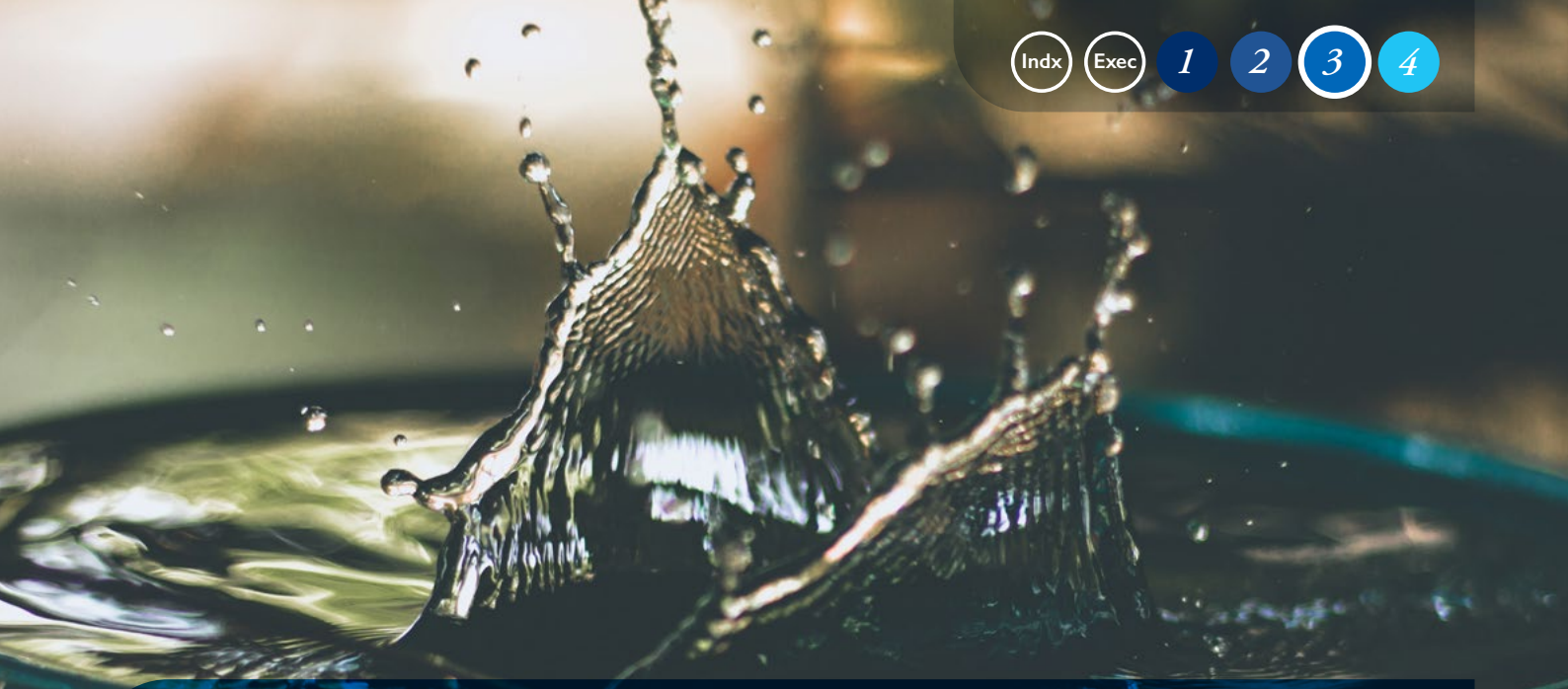


Designing and Evaluating Integrated Water and Governance Activities

3

PHOTO CREDIT: Photo by Amritanshu Sikdar on Unsplash

Design Support Overview

The GROWS Toolkit Design Support section aims to support cross-sectoral work between the Democracy, Human Rights and Governance (DRG) and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sectors bt providing tools to help DRG Officers promote best practices in rural water governance. The tools here were primarily developed based on the findings of GROWS Landscape Review and field assessments and can be used as a quick reference to these texts.

1. **WASH Governance Scorecards**
   These scorecards are built to rapidly evaluate water governance during the activity planning or implementation.

2. **Landscape Snapshots**
   These snapshots are a brief overview of the technologies that support Rural Water Governance as identified in the GROWS Landscape Review.

3. **Utilizing Data to ImproveRural Water Governance**
   Brief overview of key water datasets which can provide insights to USAID staff during the design evaluation of water governance programs and activities.

4. **Country Reference Guide (USAID Water Activities)**
   A list of recent USAID WASH activities in Africa.

5. **Suggested USAID Indicators**
   A list of WASH and DRG indicators that share overlapping objectives for consideration in cross-sectoral programming.

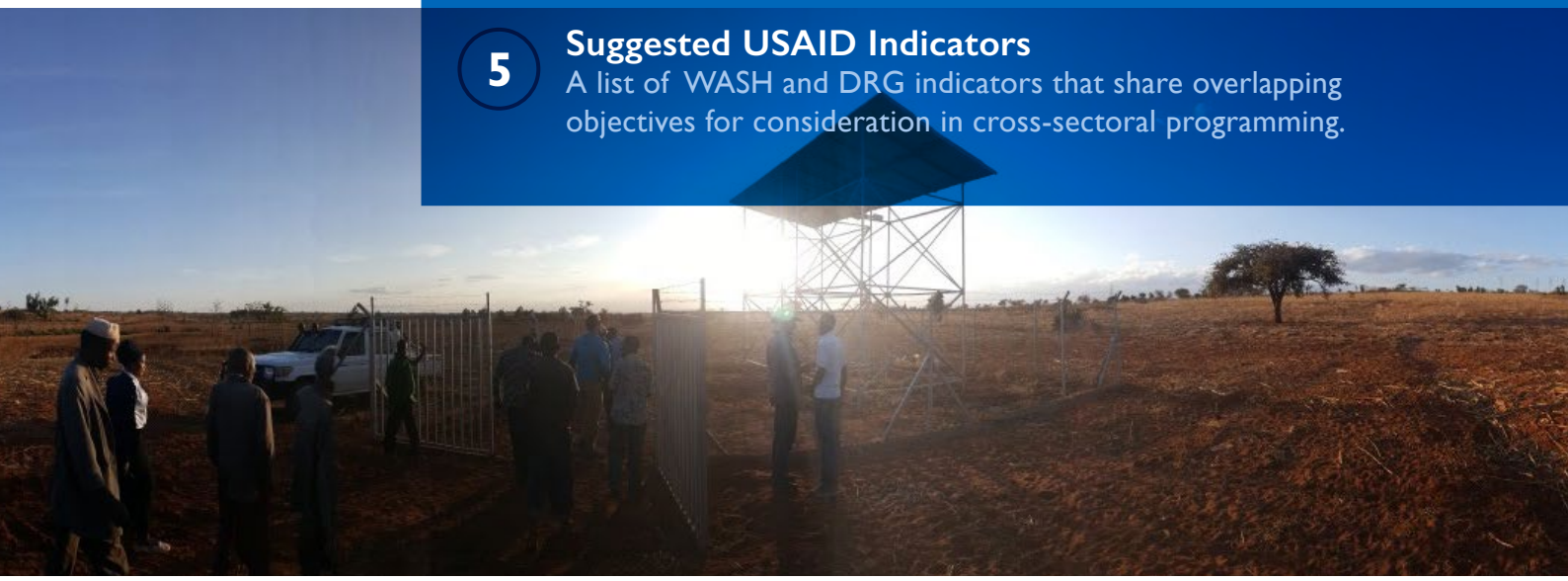


PHOTO CREDIT: Water and Development Alliance (WADA), Tanzania, 2019.

