

# Sector Strengthening Programme Design Toolkit

This document sets out a series of nine participatory exercises that can be used to design a programme focussed on sector strengthening for sustainable services. On average, it will take 2 days to complete all nine exercises, although this will vary depending on the depth of the discussions (some Country Programme Teams have previously spent up to 4 days to complete them). Relevant institutions (local government, national government, local private sector, service providers, regulators, utilities, civil society groups etc) should participate in the programme design process.

## Overview of exercises

**Exercise 1** encourages participants to discuss the willingness and ability of government to ensure sustainable universal access to WASH services. This helps to assess the balance of the programme between strengthening sector capacity versus supporting civil society to demand their WASH rights and hold government to account.

**Exercise 2** asks participants to identify the root causes of poor service sustainability using 'three levels of why'. Root causes are then mapped against six dimensions of sustainability and discussed in plenary.

**Exercise 3** asks participants to identify the critical sector processes and functions required for service sustainability. The facilitator positions these into groups which subsequently form the 'sector building blocks' (strategic planning, monitoring, coordination, financing, institutional arrangements, water resources and accountability).

**Exercise 4** introduces the District Sustainability Assessment. This exercise encourages participants to discuss the strength of the WASH sector in the district/city in relation to the seven sector building blocks (first introduced in Exercise 3). This helps to identify which building blocks should be prioritised in the programme.

**Exercise 5** encourages participants to think about the other sector actors who are already working to strengthen the various sector building blocks in the district/city. This is to avoid duplicating ongoing efforts and to identify WaterAid's added value.

**Exercise 6** asks participants to prioritise areas the programme is going to focus on and identify outcomes that the programme will achieve in relation to these priorities. It may be necessary to identify longer-term outcomes that will be achieved beyond the duration of the programme and nearer term outcomes that will be achieved within the programme.

**Exercise 7** asks participants to identify activities for the programme under each outcome area. To do this, participants should take into account the discussions from the previous five exercises about the strength of the WASH sector and what other organisations are already doing to strengthen the building blocks in the target area.

For more information contact Vinny Casey at [VincentCasey@wateraid.org](mailto:VincentCasey@wateraid.org), Clare Battle at [ClareBattle@wateraid.org](mailto:ClareBattle@wateraid.org) and/or Hannah Crichton-Smith at [HannahCrichtonSmith@wateraid.org](mailto:HannahCrichtonSmith@wateraid.org)

**Exercise 8** invites participants to vote on the proposed activities to identify which ones are most achievable and impactful within the timeframe of the project.

**Exercise 9** asks participants to reflect on the skills and resources required to deliver the project activities and achieve project outcomes.

**Exercise 10** draws on the 'Partnership Training' exercises which encourage participants to think about the partnerships required for the successful delivery of the project.

### Exercise 1: Willingness & Ability of Government to deliver and sustain services / behaviours

**Time: 30 minutes**

**Objective:** Participants express where their government is in relation to their willingness and ability to ensure that everyone gets access to WASH services. This helps to understand how to balance our programme efforts between strengthening institutional capacity versus empowerment activities aimed at achieving sustainability. Obviously, government participants may be 'unwilling' to rate themselves objectively so if there is heavy government participation in this exercise it might make more sense to replace it with a stakeholder analysis that asks participants to rank themselves in terms of their level of interest in and ability to deliver and sustain services / behaviours.



#### Method:

- Print out 4 x A4 copies with 'Willing & Able', 'Willing but unable', 'Unwilling but able' and 'Unwilling & Unable'.
- Mark a grid on the floor using thick white tape
- Position print-out headings into each of the quadrants (see image below)
- Ask participants to stand in the quadrant where they think their governments is
- Discussion follows about why they are standing where they are.

#### Resources:

- Thick white tape
- 4 x A4 sheets with one bearing 'Willing & Able', one with 'Willing but unable', one with 'Unwilling but able' and one with 'Unwilling & Unable'.

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Willing and Able	Unwilling but Able
Willing but Not Able	Unwilling and Unable

## Exercise 2: Unpacking Sustainability (using three 'levels of why')

**Time: 1hr+**

**Objective:** Participants identify some of the major threats to the sustainability of water, sanitation and hygiene in their country. Participants are encouraged to use a 'three levels of why' approach to get to root causes of poor service sustainability. Participants share two reasons for water, sanitation and hygiene and position these under the six dimensions of sustainability.



