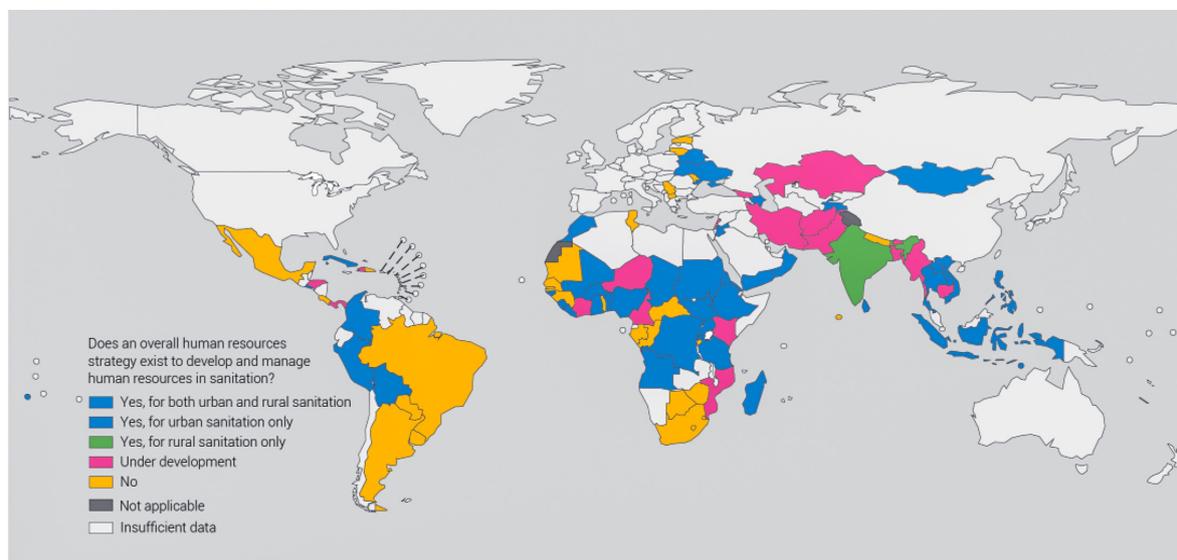


None of the respondent countries reported on human resource actions are fully implemented, funded and regularly reviewed.

Disaggregating this data across Africa sub-regions shows large differences: human resources remain a key challenge in Eastern Africa and Southern Africa, where there is limited progress, while West and Central Africa have made some progress.

# Addressing the Sanitation Capacity Gap in Africa:

## Some Reflections



Source: WHO (2014).

**Figure 3: Human Resources Strategies in Sanitation, Disaggregated for Urban and Rural Areas (94 countries)**

AfricaSan5 sessions highlighted some key capacity building issues that lie behind ineffectiveness of the WASH sector in Africa: lack of supportive policy and regulatory framework; failure to mobilize public participation; limited managerial capabilities to make institutions operate effectively; limited financial and technical capabilities; poor personnel management; and a general lack of communication ability (between grass root and planner, as well as horizontally or between subsectors), among others.

## Strengthening the Case for Building Sanitation Capacity

There is an acute lack of data on the human resource demand, capacity, supply and shortages for water and sanitation services. Without credible evidence to support estimates of the real human resources shortages across all components of water, sanitation and hygiene provision, the WASH sector will not be able to make a business case that will attract sufficient investment.

## Focus the Enabling Environment

Identification of the policy environment, institutional resources, water resources availability, quality and demand, and human, material, educational and financial resources are key elements of capacity building in a country. Countries can accelerate the rate of access to sanitation by strengthening the enabling environment, which provides a broad context within which water and sanitation for all, for industry and for the environment can flourish.

Based on learning from other countries, it is possible to accelerate the rate of access by focusing on key elements of the enabling environment such as policy, institutional arrangements, products and tools, capacity, financing and M&E. This is essentially the responsibility of governments in their role of enabler or provider of conditions for sustainable development. Choosing to invest in sanitation and to accelerate the rate of access for Africa can begin by requiring sector frameworks to provide adequate enabling environments.

## Need for Institutional Strengthening

Strong formal and informal institutions and human resources underpin good water governance. Focus should be on strengthening institutions at all levels to deal, more effectively and efficiently, with all aspects of sustainable sanitation development, including the creation of a favorable policy environment, WASH assessments (both quantity and quality), planning, management, and program and project formulation, implementation and evaluation.