WASH Governance Scorecards

GROWS designed two water governance scorecards to assist with incorporating GROWS findings into future and current activities. The questions were informed by the GROWS Landscape Review and field studies.

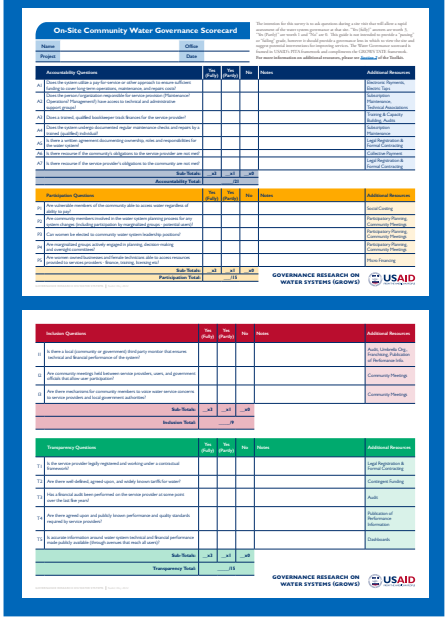
While GROWS research was conducted using the TATE (transparency, accountability, trust, equity) framework, the scorecards use USAID's PITA framework for more streamlined integration into existing USAID guidance.

The on-site community water governance scorecard

This scorecard provides a rapid assessment of existing water system governance.

It can be downloaded and printed to complete.

DOWNLOAD


On-Site Community Water Governance Scorecard

Name | Office
Project | Date

The intention for this survey is to ask questions during a site visit that will allow a rapid assessment of the water system governance at that site. "Yes (fully)" answers are worth 3, "Yes (Partly)" are worth 1 and "No" are 0. This guide is not intended to provide a "passing" or "failing" grade, however it should provide a governance lens to which to view the site and suggest potential interventions for improving services. The Water Governance scorecard is framed by USAID's PITA framework and complements the GROWS Rural Water Toolkit. For more information on additional comments, please see Annexes 1 of the Toolkit.

	Accountability Questions	Yes (Fully)	Yes (Partly)	No	Notes	Additional Resources
A1	Does the system utilize a pay-for-service or other approach to ensure sufficient funding to cover long term operations, maintenance, and repairs costs?					Electronic Payments, Electric Taps
A2	Does the person/organization responsible for service provision (Maintenance/Operations/Management) have access to technical and administrative support groups?					Subscription Maintenance, Technical Associations
A3	Does a trained, qualified bookkeeper track finances for the service provider?					Training & Capacity Building, Audits
A4	Does the system undergo documented regular maintenance checks and repairs by a trained (qualified) individual?					Subscription Maintenance
A5	Is there a written, agreement documenting ownership, roles and responsibilities for the water system?					Legal Registration & Formal Contracting
A6	Is there resource if the community's obligations to the service provider are not met?					Collection Payment
A7	Is there resource if the service provider's obligations to the community are not met?					Legal Registration & Formal Contracting
	Sub-Totals	x3	x1	x0		
	Accountability Total:		/21			

	Participation Questions	Yes (Fully)	Yes (Partly)	No	Notes	Additional Resources
P1	Are vulnerable members of the community able to access water regardless of ability to pay?					Social Costing
P2	Are community members involved in the water system planning process for any system changes (including participation by marginalized groups - potential users)?					Participatory Planning, Community Meetings
P3	Can women be elected to community water system leadership positions?					Participatory Planning, Community Meetings
P4	Are marginalized groups actively engaged in planning, decision making and oversight committees?					Participatory Planning, Community Meetings
P5	Are women owned businesses and female technicians able to access resources provided to service providers - finance, training, training, etc.)					Micro Financing
	Sub-Totals	x3	x1	x0		
	Participation Total		/15			

GOVERNANCE RESEARCH ON WATER SYSTEMS (GROWS) USAID

	Inclusion Questions	Yes (Fully)	Yes (Partly)	No	Notes	Additional Resources
I1	Is there a local (community or government) third party monitor that ensures technical and financial performance of the system?					Audit, Umbrella Org., Franchising, Publication of Performance Info.
I2	Are community meetings held between service providers, users, and government officials that allow user participation?					Community Meetings
I3	Are there mechanisms for community members to voice water service concerns to service providers and local government authorities?					Community Meetings
	Sub-Totals	x3	x1	x0		
	Inclusion Total:		/9			

	Transparency Questions	Yes (Fully)	Yes (Partly)	No	Notes	Additional Resources
T1	Is the service provider legally registered and working under a contractual framework?					Legal Registration & Formal Contracting
T2	Are there well-defined, agreed-upon, and widely known tariffs for water?					Contingent Funding
T3	Has a financial audit been performed on the service provider at some point over the last five years?					Audit
T4	Are there agreed-upon and publicly known performance and quality standards required by service providers?					Publication of Performance Information
T5	Is accurate information around water system technical and financial performance made publicly available (through avenues that reach all users)?					Dashboards
	Sub-Totals	x3	x1	x0		
	Transparency Total:		/15			

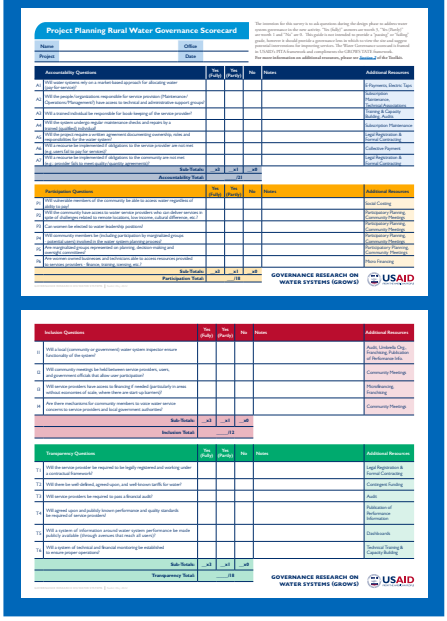
GOVERNANCE RESEARCH ON WATER SYSTEMS (GROWS) USAID

The project planning scorecard

This scorecard evaluates a project concept to help incorporate water governance principles.

