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# STRENGTHENING COUNTY GOVERNMENTS' ACCOUNTABILITY, PARTICIPATION, AND COMMITMENTS IN THE WASH SECTOR:

## Case Study of Kitui and Makueni Counties, Kenya



**USAID Kenya Integrated Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Project (KIWASH)**

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# Acknowledgments

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We wish to appreciate the support given to the KIWASH project by the County Governments of Makueni and Kitui, Kenya. Special thanks go to all the WASH sector players in Kitui and Makueni Counties, especially the Water Service providers and the WASH enterprises.

Finally, we would like to thank all the participants who took part in the data collection process through the Key Informant Interviews, the Focus Group Discussions, and the Field Visits.

# Executive Summary

While the population of Kenya is steadily rising - recently being enumerated at over 47 million (Kenya Population and Housing Census 2019) - 40 percent of Kenyans still rely on unimproved water sources such as ponds, shallow wells, and rivers, while 70 percent of Kenyans lack access to basic sanitation solutions. Rural Kenya and urban slums suffer the most, with most people often unable to connect to piped water infrastructure.

Regrettably, the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs) in Kenya are highly affected by water scarcity leaving most of the inhabitants dependent on unimproved water sources. According to the 2014 Joint Monitoring Program (JMP) report, Kenya was ranked among countries with inadequate sanitation facilities in rural areas where some open defecation cases have been reported. Moreover, water for most households in ASALs is drawn from water pans, dams, unprotected springs, unprotected wells, water vendors, and rivers.

The Constitution of Kenya 2010 (COK2010) presented a devolved system with subsequent transfer of WASH service delivery to the county governments. Therefore, the sole responsibility of service provision in the WASH sector lies with the county governments, while the national government is only responsible for overall policies and frameworks. However, ten years after the COK2010 was passed, a lot is yet to be done to expand access to WASH within the counties.

The COVID-19 pandemic entry into the equation complicated matters for the county governments and more so in the ASAL counties. While access to WASH services has been a perennial challenge in the ASAL counties, COVID-19 demanded more access exacerbating the situation. Containing the spread also demanded high rates of sanitation, which is a problem even in the best of times. Adequate hygiene that COVID-19 warranted is hardly possible, and self-quarantine seems a far-fetched idea for most Kenyans.

The Kenya Integrated Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (KIWASH) project has been working in nine counties in Kenya (Busia, Kakamega, Kisumu, Migori, Nairobi, Nyamira, Siaya, Kitui, and Makueni) over the past five years to strengthen WASH service delivery through building more robust systems and enhancing the capacity of the counties and the WASH enterprises.

Through an initiative of the RLA, this case study report has been produced and highlights the fundamental approaches used by KIWASH, the successes so far, lessons learned, challenges, and opportunities for WASH from two counties in the ASAL region – Makueni and Kitui.



*The COVID-19 pandemic entry into the equation complicated matters for the county governments and more so in the ASAL counties. While access to WASH services has been a perennial challenge in the ASAL counties, COVID-19 demanded more access exacerbating the situation.* ””

## Case Study Methodology

The overall case study methodology had four interconnected stages as follows:

- **Review and synthesis of literature –** Several documents were reviewed, including KIWASH annual and semi-annual reports, websites for previous cases, and the KIWASH project.
- **Key Informant Interviews –** 21 persons were sampled and interviewed for the purpose of the case study to collect information.
- **Focus Group Discussions –** Four focus group discussions were conducted to gather information.
- **Field visits –** Five field visits were conducted during the case study.
- **Case Study Report Writing –** The data and information were then analyzed, synthesized, and packaged into the case study report.