The dependence on communities, volunteers and semi- skilled workers in rural areas is not sustainable without adequate institutional and operational support from local government and structured, formalised support from the professional sector.

### Country Story: Focusing on human resources planning in Uganda

Uganda has experienced challenges in attracting and retaining sufficient numbers of qualified health workers to the sanitation and hygiene sector. Institutional shortfalls including HR planning capacity have contributed to this situation.

In response, the Ministry of Health carried out a comprehensive Human Resources for Health study in 2015. The study found a large deficit in numbers of Health Inspectors and Environmental Health Officers. These findings led to a mass recruitment of all health cadres, and by 2016/17 the numbers of Health Inspectors and Environmental Health Officers had risen from 57% to 69% coverage. Advocating for the budget necessary to recruit more Health Inspectors and Environmental Health Officers to reach 100% coverage is ongoing.

In the meantime, the policy framework for sustainability planning and addressing human resource capacity is being put in place at all levels of Local Government. The Environmental Health Strategic plan 2018, which aligns to the Health Sector Development Plan 2015-2020, and the draft Uganda National Sanitation and Hygiene Investment Plan 2018-2023 all articulate clear human resource actions and targets.

## Tackling Human Capacity Gaps

The growing human capacity gap remains one of the greatest concerns to achieving water and sanitation goals in Africa. There are not enough appropriately skilled water professionals to support the attainment of universal access to safe water and sanitation. Sanitation services are significantly undermined by a poor supply of professionals when compared to water services.

The WASH activities that could benefit immensely from increased human resources include monitoring and evaluation, national and local planning, and operation and maintenance. However, human resource shortages, as well as skills and experience, are lacking in areas such as behavior change, waste-water treatment, and utilizing recycling and reuse technologies.

The increasing involvement of the private sector in sanitation and hygiene is creating new demands for more-responsive government agencies. Skills such as organizing stakeholders and openly providing information, as well as those for contracting and tendering, are increasingly sought in government agencies, as the role of governments changes from provider to enabler. A lack of qualified professionals and technicians weakens the institutions that provide governance.

## Leaving no one Behind: Focus on the Poor, Marginalized and Unserved

With respect to providing stronger incentives to staff for delivering WASH services more effectively to the most vulnerable, the two most severe constraints on delivering adequate WASH services are inadequate staff remuneration and the lack of incentives for skilled workers to live and work in rural areas. The complexity of systems in the urban WASH sector results in the highest demand for professionally-qualified staff being in urban areas. Moreover, while in all countries studied the bulk of the population lives in the rural areas, the high, sometimes exponential urban growth rates and accompanying rise in demand for urban water and sanitation facilities further boost this demand.

Rural systems are less complex to implement, operate and maintain, and, therefore, require less highly qualified labourers. For sanitation implementation in rural areas, many countries rely on members of the households and local NGOs. Many of the rural water and sanitation services are provided by semi-skilled or unskilled workers who are either self-employed or employed by local, small private firms. They often have low levels of literacy and acquire practical skills informally as apprentices or from members of their family.

## Education and Training

Education and training provide a vital basis for building much-needed human capacity in the water and water-using sectors. Education and vocational training programmes are viewed as conditions enabling the achievement of SDG6. There are methods for rapidly increasing vocational skills to meet specific shortages using short-term programmes. However, it takes many years to strengthen institutional ca-

capacity with experienced and effective professionals and technicians that can plan and enable progress towards SDG6. Moreover, funds are often allocated for developing infrastructure rather than people. The former produces something tangible, whereas the latter is mostly invisible but critical to the effectiveness of the former.

Often, education and skills development requirements to operate and maintain specific technologies have not been appropriately assessed; such assessments would greatly benefit the WASH sector. Low levels of access to and inadequate coverage of courses in tertiary education institutes is a significant bottleneck to meeting human resource demands. Female professionals are underrepresented, particularly in technical fields. This trend is mostly observed in the public and private sectors, the non-governmental sector has a greater gender balance; the number of female graduates from technical courses at universities was also reported to be low. Development of human resources for WASH should focus on all levels including education, training, and conducive working conditions can spur delivery of sanitation and hygiene services.