It can be downloaded and printed to complete.

DOWNLOAD


Project Planning Rural Water Governance Scorecard

Name | Office
Project | Date

The intention for this survey is to ask questions during the design phase to address water system governance in the new activity. "Yes (Fully)" answers are worth 3, "Yes (Partly)" are worth 1 and "No" are 0. This guide is not intended to provide a "passing" or "failing" grade, however it should provide a governance lens to which to view the site and suggest potential interventions for improving services. The Water Governance scorecard is framed by USAID's PITA framework and complements the GROWS Rural Water Toolkit. For more information on additional comments, please see Annexes 1 of the Toolkit.

	Accountability Questions	Yes (Fully)	Yes (Partly)	No	Notes	Additional Resources
A1	Will water systems rely on a market-based approach for allocating water (pay-for-services)?					Electronic Payments, Electric Taps
A2	Will the people/organizations responsible for service provision (Maintenance/Operations/Management) have access to technical and administrative support groups?					Subscription Maintenance, Technical Associations
A3	Will a trained individual be responsible for book-keeping of the service provider?					Training & Capacity Building, Audits
A4	Will the system undergo regular maintenance checks and repairs by a trained (qualified) individual?					Subscription Maintenance
A5	Will the project require a written agreement documenting ownership, roles and responsibilities for the water system?					Legal Registration & Formal Contracting
A6	Will a resource be implemented if obligations to the service provider are not met (e.g. users fail to pay for services)?					Collection Payment
A7	Will a resource be implemented if obligations to the community are not met (e.g. provider fails to meet quality, quantity, or service)?					Legal Registration & Formal Contracting
	Sub-Totals	x3	x1	x0		
	Accountability Total:		/21			

	Participation Questions	Yes (Fully)	Yes (Partly)	No	Notes	Additional Resources
P1	Will vulnerable members of the community be able to access water regardless of ability to pay?					Social Costing
P2	Will the community have access to water service providers who can deliver services in spite of challenges related to remote locations, low income, cultural differences, etc.?					Participatory Planning, Community Meetings
P3	Can women be elected to water leadership positions?					Participatory Planning, Community Meetings
P4	Will community members (including participation by marginalized groups - potential users) involved in the water system planning process?					Participatory Planning, Community Meetings
P5	Will marginalized groups be represented on planning, decision making and oversight committees?					Participatory Planning, Community Meetings
P6	Are women owned businesses and technicians able to access resources provided to service providers - finance, training, training, etc.)					Micro Financing
	Sub-Totals	x3	x1	x0		
	Participation Total:		/18			

GOVERNANCE RESEARCH ON WATER SYSTEMS (GROWS) USAID

	Inclusion Questions	Yes (Fully)	Yes (Partly)	No	Notes	Additional Resources
I1	Will a local (community or government) water system inspector ensure functionality of the system?					Audit, Umbrella Org., Franchising, Publication of Performance Info.
I2	Will community meetings be held between service providers, users, and government officials that allow user participation?					Community Meetings
I3	Will service providers have access to financing if needed (particularly in areas without economies of scale, where there are start-up barriers)?					Microfinancing, Franchising
I4	Are there mechanisms for community members to voice water service concerns to service providers and local government authorities?					Community Meetings
	Sub-Totals	x3	x1	x0		
	Inclusion Total:		/12			

	Transparency Questions	Yes (Fully)	Yes (Partly)	No	Notes	Additional Resources
T1	Will the service provider be required to be legally registered and working under a contractual framework?					Legal Registration & Formal Contracting
T2	Will there be well defined, agreed-upon, and well known tariffs for water?					Contingent Funding
T3	Will service providers be required to pass a financial audit?					Audit
T4	Will agreed upon and publicly known performance and quality standards be required of service providers?					Publication of Performance Information
T5	Will a system of information around water system performance be made publicly available (through avenues that reach all users)?					Dashboards
T6	Will a system of technical and financial monitoring be established to ensure proper operations?					Technical Training & Capacity Building
	Sub-Totals	x3	x1	x0		
	Transparency Total:		/18			

GOVERNANCE RESEARCH ON WATER SYSTEMS (GROWS) USAID

PITA Framework Definitions

Participation

Participation is defined as efforts to involve citizens in the design, monitoring and delivery of policy and programmes upstream (Quick and Feldman, 2011).

Inclusion

Inclusion means a particular focus on marginalised and vulnerable citizens in policy and programming upstream or downstream (Quick and Feldman, ibid).

Transparency

Transparency is a "characteristic of governments, companies, organisations, and individuals, of being open in the clear disclosure of information rules, plans, processes and actions" (Transparency International, 2009).

Accountability

Accountability is the concept that individuals, agencies and organisations are held responsible for executing their powers according to a certain standard downstream (McGee and Gaventa, 2011).

Landscape Snapshot

Technologies

This snapshot is a brief overview of the technologies that support rural water governance as identified in the *GROWS Landscape Review.*

Electronic Taps and Smart Meters

Definition: Electronic taps and smart meters are classifications of devices that allocate and track water usage without the need for operators.
Why this is useful: Electronic taps and smart meters allow a water system operator to measure water use and receive payment remotely and on demand, eliminating the need for human meter readers to visit homes and other water points.
Examples: Water ATMs, eWater, LIFELINK
Learn more: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 52-53, 72 – 73*

- **Transparency:** Increase transparency about disbursed water and tariffs collected.
- **Accountability:** Increase the accountability of individuals who are receiving money.
- **Trust:** Increase a service provider's trust that users will pay for all water that they have used.
- **Equity:** Numerous positive equity implications. Electronic taps ensure that there is no favoritism in access to water, make it easier – and more likely – to employ social costing, and increase gender equity through their profound effects on married women.

Remote Monitoring

Definition: Remote monitoring refers to a process in which water systems can be assessed remotely. Remote monitors can track operation and maintenance information or to even predict issues before they occur.
Why this is useful: Stakeholders can use remote monitoring to track system performance without having to travel to sites.
Examples: mWater, WPdx, Whave
Learn more: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 50 – 52, 72*

- **Transparency:** Reduce the costs of observing water system functionality, thereby increasing transparency.
- **Trust:** Increase users' trust in the reliability of the water services, if such monitoring results in reduced downtime.
- **Equity:** Increase geographic equity with respect to maintenance by making it easier and more cost effective for service providers to monitor water systems in very remote or difficult to reach areas.