## Key approaches

The Case Study Report presents 10 Key Approaches that have been applied by the KIWASH project to strengthen the capacity of the county governments and WASH enterprises in Kitui and Makueni Counties. These approaches are:

- **Capacity Building -** While capacity building is a common term in the development sector, different organizations, projects, and institutions adopt varying approaches to undertake it. KIWASH built and strengthened the capacity of the county government, the water service providers in urban areas, and community water supply schemes in rural areas to provide quality WASH services to improve operational efficiency towards commercial thinking for sustainability as WASH enterprises. The KIWASH project used a seven-step process in systematic and sustainable capacity building in Makueni and Kitui Counties. The steps included: stakeholder engagement, training needs assessment, developing training modules, implementing the training, evaluating the capacity building, development of performance improvement plans (PIPs), and coaching and mentoring.
- **Staff Placement within counties –** KIWASH had staff based at the counties in office space provided by county governments. This was meant to strengthen the relationship and ensure the county staff are at close reach for the KIWASH project staff and vice versa.
- **Community-led approaches and Leveraging on local resources –** Critical and sustainable changes in sanitation and hygiene rely heavily on communal ownership and leadership. The KIWASH project championed the use of local resources, expertise and engaged the county governments to create resources for supporting the WASH enterprises.

- **Social Behaviour Change**

**Communication (SBCC)**- Sanitation and hygiene interventions call for behaviour change. KIWASH was aware of the need for change in critical behaviours among the recipients and community members as well as county governments to ensure that sanitation and hygiene practices are entrenched. KIWASH's SBCC approach utilizes effective behaviour change methodologies, promoting education through listening to positive impact practices through consistent use of latrines for human waste disposal, safe disposal of baby waste, correct handwashing, and household water treatment and storage. House-to-house visits and community meeting platforms such as dialogue meetings, focus group discussions, and Barazas have been used to reach communities with sanitation products as well as sanitation and hygiene messages.

- **Governance and Policy Reforms-**

Sustainability of development projects is grounded on local ownership, local governance, and ensuring there are existing policy frameworks that act as the foundation upon which development is built. Governance and enabling policies are critical for WASH to ensure all stakeholders have their roles clearly defined but also to provide proper guidance for work.

*"Governance, political goodwill, and policy frameworks for WASH are key if the sector is to remain successful," said Japheth Mbuvi, the KIWASH Chief of Party. "Governance has no substitution. You MUST fix it."*

- **Sanitation Marketing and Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS)**-

KIWASH adopted a Sanitation Marketing Approach in Makueni and Kitui counties to strengthen the component and expand coverage for rural sanitation. The sanitation marketing approach basically ensures that these communities

are encouraged and motivated to increase sanitation and hygiene coverage in their own localities. KIWASH brought in a market role to activate the scale of sanitation and hygiene. KIWASH explored the existing products in the market and worked with the private sector and the community on the sanitation marketing approach to enhance scalability.

- Further, on **Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS)**, KIWASH worked with county and sub-county health management teams to identify and trigger villages to scale up CLTS activities, including prioritizing villages with low latrine coverage and assisting them in identifying and developing strategies to achieve Open Defecation Free (ODF) status. The stakeholders also participated in monitoring and accelerating progress in CLTS processes.
- **Grant Making** - KIWASH project is aware that public resources alone can never be enough for the WASH sector's success, incorporated grant-making as a fundamental approach. KIWASH adopted and championed this notion for a blended approach to financing the WASH sector, including grants (recoverable and non-recoverable), local financing (county governments, water service providers [WSPs], or community), and commercial financing (banks and micro-finance institutions).
- **Gender Mainstreaming and Inclusion** - KIWASH believes that WASH is an inclusive sector, and thus the approaches must adopt an inclusive model. KIWASH's gender mainstreaming and inclusion strategy is aimed at integrating the needs of all people. It ensured that all the projects consider the opinions and voices of all the segments of the population, including women and the youth. As part of this approach, KIWASH

trained the WSPs, the WASH enterprises, and the county governments on gender equality mainstreaming and supported them to develop gender policies.

- **Environmental Protection and Sustainability** - Environmental sustainability is responsibly interacting with the planet to maintain natural resources and avoid jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet their needs. WASH depends largely on the environment because anything that degrades the environment hinders WASH's success. KIWASH, therefore, championed environmental protection aimed at maintaining (and recovering when necessary) a healthy natural environment. This is in line with sustainable development that embraces environmental, social, and economic objectives to deliver long-term equitable growth that benefits current and future generations.