## **Enhancing the Capacity for Implementing Capacity Development Strategies**

Lack of capacity also undermines the implementation of policies at various levels. Several countries are now producing national capacity-development strategies for the WASH sector. However, the big challenge is implementation. It is imperative for African countries to develop mechanisms and strategies to address, rather urgently, national capacities to move forward the SDG6 agenda and Ngor Vision.

### **Focus on Operations and Maintenance**

The acute lack of capacity is constraining the development and management of water resources in all its facets across sub-Saharan Africa. Operation and maintenance of water and sanitation systems are chronically neglected, with human resources inadequately allocated. Significant investments in the water and sanitation sector are at risk and may be ineffective if not accompanied with capacity-development programmes to ensure proper management and maintenance.

### **Strengthening Monitoring Capacity**

Country capacity to monitor and report on the global SDG6 indicators is generally weak across Africa. Many countries lack the capacity to collect and analyse the data needed for full assessment of the state of sanitation and hygiene. Data collection is often conducted by different institutions at national and subnational levels that were not used to sharing data. Many countries report capacity constraints to coordinate, compile and report on complete accurate data.

Strengthening the capacity of local and national authorities to manage and regulate sanitation systems, including the development of information management systems, is a high priority for African countries. Key challenges are localized in the technical, personnel and financial capacities to establish, maintain and further develop national WASH monitoring systems.

Resources and capacity-building are needed to close data gaps and harmonize reporting. Much work

still needs to be done to ensure availability of timely and good-quality data on all global SDG6 indicators. Capacity development needs to look at the hardware available (laboratory level) and the process of data collection in the field, as well as the analysis of data, upscaling solutions and institutional collaboration on statistics. A specific policy focus also needs to be put on sanitation monitoring (a neglected area) to inform decision making.

## Building Capacity for Community Participation

Effective and sustainable water and sanitation management depends on the participation of a range of stakeholders, including local communities, which is the focus of target 6.b. Participation implies provision of mechanisms to enable affected individuals and communities to meaningfully contribute to decisions related to water and sanitation planning and management. This can promote “local ownership” and lead to long-term sustainability of services.

Community participation is a key component of increasing sustainable WASH service provision, particularly in rural areas (SDG targets 6.1 and 6.2), and also for IWRM (target 6.5). Achieving this can contribute towards increased participation of women in political, economic and public life (target 5.5), and empower and promote social, economic and political inclusion (targets 10.2 and 10.). It can also contribute towards ensuring conservation, restoration and sustainable use of freshwater ecosystems and their services (target 15.1) and ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels (target 16.7).

## Role of National Governments

**National governments are urged to:**

1. strengthen operational capacity including provision of adequate time and financial resources,
2. implement clear roles and responsibilities for data collection and
3. ensure political will exists for this at senior government level. Institutional capacity-building and integration across stakeholders need to be intensified to make monitoring more effective and efficient. International collaboration and partnerships can support data collection, analysis and use.

## Improving Coordination and Disbursement of ODA Funding

SDG Target 6.a seeks to expand international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries. The specific indicator for this target assesses the proportion of water- and sanitation related ODA included in government-coordinated spending plans, as an indication of alignment and cooperation among donor and recipient countries.

According to GLAAS, most countries indicated limited availability of financial reports on external aid expenditures for WASH in 2017.

### Reasons included:

1. partners reporting only activities and outcomes, but not financial information,
2. direct implementation of projects and programmes by development partners with little reporting of collaboration with national partners,
3. other reporting difficulties, including a lack of disaggregation of projects into separate subsectors. Some countries have established coordination frameworks at the national level to encourage improved collaboration among technical and financial partners and national institutions.

This collaboration includes development partners, donors and international NGOs, using a database as a key instrument to centralize aid commitments and disbursements.

There is a need to better understand the extent and value of international cooperation, particularly support for capacity development, as this is currently not part of the indicator. Both the target and the indicator are strongly focused on external support and refer to the potential and need for stronger domestic engagement, but do not monitor capacity-building explicitly. Defining additional indicators or rewording indicators to take account of this should be considered. There are also no internationally established methodology or standards available for this indicator, though they are being developed and tested for future use.