Information Dashboards

Definition: Dashboards summarize and display relevant information about a water system, including both technical and financial information. Dashboards are typically dynamic web-based systems.
Why this is useful: Typically used with other technologies such as smart taps or well pumps, web dashboards can provide real time operating data, distribution and sales information, as well as alerts about potential malfunction to allow for greater oversight and management.
Examples: mWater
Learn more: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages.*

- **Transparency:** Dashboards that allow stakeholders to monitor and analyze the performance of other tools have a positive impact on transparency by reducing costs of sharing and divulging information.
- **Accountability:** Communication improvements are the main avenue for accountability gains in using information dashboards.
- **Trust:** If the dashboards provide relevant and legible information used by stakeholders, they tend to increase trust in the systems they provide information about.
- **Equity:** When the information is easy to access for users, its availability by itself can increase equity.

Landscape Snapshot

Technologies

Retrospective Monitoring

Definition: Retrospective monitoring evaluates water service delivery and related infrastructure to help improve future services.
Why this is useful: Technological advancements and the falling prices of such technology allows rural communities and local governments to better monitor the performance of private contractors.
Examples: Borehole cameras
Learn more: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 50, 71-72*

- **Transparency:** Increases transparency for the monitor in terms of the quality of work completed.
- **Accountability:** Crucial for users or regulatory bodies to be able to hold private operators accountable for the quality of their work.
- **Trust:** The capability to directly monitor work performed by private actors can increase users' trust that contracted work will be completed at a high standard.
- **Equity:** Ensures that water suppliers maintain the operating conditions that ensure water service to all community members from the beginning of the project.

Communication Platforms

Definition: Communication platforms allow communication between water service providers and users around service updates and feedback.
Why this is useful: Water customers can submit complaints or requests to their water service provider and receive responses and relevant system information.
Examples: mwater, WhatsApp, Maji Voice
Learn more: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 54-55, 74-75*

- **Transparency:** Increases transparency by lowering the costs of sharing or consuming information.
- **Accountability:** Increases accountability by giving users a means through which to communicate their needs and other feedback to the service provider.
- **Trust:** Increase or decrease the user's trust in the water supply system.
- **Equity:** Although users can access information more easily, platforms can exclude certain groups who do not have the resources to acquire the technologies that the platforms support.

Electronic Payment

Definition: Electronic payments (e-payments) allow water users to pay for the water they collect using mobile money or other electronic funds transfers.
Why this is useful: Epayment makes it much easier for service providers to have accurate and up-to-date information about revenue raised and outstanding bills.
Examples: Water ATMs, eWater
Learn more: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 53, 73-74*

- **Transparency:** Systems tend to increase financial transparency.
- **Accountability:** Similar to electronic taps, other forms of electronic payment also increase accountability through the creation of a digital audit.
- **Trust:** Electronic payments can increase trust for the service provider that funds are being collected and recorded accurately.
- **Equity:** Electronic payments may decrease equity by making it harder for poorer and less tech-savvy users to pay their bills.

Landscape Snapshot

Areas of Practice

Collective Payment

Definition: Collective payment refers to the manner of assessing charges and holding water system users accountable for payment that pools across individual users.
Why this is useful: Collective payments are meant to harness communal forms of social pressure and sanctioning to increase tariff recovery.
Example: LibSolar, Vergnet Hydro's Warranty Schemes
Learn More: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 43, 67*

- **Transparency:** Increases transparency by reducing the number of financial transfers made to a water supply system.
- **Accountability:** Designed to increase the accountability of users to pay for services by leveraging social and communal networks.
- **Trust:** Because of increased accountability, arrangements may increase water service providers' trust that water tariffs will be recovered.
- **Equity:** May compromise equity among users by setting unreasonable rates at each user's income and water consumption levels.

Social Costing

Definition: Subsidizing water allocations based on specific need or use.
Why this is useful: Communities identify users or groups within the communities who are less able to pay for water for their basic needs and give them subsidized access.
Example: MajiMilele
Learn More: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 43-44, 68*

- **Transparency:** May help with transparency, but it poses more challenges.
- **Accountability:** Similar to transparency, structures present additional challenges for accountability.
- **Trust:** Users are more likely to trust arrangements that implement social costing if they are on board with the rationale for differential treatments.
- **Equity:** Social costing increases equity of access by ensuring that everyone has access to enough water to cover their basic needs, regardless of socioeconomic status.

Training & Capacity Building and Operations & Maintenance (O&M)

Definition: O&M training and capacity building focuses around providing support to improve local knowledge for a water service.
Why this is useful: Local capacity building of entrepreneurs, skilled professionals, and regular community members can improve the returns to private sector engagement.
Examples: Uganda Water Service Institute, The Adventure Project
Learn More: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 44-45, 68*

- **Transparency:** Some challenges in transparency are directly connected to lack of capacity, especially at the local level.
- **Accountability:** Rural districts are often held accountable to water schemes' shortcomings by the users, but such accountability can be non-existent in the absence of well-trained professionals.
- **Equity:** There are no main connections between capacity building and equity besides the effects it has on the other governance aspects.

Landscape Snapshot

Areas of Practice

Contingent/ Results-Based Funding

Definition: Contingent funding (also known as results-based, outcomes-based or financing) is a practice through which funding is allocated based on previously agreed upon metrics of performance.
Why this is useful: This funding is used to create incentives for good performance by linking payment to observable outcomes.
Examples: DFID Tanzania, Turkana Water Fund
Learn More: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 50, 71-72*

- **Transparency:** Presents a unique set of difficulties as funding is conditioned to results or other goals set by the donors.
- **Accountability:** Explicitly designed to increase the accountability of service providers by aligning incentives for continued performance.
- **Trust:** Trust can be reinforced with contingent funding as a continuing relationship is established, as both sides learn to meet expectations and rearrange agreements upon reevaluations or as conditions change.

Participatory Planning

Definition: Participatory planning includes all relevant stakeholders in the planning processes for establishing new water systems and the maintenance and expansion of existing systems.
Why this is useful: Collaboration with communities through a long-term commitment can result in appropriate materials and activities that allow for true input from those who are meant to benefit from a particular water system.
Examples: Shared Vision Planning, Integrity Management Toolkit, CESPAD
Learn More: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 38-39, 71-72*

- **Transparency:** Increases transparency by giving water users and community members a better understanding of both the inputs to decision-making and the process through which final decisions will be made.
- **Accountability:** May increase the accountability of water service providers by making it clear to water users who the decision makers are.
- **Trust:** Increases users' trust in a water system and its management, as they have early access to information and the planning process.
- **Equity:** If not well structured, can reduce equity of input by giving special interest groups a platform through which to influence outcomes.