### Method:

- Set up a grid with WASHTech symbols and headings down the left-hand side
- Position 'Water', 'Sanitation' and 'Hygiene' headings along the top of the grid
- Cover/hide the grid with blank flipchart paper – this is to avoid participants thinking only of the causes of poor sustainability under the fixed dimensions in the grid.
- Work in groups to discuss and identify the root causes of poor service sustainability using three 'levels of why'.
- Groups write the third reason (third level of why) on a small piece of card or post-it note.
- Once groups have finished discussing, reveal the grid.
- Group nominates one person to put cards/post-it notes against different dimensions on the grid.
- Group reports back and discusses in plenary their identified root causes against the different dimensions for water, sanitation, hygiene.

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## Resources:

- WASHTech symbols – printed in A4 in colour
- WASHTech category headings – printed in A4 in black and white
- Thick white tape
- Coloured post-it notes / small cards
- Marker pens

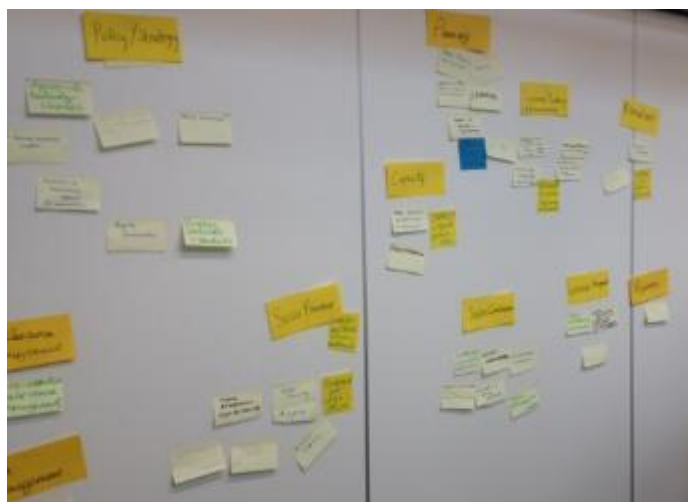
## Exercise 3: What does an ideal WASH sector look like?

**Time: 45 mins**

**Objective:** Participants identify what critical sector processes have to be in place to enable services to be delivered, managed and sustained. These processes are building blocks for sustainable services.

### Method:

- Introduce session objective and task. Make link from exercise 2 about multiple dimensions of service sustainability.
- Define what we mean by “sector” – “all actors, institutions and functions that need to be in place for sustained universal access to be achieved”.
- Group work. Participants discuss what sector processes have to be in place to enable services to be delivered, managed and sustained. They write these on post its – just three words max. They try to come up with a minimum of 4
- Groups nominates a reporter to feedback on the identified processes – reporter comes to the front to share cards.
- Facilitator groups these under headings that effectively group the different processes. These headings are the ‘building blocks’ (coordination, strategic planning, financing, monitoring, accountability, service delivery, environment and water resources, institutional arrangements)
- Discussion follows about the different processes, other processes that don’t fall neatly under a building block, and who leads on different processes.



## Resources:

- Coloured post-it notes
- Large wall space
- Marker pens
- List of the eight building block headings (to help facilitator to group the identified processes)

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### Exercise 4: District Situation Analysis Tool

Time: 1hr30

**Objective:** Participants position where their districts are in relation to the different building blocks for sustainable services. They discuss why the districts are where they are (barrier analysis).