## Learning and Knowledge Sharing

Government and stakeholders are encouraged to use local and international institutes, professional associations, water and sewerage utilities, twinning arrangements and consulting firms as additional ways of obtaining expertise and of sharing information. The Pan-African Association of Sanitation Actors (PASA) network was launched at AfricaSan5 to provide a platform for emptier, utility representatives and practitioners to engage, learn and support each other. During AfricaSan5, the Pan-African Emptiers Association called for improved health and safety provision, access to finance, equipment and dumping sites for emptiers, and recognition by government and NGOs of the critical work emptiers play in managing sanitation in towns and cities across Africa.

# Initiatives to Address the Sanitation Capacity Gap in Africa

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Capacity building is an intrinsically slow and complex process. The expertise required in the water and sanitation sector at all levels of education, in numerous agencies, communities, schools and private companies, is extremely broad. The need for comprehensive capacity-development programmes to create a cadre of specialists and technicians working in the water sector is well recognized.

## Strengthening Sanitation Management and Leadership

### Case Study: Feasibility Studies on an African Sanitation Academy

USAID through its Water for Africa through Leadership and Institutional Support (WALIS) project studied the feasibility of a sanitation training center with an Africa continent focus, known as the African Sanitation Academy. WALIS commissioned three regional market assessment and feasibility studies in eastern, western, and southern Africa. The feasibility studies aimed to: access existing government frameworks and how local governments and sanitation providers are strengthening sanitation management and leadership; analyze the demands of African utilities and governments for sanitation management.; and, identify what educational institutions are researching and/or teaching relevant to sanitation. The studies further sought to: explore potential partnerships that should be developed and how they should be structured; consider products appropriate to meet these demands; and, examine what type of organizational framework would best suit ASA and how it should be financed, and the overall feasibility of the concept.

#### Top-line results of the feasibility study suggest that:

- The existing training programs provided by training institutions are too basic and are combined with other types of training, which may not be relevant for the sanitation sector.
- There are no exclusive sanitation training programs for leaders and managers who need to strengthen their technical knowledge.
- The existing training institutions are not equipped to meet the capacity building needs expressed by sanitation leaders and managers.
- The budget for capacity building of the main sanitation services are not sufficient to cover all the training needs of leaders—training is not sufficiently prioritized.
- The organization and criteria for establishment of private training institutions (in addition to public ones) are already set in different countries; private institutions have more ability to tailor training courses to the needs of the sector.

- Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have developed and implemented capacity building systems for their employees in sanitation and these courses could be provided more widely or adapted for government and private sector participants.
- Financial and technical partners already contribute to funding of capacity building for leaders and managers of services in charge of sanitation, using training that is available, but not considered ideal. With better training available, it can be anticipated that they will continue to send their trainees.
- Although rural sanitation is often less complex than urban sanitation, it poses an ongoing challenge to most Southern African countries, particularly for those moving up the sanitation ladder. Zambia could also provide a basis for leaders to share their rural challenges, such as Namibia, Botswana, and Malawi, perhaps through a form of knowledge sharing.

This feasibility study recommends that the ASA be established independently from existing public or private institutions and universities to ensure that the focus for sanitation is not diverted and that the training content is relevant for what the sector needs. In addition, the study recommends that regional hubs for West, Central, Southern, and East Africa will be needed, given the size of the continent, the size of the job to be done in terms of the number of people to be trained, and because each region has some uniqueness, which may require that similar regional approaches are shared.

Other recommendations include creating a training approach that integrates ongoing mentorship alongside practical applications such as:

- Building a specific sanitation focus into communities of practice in Mozambique with Aquashare, a platform of professional operators in the water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) sector.
- Emulating the City Water Managers Forum (CWMF) through a City Sanitation Managers Forum in South Africa, linked to the South African Local Government Association (SALGA).
- Conducting training in Zambia, and drawing in professionals from other Southern African countries as appropriate to join the training

# Sector Professional Development

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## Country Story: Setting up an Academy for Professional Development in Mozambique

Fundo de Investimento e Património do Abastecimento de Água (FIPAG)—the national Urban Water Asset Holding and Investment Fund of Mozambique—was created in 1998 as a public entity to act as a holding company for water supply investments and asset management in Mozambique. It currently has a total of 2200 employees. FIPAG contributes to the preparation of policies and is an important part of the Government of Mozambique’s strategy to reduce poverty by investing in water supply and sanitation infrastructure. The National Directorate of Water (DNA) is mandated by the Ministry of Public Works and Housing (MOPH) to negotiate and monitor FIPAG, and is responsible for the investments in the urban water supply services not covered by FIPAG’s programme.