Water Treatment

Definition: Water treatment refers to processes that improve the quality of water, typically in reference to making water safe for drinking.
Why this is useful: Drinking water treatment is typically focused on removing microbial or mineral contaminates that are harmful to human health when ingested.
Examples: Chlorine tablets, AguaClara
Learn More: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 50, 66-67*

- **Transparency:** This research did not find any specific links to transparency based on water treatments besides those connected to other aspects of governance.
- **Accountability:** There are no links to accountability based on water treatments besides those connected to other aspects of governance.
- **Trust:** Some water users will have increased trust in the water system if water is properly treated.
- **Equity:** Water treatment can increase equity within the water supply system by providing water without contamination or health-related risks to all users.

Landscape Snapshot

Areas of Practice

Subscription Maintenance

Definition: Subscription maintenance is a practice through which individuals or groups of users pay a fixed fee at regular intervals in exchange for maintenance and repair of water systems.
Why this is useful: Subscription maintenance is similar to insurance, in which risk is pooled across many systems allowing access to technical support.
Examples: Whave, FundiFix, EverFlow, and Water for Good
Learn More: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 46-48, 67*

- **Transparency:** Efforts for transparency require some level of stability of information flow, which subscription maintenance may elicit for users if providers are also mandated to share information.
- **Accountability:** Increases the accountability of the water service provider by making clear the provider's obligations and standards.
- **Trust:** May increase users' trust in the reliability of the water system, as service providers have increased incentives to monitor performance and conduct preventative maintenance.
- **Equity:** This research found few links to equity based on subscription maintenance besides those connected to other aspects of governance.

System-Wide Assessment Tools

Definition: System-wide assessment tools are practices that allow a stakeholder to track the performance of water systems as a whole, both across projects and over time.
Why this is useful: These tools allow for an assessment of the strengths and weakness of a particular system, provide information for planning and decision-making, and allow for a benchmark against which to track progress over time.
Example: IRC's WASH System Building Block Assessment Tool
Learn More: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 50, 71-72*

- **Transparency:** Can increase transparency by making clearer the mode of assessment and the nature of the metrics that are important.
- **Accountability:** Can increase accountability by predefining the criteria for determining success and failure, and by treating a water system holistically.
- **Trust:** Most of the effects of system-wide assessment tools on trust come from its connection to transparency and accountability.
- **Equity:** Can increase equity by building indicators of inclusivity and participation into the assessment scheme.

Audits

Definition: Audits refer to the practice of systematically reviewing and assessing an organization's structure, performance, financial accounts, or other records.
Why this is useful: Audits are a form of regulatory control and oversight that can be used to constrain malfeasance.
Examples: STeFi, Water Integrity Network's Integrity Management Toolkit
Learn More: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 45-46, 69*

- **Transparency:** Can increase the transparency of service providers' finances and operations, especially those carried out by an external and independent party.
- **Accountability:** Can increase the accountability of service providers if they are implemented on a regular basis by independent, qualified staff, and there are predetermined and enforceable consequences.
- **Trust:** Regular audits can increase trust in a service provider by ensuring its customers that there is a mechanism for performance oversight.
- **Equity:** Audits are necessary to ensure equity is being pursued and/or achieved, particularly regarding how benefits are distributed.

Landscape Snapshot

Areas of Practice

Technical Associations

Definition: Technical associations are organizations made up of technical professionals in a specific field to assist with establishment of best practices.
Why this is useful: For members, technical associations can offer trainings and certifications, and help connect members to potential clients. For clients, an association can help with the identification of qualified technicians and with formalizing the process of contracting work.
Examples: Handpump Mechanics Associations, Association of Private Water Operators
Learn More: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 50, 71-72*

- **Transparency:** Can increase transparency through reducing the number of steps between stakeholders and information, and increasing the reliability of information.
- **Accountability:** Can increase the accountability of service providers when issues arise.
- **Trust:** Users may have increased trust in the private actors and the reliability of the water system if technical assistance increases the quality of service.
- **Equity:** Can standardize practices and prices, allowing for better planning on expenditures, even for remote locations.

Legal Registration & Formal Contracting

Definition: Legal registration refers to the process of recording details about a private entity in a standardized way that allows for the entity to be traceable and legally liable for its actions.
Why this is useful: The liability that follows from legal registration also allows service providers to access additional resources, such as establishing a bank account and accessing commercial financing.
Examples: Delmon
Learn More: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 40-41, 66*

- **Transparency:** Can increase transparency by building reporting requirements into the registration and contracting processes.
- **Accountability:** Should increase the accountability of water service providers because it facilitates government oversight and clarifies who is responsible for infrastructure.
- **Trust:** Can increase a water service provider's trust that the government won't appropriate their business.
- **Equity:** Ensures guidelines and procedures for all stakeholders in a water system that they will be included effectively and equitably in receiving benefits and making decisions.

Publication of Performance Information

Definition: Publication of performance information is publicly available information about the performance of service providers.
Why this is useful: It allows stakeholders, such as the general public, users, and/or oversight bodies, access to clear and accurate information about the performance of service providers.
Examples: WASREB, Good Governance Working Group in Uganda
Learn More: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 49-50, 71*

- **Transparency:** Making performance information available to the public increases transparency in terms of the performance of water service providers.
- **Accountability:** Because transparency is increased through the publication of performance information, accountability is made easier.
- **Trust:** Information can increase users' trust in the intentions and capacity of their water service provider.
- **Equity:** This research did not find any links to equity.

Landscape Snapshot

Areas of Practice

Training & Capacity Building (Technical)

Definition: Technical training and capacity building focuses around providing support to improve local knowledge for a water service.
Why this is useful: Local capacity building of entrepreneurs, skilled professionals, and regular community members can improve the returns to private sector engagement.
Examples: Uganda Water Service Institute, The Adventure Project
Learn More: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 44-45, 68*

- **Transparency:** Some challenges in transparency are directly connected to lack of capacity, especially at the local level.
- **Accountability:** Rural districts are often held accountable to water schemes' shortcomings by the users, but such accountability can be non-existent in the absence of well-trained professionals.
- **Trust:** Can increase users' trust in the reliability of the water system. Financial management trainings and capacity building can increase users' trust that tariffs are being managed appropriately.
- **Equity:** There are no main connections between capacity building and equity.

Community Meetings

Definition: Community meetings with service providers connect the users of a water system to service providers and relevant government officials.
Why this is useful: Meetings allow service providers and government officials to share information with users, as well as allowing users to provide feedback to or ask questions of their service provider.
Examples: Water Clinics – Nakuru, Kenya
Learn More: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 49, 70-71*

- **Transparency:** Meetings in which technical and financial information is shared with the community can increase transparency in a straightforward manner.
- **Accountability:** Can increase accountability if community members are able to give feedback to service providers and government, and to question the past or current actions of service providers and government officials.
- **Trust:** The act of asking questions, receiving usable information, and interacting directly face-to-face can increase community members' and users' trust in service providers.
- **Equity:** Community meetings can increase equity if they are open to all community members or users.

PHOTO CREDIT: WADA, Tanzania, 2020.