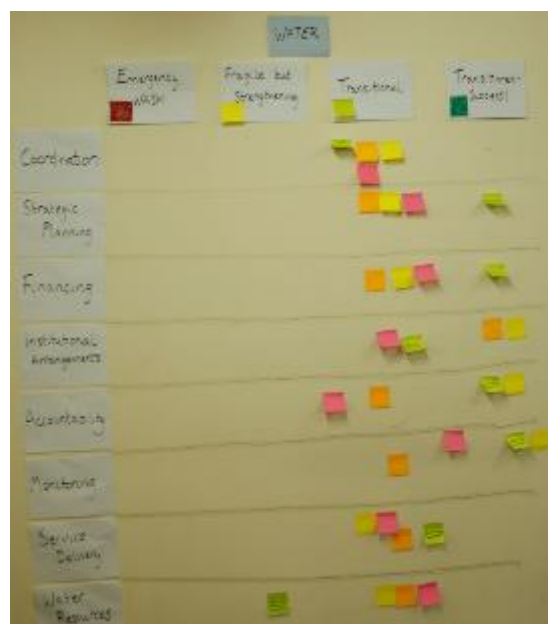
	Emergency WASH	Fragile but strengthening	Transitioned	Desired/ all services using District systems (Transitioned)
<b>Coordination</b>	Coordination is often a challenge. District WASH Officers by JICAOP are a challenge to work with in some districts.	No coordination of agencies	Key political connections of the WASH are in the district	Multiple agencies, but not completely clear roles for all stakeholders
<b>Strategic planning</b>	WASH plans, water supply plans or government water plans, are not always clear.	Plans are available, but often unclear, handwritten, inconsistent, lacking and not updated.	Plan is clear in theory, but not always clear in practice. It is often unclear how to implement it.	Multiple plans in relation to water services, often conflicting with each other.
<b>Financing</b>	External or specific funds through NGOs and UN agencies.	External financing is often used, but often not clearly defined. Funding is often used for specific projects.	World Bank, UN agencies and other donors, but not always clear. On budget, but not always clear.	Multiple sources of funding, but not always clear. Funding is often used for specific projects.
<b>Institutional Arrangements</b>	There is an overlap between different agencies, but often not clearly defined. There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what.	Multiple agencies are often involved, but often not clearly defined. There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what.	Multiple agencies are often involved, but often not clearly defined. There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what.	Multiple agencies are often involved, but often not clearly defined. There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what.
<b>Accountability</b>	There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what. There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what.	There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what. There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what.	There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what. There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what.	There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what. There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what.
<b>Monitoring</b>	There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what. There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what.	There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what. There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what.	There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what. There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what.	There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what. There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what.
<b>Service delivery</b>	There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what. There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what.	There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what. There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what.	There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what. There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what.	There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what. There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what.
<b>Environmental issues</b>	There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what. There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what.	There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what. There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what.	There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what. There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what.	There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what. There is often a lack of clarity on who is responsible for what.

**Method:**

- Set up building blocks grid onto large wall space. Position building block headings down left-hand side of the grid. Position status headings along the top of the grid.
- Split participants into groups
- Ask each group to select a district and think about where their district is in relation to the different building blocks
- Ask participants to stick post-it notes onto the grid on the wall
- Discuss in plenary why participants have stuck post-it notes where they have

**Resources:**

- A3 size coloured print-outs of District Situational Analysis Tool – 2 per group (or 1 between 2 participants)
- Building block headings (Coordination, Strategic Planning, Financing, Institutional Arrangements, Accountability, Monitoring, Service Delivery, Environment & Water Resources)
- State headings (Emergency WASH, Fragile but Strengthening, Transitioned, Desired/Transitioned)
- Thick white tape
- Large wall space
- Coloured post-it notes
- Marker pens





## Exercise 5: What are others doing in the district?

**Time: 1hr30**

**Objective:** Participants identify which other actors are working on the sector strengthening building blocks within the district to avoid duplication, ensure efforts are complementary and aligned, and identify WA's added value is.

### Method:

- Set flipchart paper on the wall
- Write one building block on each flipchart paper and draw line across the middle (On the top half write 'water', on the bottom half write 'sanitation')
- Introduce activity (high level objectives)
- Split participants into groups to discuss what others are doing to strengthening the building blocks
- Groups write down 2-3 words per post-it note about who is doing what in the district
- Groups nominates 1 person to stick up post-it notes onto relevant building block flipchart paper and relevant section (water/sanitation)
- Each group rapporteur presents what they've written on their post-it notes. If activities have been mentioned before, no need to mention them again.
- Group discussion to answer following question: Is everything captured here? Where are there gaps? Where could WaterAid's added value be? Guide questions about trends in who is doing what and where WA can add value/support etc.



### Resources:

- Flipchart paper
- Marker pens
- Post-it notes of 1 colour

## Exercise 6: Identification of what outcomes the programme wants to achieve

**Time:** 1hr+

**Objective:** Participants identify what areas the programme is going to prioritise working on and what outcomes they want to see in relation to those priorities. Essentially participants set out what change they want to see happen.

### Method:

- It may be necessary to define long term outcomes that are only achievable beyond the duration of the programme and near term outcomes that can realistically be achieved within the programme. These then become the focus of activity development
- Split into groups
- Groups discuss what outcomes the programme will aim to achieve in relation to each priority area selected from the previous building block analysis exercise
- Groups should determine one outcome per priority area

### Resources:

- Flipchart paper
- Marker pens

## Exercise 7: Activity identification

**Time:** 2hr+

**Objective:** Participants identify what gaps there are and where more work needs to be done to achieve sustainable, universal access to WASH services.