The FIPAG Academy for the Professional Development in Water and Sanitation was launched in early 2019—with support from an international consortium of partners, including UNESCO–IHE Institute for Water Education, IRC, IHE Delft, and Rand Water—to contribute to the improvement of management, services and infrastructure in the water and sanitation (WATSAN) sector in Mozambique. It focuses on strengthening the capacity of FIPAG to implement investment programmes in peri-urban water and sanitation and ensure the provision of potable water and cost-effective sanitation to the population, with a gender and labour market perspective. Efforts were made to strengthen links with key WASH stakeholders and activities were coordinated with other providers of WASH education and training in Mozambique and in the wider Southern Africa region.

Some of the benefits that will accrue due to the project include support sustainability and growth in building capacity for the employees in FIPAG, and support for the water sector. FIPAG Academy staff and participants in the programmes are key beneficiaries, as are all stakeholders in the project, such as the National Water Directorate, the WATSAN Management Units in secondary towns, the Water Regulatory Council and various water and sanitation providers, other training institutions, consulting companies and NGOs in Mozambique.

The setup of FIPAG Academy is urgently needed in Mozambique as the country is suffering from a shortage of water and sanitation experts at all levels. It is estimated that the Mozambique water and sanitation sector needs nearly 6000 workers in water and an additional 1600 professionals in the field of sanitation. To achieve full service coverage the water and sanitation sector needs an additional 3000 water engineers and more than 4000 sanitation engineers.

## Education and Training

### Case Study: IHE Delft: Building Technical Capacity Through Formal Courses

IHE Delft Institute for Water Education, the world's largest international graduate water education facility, is offering a demand-driven and practice orientated programme to improve fundamental understanding and knowledge on urban and peri-urban sanitation—especially in informal settlements—as well as the skills necessary for creating impact.

The programme is dedicated to targeting needs and delivering specialists in a short time, with the necessary qualifications. It aims to attract talented and ambitious young and mid-career sanitation professionals, working in water supply and sewerage companies, municipal assemblies, government ministries, NGOs and consulting firms. Ideally these individuals are dealing with urban and peri-urban sanitation, especially in informal settlements.

In partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, IHE Delft Institute has also launched a new Master of Science Program in Sanitation. The focus of this interdisciplinary program is on the delivery of non-sewered sanitation services to urban communities in the context of the SDGs, acknowledging the diversity and complexity of challenges in urban sanitation worldwide.

The Netherlands-based IHE Delft is a member of the Global Sanitation Graduate School.

<https://www.un-ihe.org/msc-programmes/specialization/sanitation>

## Building Consultant Capacity for City-Wide Inclusive Urban Sanitation Services

### Case Study: Consultant Capacity Development Training

Consultant Capacity Development training developed by Eawag will build capacity in private sector consulting firms and with individual consultants to conceptualize, plan, design and supervise the implementation of city-wide inclusive urban sanitation services. The purpose of increased consultant capacity is to improve the delivery and sustainability of sanitation services to poor and non-poor communities and increase the impact of sanitation investments at city scale in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia with a particular focus on 'at scale' sanitation services funded by Governments and or through international financing institutions and development partners.

The ConCaD project will adapt existing digital and face-to-face core materials and develop new ones for urban sanitation. Materials will be delivered in short face-to-face training workshops held by Partner Training Institutions in the target countries and by Eawag through eLearning tailored to the needs of the local and international consulting industry. It will also hold training of trainers with Partner Training institutions to facilitate the use of participatory training and to contextualise the materials for the focus countries. Finally, it will support developing business plans for increasing the sustainability of face-to-face and eLearning course delivery.

The initiative funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation targets countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (Ivory Coast, Uganda and Zambia) and South Asia.

# System Capacity Through Competency-Based Capacity Development

## Case Study: The Centre for Affordable Water and Sanitation Technology (CAWST)

CAWST is a Canadian charity and licensed engineering firm, focused on addressing the global need for safe drinking water and sanitation by building local knowledge and skills on household solutions people can implement themselves.