Landscape Snapshot

Frameworks

Microfinancing

Definition: Microfinancing refers to financial services, such as loans, that are provided to small businesses or individual entrepreneurs who typically do not qualify for traditional financial services.
Why this is useful: Microfinancing helps address the lack of capital that hinders entry of small-scale private operators.
Examples: K-Rep Bank
Learn More: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 38, 64-65*

- **Transparency:** Our research did not find any specific links to transparency based on microfinancing besides those connected to other aspects of governance.
- **Accountability:** It helps improve system operations by creating more specific and localized accountability among microfinance stakeholders, including service providers and recipients.
- **Trust:** Increases bilateral trust between those responsible for the water supply system and users.
- **Equity:** Increases equity among (potential) water service providers by opening the water sector to small-scale entrepreneurs who lack the necessary upfront capital and who are unlikely to qualify for traditional financing.

Umbrella Organizations

Definition: Umbrella organizations (also called federations, cooperatives, or trusts) refer to an institutional arrangement through which multiple organizations that each manage a water point or system form an aggregate, overarching organization.
Why this is useful: Umbrella organizations can provide technical or financial services to lower-level member organizations in exchange for financial transfer from constituent water organizations, sometimes subsidized by government or donors.
Examples: Professionalized Rural Service Areas (PRSA), Federation of Community Owned Water Supply Organizations (COWSOs) within Tanzania, South Western Umbrella for Water and Sanitation (SWUWS)
Learn More: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 33-34, 61-62*

- **Transparency:** Each umbrella organization is organized differently, thus having mixed effects on implications for transparency.
- **Accountability:** The accountability implications of umbrellas will depend on the degree of top-down pressure.
- **Trust:** Well-functioning umbrella organizations have the potential to increase trust in the water system's reliability because of the increased capacity of technical staff relative to local maintenance staff and because of better access to spare parts.
- **Equity:** Regional equity may be expected from establishing an umbrella organization. Some localities suffer from lack of access to the numerous tools discussed here for reasons including town size, remoteness, cultural differences, etc.

Landscape Snapshot

Frameworks

Franchising

Definition: A franchising framework refers to a contractual arrangement in which entrepreneurs pay for access to a franchiser's name, processes, practices, and knowledge, typically in the form of a licensing fee plus ongoing royalties.
Why this is useful: A franchising business model can help small businesses and entrepreneurs overcome barriers to starting a business, including the development of a business method, the establishment of branding, raising initial capital, understanding and complying with regulations, and training qualified staff.
Examples: Safe Water Network, Jibu, Mama Maji
Learn More: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 35-38, 64*

- **Transparency:** By establishing business relationships, franchisors can improve transparency among stakeholders in the water system though confirming the linkage mechanisms with each franchisee.
- **Accountability:** Franchisers can hold individual franchisee entrepreneurs accountable through their contractual relationship and by creating an intermediary between government and small water service providers.
- **Trust:** Can increase customers' trust in the reliability and quality of water provided.
- **Equity:** Can increase equity in community water systems by implementing guidelines in which the franchisor requires franchisees to ensure that all community members have an equal opportunity to receive service and participate in decision making.

Rural Utilities

Definition: Utilities are typically publicly owned but independently run organizations that maintain and operate water schemes.
Why this is useful: Rural utilities provide water services and operations for smaller water networks.
Examples: Ugandan National Water and Sewage Corporation (NWSC)
Learn More: *GROWS Landscape Review Pages: 35, 62-63*

- **Transparency:** Because utilities are publicly owned, regulators can require the collection and sharing of performance information, increasing transparency.
- **Accountability:** Governments are better able to hold utilities accountable.
- **Trust:** Water users may trust utilities operating more than regional umbrellas or private operators because of their national profile and their deep expertise and experience.
- **Equity:** Rural utilities may increase equity in access if regulations compel them to expand into underserved areas that would not be served under a fully privatized system.

Water Governance Indicators

Introduction

Performance indicators can help to track the progress of a project and measure actual results against expected results. They are an important management tool to consider when creating either a Performance Management Plan (PMP) or a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) plan.

When designing and implementing a project, managers should select a number of indicators to measure the impact of the project, while keeping in mind that indicators alone cannot describe why a project is or is not achieving its intended results. Depending on the project, both standard indicators and custom indicators may be of interest.

Standard Indicators

To report on its development investments in a consistent manner, USAID has identified some performance indicators as the best choices for characterizing progress in each of the sectors and technical areas in which it works.

This set of indicators, called standard indicators, is to be given priority over alternatives wherever a particular standard indicator would be applicable.

The U.S. State Department maintains the list of *Foreign Assistance Standard Indicators*.

The following are a subset of potentially relevant indicators for consideration when designing water governance programs and activities.

Capacity Building

CBLD-9: Percent of USG-assisted organizations with improved performance.

Definition
This indicator measures whether USG-funded capacity development efforts have led to improved organizational performance in organizations receiving organizational capacity development support.

What counts
This indicator should only be used when the following conditions are met: a) The activity theory of change, award documents, work plan, or other relevant documentation reflects that resources (human, financial, and/or other) were allocated for organizational capacity development. (b) An organization demonstrates that it has undergone and documented a process of performance improvement which meets the four requirements detailed in the Performance Indicator Reference Sheet.

Governance

DR. 4-1: Number of USG-supported activities designed to promote or strengthen the civic participation of women.

Definition
An activity is defined as a specific, individual action under a larger program, for example a training or capacity building initiative, the design of an event that incorporates or encourages women's participation, or an advocacy campaign to encourage and increase women's civic participation.

What counts
To be counted, an activity should explicitly identify strengthening, promoting, or increasing women's participation as one of its objectives, and should be intended to achieve a quantifiable increase or qualitative improvement in women's civic participation at the local or national level.

Gender

GNDR.8: Number of persons trained with USG assistance to advance outcomes consistent with gender equality or female empowerment through their roles in public or private sector institutions or organizations.

Definition
This indicator is a count of the number of persons trained with USG assistance to advance gender equality or female empowerment objectives in the context of their official/formal role(s) within a public or private sector institution or organization. To be counted under this indicator, a person must have been trained in their role as an actor within a public or private sector institution or organization. Persons receiving training in their individual capacity, such as livelihoods training designed to increase individual or household income, should not be counted under this indicator. Public or private sector institutions or organizations include but are not limited to: government agencies forming part of the executive, judicial, or legislative branches; public and private health, financial, and education institutions; and civil society organizations such as rights advocacy groups, business associations, faith-based groups, and labor unions.

What counts
To be counted under this indicator, persons must have participated in a training of at least three hours, with content designed to develop or strengthen the institution's/organization's capacity to advance gender equality or female empowerment objectives. Stand-alone gender trainings may be counted under this indicator, as well as trainings where gender is integrated within a broader sector training. In the latter case, the training must include a substantial focus on gender issues (e.g., gender issues are addressed throughout the training, there is a gender module that explores the relevant gender issues in depth, etc.).

