



# WASH Accountability Mapping Tools

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR  
**SUSTAINABILITY**



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## WASH Accountability mapping tools

Ensuring the sustainability of investments in the WASH sector remains a major challenge in many parts of the world. An unacceptable number of WASH projects still fail within a few years of completion, putting access to safe and sustainable drinking water and sanitation at risk. Even communities that still have access to water and sanitation services have to deal with poor service provision.

The solution is not so much about installing new infrastructures, but about building systems that can deliver reliable water and sanitation services in the long-term. Good governance of the sector, within an accountability framework, is crucial for the national sector to deliver sustainable results at scale. Governments, service providers, civil society and communities must all play their role and cooperate to better protect the right to safe water and sanitation.

Accountability mapping tools are participatory instruments developed to assess the status and quality of accountability lines within the water and sanitation sector. They enable participants to review practices in any country at the local or sector level. The tools produce graphics of the water sector, represented as a comprehensive system of accountability relations including:

- Roles and functions – who is doing what in the sector?
- Relations between actors – who is accountable to whom?

The mapping helps to identify the accountability weaknesses to be addressed, the actors who should be engaged in this work and potential improvement actions.

### KEY POINTS

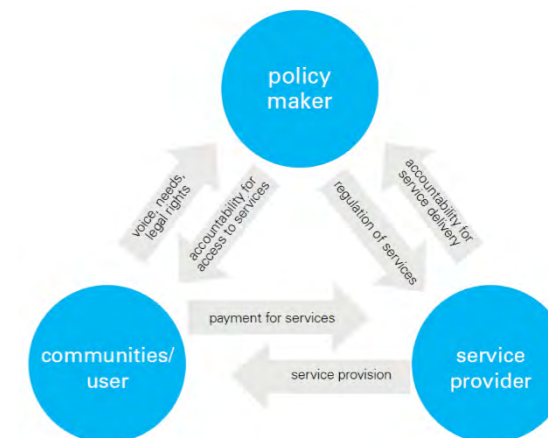
- WASH accountability tools enable participants to assess the status of accountability relations existing between actors of the service delivery system in a quick and comprehensive manner.
- The assessment can be conducted as a quick sector snapshot or as an in-depth diagnosis at the service delivery level.
- The process is based on a representation of the sector in the form of a triangle of accountability. The visualisation helps identify the actors and their relations as duty bearers and rights holders.
- The findings help identify areas for priority action and recommended actions.






## The triangle of accountability in the service delivery framework

The Accountability mapping tools are built upon the accountability framework, the generic set-up of institutional responsibilities in public service provision. It is represented as a triangle showing the existing functions and relations within the public service delivery.









The figure of the triangle shows that the water and sanitation sector works as a system of interconnected functions that need to work together for the services to be provided successfully and for the long term



### Accountability relations

	<p><b>Policymakers</b></p> <p>The state has the primary responsibility for the allocation and provision of water, as a basic service and as a human right. Governments fulfil this responsibility by planning, regulating, financing, budgeting and monitoring services and providing information about them. Government decisions also underpin the service delivery arrangement. This includes the setting up of legal and regulatory frameworks that create the operating environment for the providers, delegation, contracting, or licensing of operations, so that providers deliver services to the users.</p>
	<p><b>Service providers</b></p> <p>The responsibility for the provision of WASH services can be held by the central government, or transferred to lower tiers of government, to the private sector, to non-profit organisations, to communities or to the households.</p> <p>Regardless of the service delivery arrangement, service providers in charge of delivering the service are accountable to the state. Critical elements in the relationship between policy makers and service providers are clear responsibilities and performance standards as well as a good information flow.</p> <p>Service providers are also accountable to the communities and/or individual users, who establish their entitlement to services through a contract or an agreement and the payment of tariff.</p>
	<p><b>Communities/users</b></p> <p>Users have two ways to claim their rights to WASH services: either by exercising their voice through elections or other political actions to make politicians and policy-makers prioritize services, or by exerting influence directly over providers through increased voice and participation in service delivery.</p>

## Accountability links

 <p>policy-maker</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountability for access to services</li> <li>• Establish mechanisms for participation and complaints</li> <li>• Transparent budget process and budget allocation</li> <li>• Information about services</li> <li>• Sector investment planning</li> <li>• Targeting of resources to reduce inequalities</li> <li>• Responsiveness</li> <li>• Ensure existence of legal, political and economic means to demand better services</li> </ul>
 <p>communities/ user</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voice, needs and rights</li> <li>• Vote and other forms of political participation</li> <li>• Participation in institutional mechanisms for oversight and monitoring</li> <li>• Participation in government-led interactions on WASH services</li> <li>• Complaints</li> </ul>
 <p>service provider</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reliable service delivery and behaviours</li> <li>• Consultation</li> <li>• Transparency</li> <li>• Equity</li> <li>• Responsiveness</li> <li>• Affordability</li> <li>• Quality</li> <li>• Availability</li> </ul>
 <p>communities/ user</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Payment of services</li> <li>• Monitoring of quality</li> <li>• Participation in management</li> <li>• Responsible use</li> <li>• Voicing complaints</li> </ul>

 <p>policy-maker</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulation of services</li> <li>• Internal capacity to fulfil functions</li> <li>• Clear definition of roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• Financial and human resources</li> <li>• Monitoring and oversight</li> <li>• Pricing and affordability</li> <li>• Instruments to clarify the delegation from governments to services providers</li> <li>• Decentralisation</li> </ul>
 <p>service provider</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountability for service delivery</li> <li>• Transparency</li> <li>• Affordability</li> <li>• Quality</li> <li>• Availability</li> </ul>



## Process

The Accountability Mapping tools can be conducted as a quick accountability mapping at the sector level, or as an in-depth accountability diagnosis at the service delivery level.