- **Knowledge Management and Learning-** KIWASH project has also been built on the foundation of learning and sharing through effective knowledge management. Learning is a conscious attempt on the part of organizations to improve productivity, effectiveness, and innovativeness while enabling quicker and more effective responses to a complex and dynamic environment. To facilitate learning, KIWASH intentionally documented project outputs with the aim of sharing them with stakeholders during WASH forums. Further, KIWASH organized and conducted exchange visits to other WASH enterprises in other counties for benchmarking. The project further organized joint planning, monitoring, and evaluation to enhance synergy and avoid duplication hence conserving essential resources such as time, human resources, and finances.



## Successes

Through the implementation of the KIWASH project in Kitui and Makueni Counties, several successes have been realized, including:

- KIWASH has strengthened the county government's capacity to manage the WASH enterprises and the WSPs better.
- KIWASH has revolutionized the way the WSPs and the water enterprises have been implementing water projects.
- KIWASH has changed the notion that solar systems cannot run big water projects.
- Reduction in Non-Revenue Water (NRW) and an overall increase in revenue collection for the WSPs and WASH enterprises.
- Kitui County and some wards in Makueni County have been declared ODF.
- KIWASH has elevated the quality of work being done in the water sector.



## Key Lessons Learned

The KIWASH project has been full of lessons both for the project itself but also for the beneficiaries, including the County Governments, WSPs, and the WASH enterprises. These lessons are:

- Governance is KEY and has no substitution – It MUST be fixed.
- Political goodwill and leadership support are important for the success of the WASH sector and MUST be interpreted in the right way.
- Policies, legislation, rules, and regulations are critical for the sector to be successful.
- Community engagement is inevitable.
- Blended financing is key for the sector.
- The WASH enterprises MUST be run as business ventures for success and sustainability.
- Capacity development is an interactive and continuous process.
- Partnerships are essential for success at various levels.
- Learning and Knowledge Management are indispensable.
- Sustainability in the WASH sector is not only strengthening the software BUT also the hardware.
- Coordination of actors and stakeholders is challenging but paramount; and
- Integrity and professionalism are the bills to success.



**A demo slab for SAFI latrine being showcased in Kitui County to arouse community interest on improved sanitation**



## Challenges and Mitigation

Challenge	Mitigation
Ingrained bad institutional management practices in the WSPs leading to water and revenue losses	Introduction of PIPs to address critical operating deficiencies with WSP partners.
High costs of inputs for water treatment in the rural water supply schemes	KIWASH has been subsidizing this through grants to the rural water schemes
Lack of professionalism in the sector, especially on the management of community water projects primarily in rural areas	KIWASH has advocated for hiring technical managers to run the rural water schemes and designed a curriculum for on-going training, coaching, and mentorship
Inadequate resources for the sector	Advocating for blended financing that includes grants, local contributions, and commercial financing
Lack of enough automated and secure systems, including billing and collections software	Lobby county governments to secure these systems to improve transparency and accurate billing
Politicization and political interference of some of the WASH projects lead them to not functioning optimally	Continuous sensitization of all county staff and members of county assemblies on their responsibilities and management of the water sector according to the Water Act 2016 and WASREB regulations.
Aging and capacity mismatch of water distribution infrastructure including pipes, meters, and storage tanks	KIWASH has a module on operations and maintenance that supports the identification of such needs and address them
Weak reporting and availability of data for decision making	WSPs to be deliberate in investing adequate staff capacities to improve on reporting and data management

## Opportunities

There are several opportunities that still exist within these counties for partnerships to strengthen the WASH sector. These include:

- Harness solar energy and gravitational flow for the production of renewable and cheap energy in pumping water.
- Protection of water sources and catchment areas through afforestation and reforestation.
- Exploring water storage facilities, including damming.
- Partnering with and involvement of the private sector in revenue collection for WSPs, e.g., payments through Post Bank and other banks.
- Government and development actors can tap into financing instruments, e.g., blended finance models or village level microenterprises, to leverage additional capital for WASH investments, for instance, KIWASH's SRF model.