Water Supply

More information and guidance on the water-related indicators is available on the USAID Global Waters website including the *WASH Indicator Handbook* and *WASH Indicator References Sheets*. A summary of how progress in WASH is measured is also available in the *WASH in Development.*

HL.8.3-3: Number of water and sanitation sector institutions strengthened to manage water resources or improve water supply and sanitation services as a result of USG assistance.

Definition
This indicator will measure the number of water sector institutions that demonstrate an improvement in governance based on an activity-specific institutional assessment index. The index can be activity-specific but must follow guidelines below and must be able to set a baseline against which improvement is measured. Changes must result through USG assistance and meet targets set at the beginning of the activity.

What counts
Institutions under this indicator may include:

- Local, regional, or national government ministries
- Regulators
- Civil society organizations which conduct activities in support of government policy-making and implementation

Improvements will be measured using an activity-specific institutional assessment index. The index will measure outcome-based changes, where the following categories can be considered for possible inclusion in the index:

- Human resources
- Monitoring systems
- Financial management (budget execution, ability to pass an annual audit)
- Project planning and management of implementation
- Enforcement of policies (watershed protection, allocation systems)
- Equity (tariff setting, poor inclusive policy, gender mainstreaming policy)
- Accountability to stakeholders

Note
Service providers (for example utilities or water point committees) cannot be counted towards this indicator. In cases where a new eligible institution (see above) is formed, it can be counted once even in the absence of an activity-specific institutional index baseline as long as all other aspects of the definition are met.

PHOTO CREDIT: WADA, Tanzania, 2019.

Custom Indicators

Custom indicators supplement USAID's list of standard indicators. Missions are encouraged to use them in combination with standard indicators for multidimensional results where a single indicator may not be adequate for assessing progress towards intended results. Custom indicators are also appropriate for results for which no standard indicator exists.

The ***USAID WASH Governance Technical Brief*** identifies some of the challenges and opportunities in tracking improvements in governance as changes happen slowly over time and may not be as tangible as other more straightforward output measurements (such as number of people gaining access to a water service). The brief includes the following list of suggested custom indicators for tracking WASH and water resources management (WRM) governance.

- **Percent of people in targeted local government units who feel that local government is addressing their WASH and/or WRM concerns**
- **Number of targeted local government units implementing WASH or WRM investment or development plans with community input**
- **Ratio of planned expenditure to actual expenditure on WASH (local or national governments, or other implementing organizations)**
- **Number or percent of local governments allocating budget to implement WASH policies and projects**
- **Number of civil society organizations engaged in WASH- or WRM-related civic education or social mobilization activities**
- **Number of groups representing marginalized constituencies in USAID-supported activities trying to affect government policy or conducting oversight of WASH**
- **Number of CSOs showing improvement on USAID's advocacy index or reaching a certain level of expertise on the index (or similar advocacy measurement scales)**
- **Number of districts with monitoring information systems in place and used as a result of USG assistance**
- **New or improved mechanisms for civil society organizations to advocate for WASH as a result of USG assistance**

The ***DRG Evidence, and Learning Platform*** curated a set of DRG-custom indicators across different topics and the custom indicators relevant to the rural water and governance sector include.

- **Percentage of youth and women among participants in project-funded social accountability actions**
- **Number of USG-supported activities designed to promote or strengthen the civic participation of women**
- **Number of public accountability and transparency mechanisms implemented**
- **Percentage of women (disaggregated by planning process) who are satisfied with their role in communal affairs/ decision making**

Utilizing Data to Improve Rural Water Governance

Challenge

According to the United Nations, at the current pace the world will not meet the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) on water. This means that in the year 2030, hundreds of millions of people will still be spending hours to collect unsafe drinking water, especially in rural areas where most of the unserved population currently lives. Achieving the SDGs and making sure that nobody is left behind will require dramatic acceleration of water access.

One of the biggest challenges limiting progress to date is the lack of information about rural water services and infrastructure. Historically, detailed global data about rural water points has not been available. Global actors looking to develop evidence-based strategies have had to either rely on national summary estimates, reference small-scale studies, or spend massive amounts of resources to bring together disparate data sets. At a local level, the barriers to using evidence are even greater. Many countries have no national inventory of rural water services, and many others have no way to regularly update the data that has been collected. Further, critical data that has been collected is often difficult to access, even by government officials. In cases where data is available, the capacity needed to turn raw data into insights and improved decisions is often limited.

The ***UN-Water 2021 Summary Progress Update on SDG 6*** states that "credible and timely water and sanitation data provide numerous social, economic, and environmental benefits in both public and private sectors, such as stronger political accountability and commitment, as well as public and private investments. [High quality data] also enables evidence-based policy-making, regulations, planning and investments at all levels, to ensure the most effective deployment of resources." However, UN-Water identifies specific data challenges, including gaps in data collection and sharing, and suggests that improved data generation, validation, standardization, and information exchange can build trust so leaders can make informed decisions and increase accountability. These ideas are also expressed in the U.S. Global Water Strategy (GWS), which identifies the lack of data for decision-making as a limiting factor in service provision sustainability and includes a strategic approach to promote common data exchange formats and access to data for decision-making to help support reaching GWS objectives (U.S. Government, 2017).

Key Datasets for Improving Governance at Scale

GROWS identified that collecting, sharing and utilizing data can improve rural water governance at the community level. *Read more here*

Linking community data into a larger administrative district, region and/or national dataset is an important step towards improving governance at scale, as planning decisions regarding budget and resource allocations are generally made at these higher levels. Data can be used to provide decision-makers with objective information regarding what works and what doesn't to inform policies and priorities. Each of the following four datasets provide key insights which will support USAID staff during the design evaluation of water governance programs and activities.

The **WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (JMP)** has reported country, regional and global estimates of progress on WASH since 1990. The JMP database aggregates data from a range of household surveys including the Demographic Health Survey (DHS), the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys [MICS] and national census data.

Program design use case
Explore information on access to WASH services at the national scale. Additionally, JMP hosts datasets and provides analyses focused on WASH services at healthcare facilities and schools.

Website
https://washdata.org/

The **United Nations -Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS)** is an effort to harmonize global water governance data. GLAAS "provides policy- and decision-makers at all levels with reliable, easily accessible, comprehensive data on WASH systems, including on governance, monitoring, human resources and finance. GLAAS monitors elements of WASH systems that are required to sustain and extend WASH services and systems to all, and especially to the most vulnerable population groups." GLAAS conducts its survey every two years.

Program design use case
Examine key findings for six thematic areas including: governance, monitoring, human resources, finance, equity and external aid which can be useful for identifying needs and opportunities to include in program design.