### Method:

- Use same flipchart papers as previous session.
- Split into groups
- Groups discuss what more needs to be done under each building block to strengthen service sustainability
- Write down on post-it notes possible activities under each of the building blocks (max. 3 words)
- Stick post-it notes on relevant flip chart building block
- Plenary discussion to follow on what and why certain activities have been identified

### Resources:

- Flipchart paper
- Marker pens
- Coloured post-it notes





## Exercise 8: Activity prioritisation & feasibility

**Time: 30 minutes**

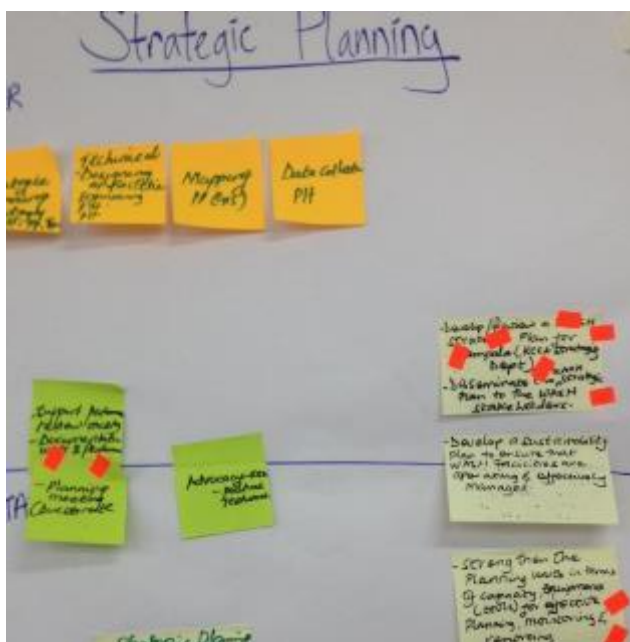
**Objective:** To identify which proposed activities are achievable within a set timeframe.

### Method:

- Introduction to activity **(5mins)**
- Give each participant 4 sticker dots
- Ask each participant to stick one dot on the four activities they think are most feasible and impactful within the set timeframe of the planned project.
- Wrap-up plenary discussion – identify clusters of activities/outliers (and ask people to explain their decisions) **(20mins)**

### Resources:

- Small sticker dots or marker pens (to identify priority activities)



## Exercise 9: Mapping resources & skills required for successful implementation

**Time: 1hr**

**Objective:** Participants identify what internal resources are required to deliver the identified activities and achieve project aims

### Method:

- Project list of resources/skills required to deliver planned activities:
  - Good understanding of national level policy environment
  - Good working relationship with district/national level government and other key stakeholders
  - Dedicated and experienced project manager who understands blockages to WASH service sustainability
  - Sufficient finances to cover activity and staff costs
  - Ability to convene multiple stakeholders and facilitate discussions for improved sector coordination
  - Ability to support government to collect baseline of service levels and asset registry data
  - Understanding of and ability to use data collection and analysis tools (mWater, Excel)
  - Understanding of and ability to conduct life-cycle costing analysis
  - Ability to support district planning processes
  - Understanding of and ability to support district governments to contextualise national policy, strategy and plans
  - Understanding of and ability to support district governments to adapt and apply global/national monitoring indicators to the district level
  - Understanding of and ability to improve/optimize contracting and procurement processes (particularly for drilling)
  - Understanding of and ability to support local government to improve quality of implementation and selection of appropriate service options
- Split participants into groups to consider the skills/resources and identify those which are available/required for effective delivery of activities.
- Plenary discussion
- Write down list of resources/skills still required.

### Resources:

- Flipchart paper
- Marker pens

## Exercise 10: Partnership mapping

**Time: 1hr 30mins**

**Objective:** Participants are clear on who they need to partner with to undertake specific activities and what the nature of those partnerships are.

### Method:

- Identify all of the partners whom you think you will need to partner with to help deliver your activities
- Write these down on a flipchart paper
- Draw a circle around the partners who are directly involved/central to the achievement of the project (primary partners)
- Partners outside of the circle are secondary partners
- Draw lines to connect the partners with one another, write along the lines the kind of agreement required and the resources that each partner brings to the work (for example, money, time, expertise, profile/reputation etc.)



*(See the partnership training for full method & resources)*

### Resources:

- Flipchart paper
- Marker pens

## Additional resources

### Political Economy Analysis Toolkit

The PEA toolkit provides a structured approach for analysing how change happens; from the national to the local level. It can help shape our country strategies, programmes and even 'everyday' decisions.

The toolkit consists of four different tools. These are complementary, but can be used separately as a stand-alone exercise, too. Each tool includes facilitation guidance, a set of core questions and discussion points, and participatory exercises to help visualise the political economy features being analysed. They are intended to help produce rapid good quality analysis, to increase our understanding of which strategies, tactics or decisions may be appropriate in the different contexts in which we work.

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