1.

### ACCOUNTABILITY MAPPING AT THE SECTOR LEVEL

**AIM:** the accountability mapping exercise at the sector level aims to provide an overview of the structure of service and to identify accountability challenges within the sector as a whole.

The workshop is organised in two consecutive sessions:

#### SESSION 1: UNDERSTAND ACCOUNTABILITY IN A WASH SECTOR

- **Activities:** identify key actors, lines of accountability and weaknesses

Visualising accountability relationships at the sectoral level through the triangle of accountability helps stakeholders understand how accountability relationships work within the sector, understand their own role as well as identify weak points, i.e., parts of the system that do not function as they should. The maps created by the tool enable visualisation of the type of actors who need to be involved in the solution and where to focus the intervention.

#### SESSION 2: IDENTIFY OPTIONS FOR ACTION

- **Activity:** use the Reference Guide for sustainability programming to identify a list of options for actions in response to the problems identified

Participants learn about the three types of obligations for those in authority in an accountability relation: responsibility, answerability and enforceability. They understand the type of problem participants are responding to in their WASH subsector and how to improve these aspects of accountability.

2.

### ACCOUNTABILITY DIAGNOSIS AT SERVICE DELIVERY LEVEL

**AIM:** the diagnosis is a full-scale application of the Accountability Mapping tool, implemented in detail and in a specific context. It is designed not only to understand how accountability relations are functioning today and why, but also to formulate and agree on a series of options for change. A Service Delivery Diagnosis is conducted in 6 sessions, over one and a half days.

#### SESSION 1: IDENTIFY KEY ACTORS AND THEIR ACCOUNTABILITY RELATIONS

- **Activities:** identify actors of the water and sanitation service, their functions (provider, user, policy-maker) and their accountability relationships.

The graphic helps participants conceptualise the roles played by actors of the WASH service delivery framework in terms of their functions within an accountability relationship (rights holders/duty bearers)

#### SESSION 2: RESPONSIBILITY- STAKEHOLDERS ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Activities:** describe the current responsibility challenges in the chosen WASH subsector and list options for action in response to these challenges.

Participants familiarize themselves with the importance of well-defined roles and cooperation in water service delivery and identify ways to improve those aspects.

#### SESSION 3: ANSWERABILITY- CAPACITY OF STAKEHOLDERS TO RESPOND TO EACH OTHER

- **Activities:** describe current answerability challenges in the WASH subsector and list options for action to tackle these problems.

The session helps participants become aware of the importance of informing, consulting and including stakeholders in water service delivery and are equipped with knowledge on how to improve those dimensions.

#### SESSION 4: ENFORCEABILITY - MONITORING, SUPPORTING AND ENFORCING COMPLIANCE

- **Activities:** describe the current enforceability challenges in the WASH subsector and list options for action in response to these challenges.

The focus of the session is on monitoring performance, supporting enforcement and compliance. It includes practical advice on ways to improve these dimensions.

#### SESSION 5: REVISION AND SELECTION OF TOOLS

- **Activities:** using the Reference Guide as a tool, list response options to the 3 types of accountability challenges identified in the WASH sub-sector

Participants identify and prioritize practical way(s) forward to solve WASH sustainability problems by improving responsibility, answerability and enforceability aspects in stakeholder relations.

#### SESSION 6: ROADMAP, FUNCTIONS, CHRONOGRAM AND CONSOLIDATION

- **Activity:** decide on a sequence of actions in response to accountability challenges in the WASH subsector.

The final session concludes the Accountability Diagnosis with an agreement on the way forward. The roadmap aims to address WASH sustainability challenges through clear and practical actions for improved accountability.

#### LESSONS LEARNED

The Accountability Mapping tools have proved successful in stimulating debates on the governance, scope and solutions to unsustainable benefits of WASH programmes. It encourages WASH professionals to reflect on these issues, and to look for new ways to improve the sustainability of programmes. In particular, it has been successfully conducted during WASH-BAT exercises to facilitate sector diagnosis and prioritization.

This brochure provides an overview of methods for assisting groups in understanding accountability relations in their WASH context and planning improvement actions. It has been produced under the “Accountability for Sustainability” programme, a partnership between the UNDP/SIWI Water Governance Facility and UNICEF which aims to increase the sustainability of WASH interventions by enhancing accountability in the service delivery framework.

# ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SUSTAINABILITY

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