Website
https://glaas.who.int/

The **Sistema de Información de Agua y Saneamiento Rural (Rural Water and Sanitation Information System; SIASAR)** platform consists of an open-source web interface and a mobile application for rural water and sanitation data collection and analysis. In addition to tracking the physical condition of water systems, it also gathers data on access, service quality, and sustainability of service provision. SIASAR provides standardized surveys for data collection and uses collected data to create a suite of rankings for each of four 'entities': community, infrastructure, service providers, and technical assistance providers.

Use case
Review existing data on communities, infrastructure, service providers and technical assistance providers for insights on needs and opportunities for program design. Note: SIASAR implementation has primarily been in Latin America, but there is interest to expand the geographical focus to include sub-Saharan Africa.

Website
https://globalsiasar.org/en

The **Water Point Data Exchange (WPdx)** is an open platform for crowdsourcing data from small water systems and point sources from a variety of stakeholders including governments, NGOs and academics and harmonizes those disparate datasets into a freely available, consolidated, analysis-ready dataset. The WPdx platform includes a suite of decision-support tools to prioritize resources based on existing levels of service available. WPdx is focused on basic service but is exploring expansion to estimate access to safely managed and limited services. GROWS supported WPdx in incorporating governance-related datasets for improved predictions and adding new filters focused on water service management type to provide insights for understanding trends and improving water service governance.

Use case
Utilize decision-support tools to identify priority districts (or sub-districts) based on service coverage, provide details for district (or sub-district) level planning on priority water points for rehabilitation and preventative maintenance and potential locations for new construction.

Website
https://www.waterpointdata.org

CLICK HERE
for the full *WPdx user guide*.

Water point based and household survey based water access estimates comparison:

Multiple sources of data are available to decision makers on the state of water access and services. There is relatively strong agreement that reliable data for decision-making is needed. At the same time, it is not always clear which data sources are both available and appropriate to answer the questions about where and how to invest resources in water services and how to appropriately target the poorest. This study seeks to determine how water point coverage estimates based on publicly available data from WPdx compare and contrast with the subnational household survey figures used by the Joint Monitoring Programme of WHO/UNICEF (JMP) in their inequality country files. The goal is to provide recommendations about how these different estimates, including the official JMP figures, could be used in tandem and identify their respective strengths and limitations.

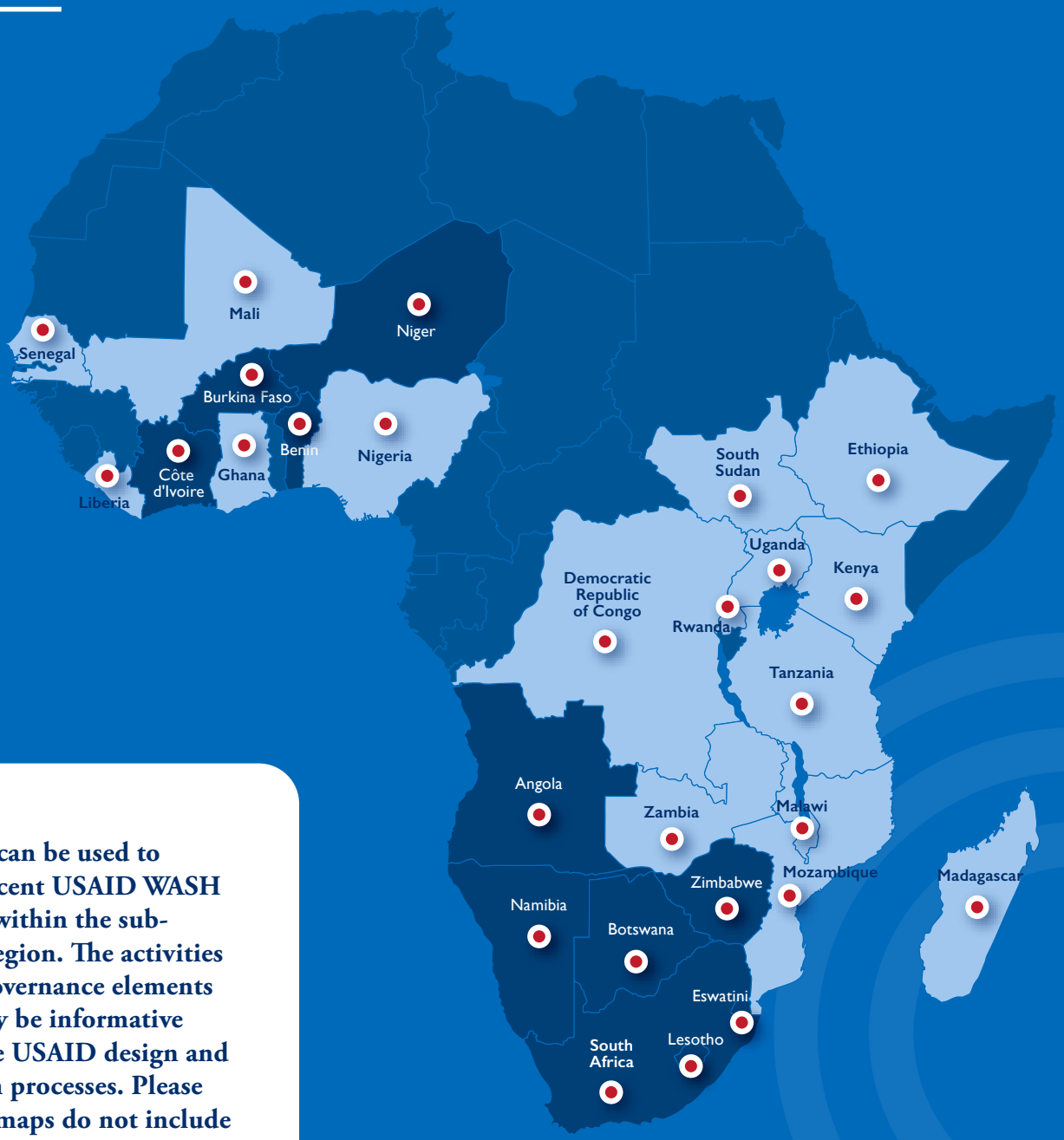
CLICK HERE
for the *paper submitted to peer reviewed journal.*

PHOTO CREDIT: WADA, Tanzania, 2020.

USAID Water Activities Sub-Saharan Africa Country Reference Guide

HOVER OVER COUNTRY ON MAP TO SEE RECENT ACTIVTIES

USAID HIGH PRIORITY & STRATEGY ALIGNED COUNTRY



This map can be used to explore recent USAID WASH activities within the sub-Saharan region. The activities include governance elements which may be informative during the USAID design and evaluation processes. Please note that maps do not include Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) funded water activities.

Updated information will be available at *Global Waters*.

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