CAWST has provided capacity development services to organizations working in non-networked WASH, helping them to start, strengthen, or scale up their programs. The suite of services includes technical training, competency development, and consulting support. Designing effective training and education programs is difficult. Evaluating their impact is even harder, which may be one of the reasons funders shy away from supporting this much needed arena. CAWST advocates for measuring what people do with the training, not how many people are trained. Thus, capacity development must be measured at the outcome level, consistently year after year

In recent studies undertaken by CAWST, Cambridge and Cranfield of over 100 WASH capacity building organizations, only one third reported capacity building results. For those who report, the majority of the results are at the output level, rather than at the outcome level. CAWST's key performance metric is "number of people with safe water" (vs "number of people trained"). This metric keeps CAWST focused on ensuring that knowledge and skills reside locally, and that our capacity development activities result in action. CAWST argues that we must also recognize that the impact of building capacity often goes well beyond short term outcomes as people are empowered, take their skills to the next project and pass on their knowledge to others.

## Collaboration and Networking

### Case Study: Sustainable Sanitation Alliance (SuSanA)

SuSanA is an informal network of people and organisations who share a common vision on sustainable sanitation and who want to contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular SDG6. Learn more about our definition of sustainable sanitation here.

SuSanA came into existence in early 2007. Since then, it has been providing a platform for coordination and collaborative work. SuSanA connects members to a community of people with diverse expertise and opinions. SuSanA also serves as a sounding board for innovative ideas. Finally, SuSanA contributes to policy dialogue through joint publications, meetings and initiatives.

SuSanA's initial role was [advocacy, highlighting the importance of sustainability in sanitation particularly in the context of the MDGs](#). The Alliance has contributed to sector de-

velopment and sector actors today increasingly focus on the sustainability of services. Through the Shit Flow Diagram project, SuSanA has provided an important platform for major donors and implementing actors such as the World Bank's WSP and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF). The Alliance has also helped refine the concept of the sanitation ladder. It advocates a performance-based (rather than technology-based) sanitation ladder [14] and has served as a sounding board in the preparation of important sector publications such as the Compendium of Sanitation Systems and Technologies.

The **SuSanA** website and Forum provide knowledge management and capacity development services that remain in high demand. For example, the BMGF uses the SuSanA Forum to introduce and discuss their sanitation research grants and to share research results with a wider sanitation community. SuSanA has thus moved beyond its original advocacy role to become a broad community of practice and sector resource for project implementation.

# Call to Action for Bridging the Human Resource Capacity Gap

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In view of the growing human capacity gap and that this shortfall remains one of the greatest concerns to achieving water and sanitation goals in Africa, there is an urgent need to develop and implement concrete strategies for building institutional and human resources capacity at all levels in the WASH sector.

Investment in human resources has the potential to have multiple benefits across sectors. Investing in WASH human resource development is investing in health, education, economic and social development. Water and sanitation are cross cutting issues, affecting nearly all other elements of socio-economic development within developing economies. Investment in, and strengthening of, the human resource base for the delivery of water and sanitation services can alleviate the pressure on human as well as financial resources in other sectors.

- Investment in the WASH sector can be a magnet attracting and retaining high calibre professionals for the WASH sector;
- Data collection needs to be strengthened and the quality of data needs to be improved to provide compelling evidence for investment in recruitment, education and skill development in the WASH sector;
- More research on the current or projected levels of funding required to support capacity development, either in its totality, from governments or from the donor community is critical;
- The SDGs must give consideration to the use of human resource capacity data for WASH as an “enabling environment” indicator;
- Appropriate public policies need to be developed and implemented to support job creation, including investing in skills to support labour supply and enabling private sector engagement to stimulate an increase in labour demand;
- Incentives to attract newly qualified and skilled personnel and retain experienced personnel within the sector and reverse a professional drain to other sectors are required;
- Developing specific programmes and promoting greater investment to engage and encourage female participation at the educational level and at the professional level could provide a ‘quick fix’ to human resources shortages, but will require a mind-set shift;
- Improve coordination and cooperation between WASH sector organisations and the education sector to enhance alignment between human resources demand and supply;
- Make technical and vocational training a pivotal element in human resources development in both urban and rural service provision.







AFRICAN MINISTERS' COUNCIL ON WATER



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