- Explore modern technologies, including the use of HDPE pipes, smart and tamper-proof water meters, to reduce NRW.
- Further capacity building of staff in the County and staff of the WSPs.
- Operationalizing the Water Policy and the Water Act to ensure the county government sticks to its course and sector institutions are strengthened and held accountable.
- Institutionalizing Learning and Knowledge Management to ensure more sharing of best practices and success with the WASH sector stakeholders must be central.
- Work in containing the spread of COVID-19 - COVID-19 has created the demand for more water, more handwashing stations, and face masks.
- Water companies still have uncertain boards, and some do not have boards – There is room to help them institute the boards to solve governance challenges.
- Engage learning institutions like the Kenya Water Institute to take on some of the modules and support processes like water harvesting etc. These institutions can also adopt the modules as part of their training.

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# Introduction

## Background and Context

While the population of Kenya is steadily rising - recently being enumerated at over 47 million (Kenya Population and Housing Census 2019) - 40 percent of Kenyans still rely on unimproved water sources such as ponds, shallow wells, and rivers, while 70 percent of Kenyans lack access to basic sanitation solutions. Rural Kenya and urban slums suffer the most, with most people often unable to connect to piped water infrastructure.

The Joint Monitoring Program (JMP) report, Progress on Household Drinking Water, Sanitation and Hygiene 2000-2017, found that eight out of ten people still lacking clean drinking water lived in rural Kenya, same as seven out of ten people who still lacked basic sanitation services (JMP 2019).

The average total coping costs for an unreliable and distant water supply are approximately \$38 per month in rural Kenya compared to the average water bill of a typical household in cities like Nairobi that is connected to a piped system, which is only \$4.46 per month (Water.org 2020). This reflects the economic burdens that often fall more heavily on unconnected rural communities than on households with piped connections.

Regrettably, the ASALs in Kenya are highly affected by water scarcity, leaving most of the inhabitants dependent on unimproved water sources. According to the 2014 Joint Monitoring Program (JMP) report, Kenya was ranked among countries with inadequate sanitation facilities

in the rural areas where some open defecation cases have been reported. Moreover, water for most households in ASALs is drawn from water pans, dams, unprotected springs, unprotected wells, water vendors, and rivers.

The Constitution of Kenya 2010 presented a devolved system with subsequent transfer of WASH service delivery to the county governments. Therefore, the sole responsibility of service provision in the WASH sector lies with the county governments, while the national government is responsible for asset development through Water Works Development Agencies and overall development of policies and frameworks. However, ten years after the COK2010

was passed, a lot is yet to be done to expand access to WASH within the counties.

While rural water is mainly provided through community water-supply schemes while urban areas are supplied by WSPs, most of the rural water schemes collapse a few years after the inauguration and hence have been inherently very ineffective. County governments face numerous challenges, especially with meeting their commitments to the citizens, involving all stakeholders in their programming, and remaining accountable.

The COVID-19 pandemic entry into the equation complicated matters for the county governments and more so in the ASAL counties. While access to water has been a perennial



*The average total coping costs for an unreliable and distant water supply are approximately \$38 per month in rural Kenya compared to the average water bill of a typical household in cities like Nairobi that is connected to a piped system, which is only \$4.46 per month.*



challenge in the ASAL counties, COVID-19 demanded more access to this rare commodity, exacerbating and complicating the already diminished access to this basic commodity. Containing the spread also demanded high rates of sanitation, which is a problem even in the best of times. Adequate hygiene that COVID-19 warranted is hardly possible, and self-quarantine seems a far-fetched idea for most Kenyans.

Fortunately for nine counties in Kenya (Busia, Kakamega, Kisumu, Migori, Nairobi, Nyamira, Siaya, Kitui, and Makueni), the KIWASH program over the past five years has designed and implemented interventions to strengthen commitment, enhance participation, and improve accountability in the WASH sector.

This case study report looks at the approaches, successes, lessons learned, opportunities, and challenges emanating from the KIWASH project for the two ASAL counties, Makueni and Kitui. The report has been produced by the RLA.

## Kenya Integrated Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene program

KIWASH is a five-year program from USAID, implemented by DAI with the goal of improving the lives and health of Kenyan citizens in nine counties through the development and management of sustainable water, sanitation, and hygiene services. KIWASH aims to accelerate and sustain improvements in water and sanitation access and services in nine target counties and improve complementary hygiene behaviors.

To ensure that improvements in access are accelerated and sustained, KIWASH is

implementing activities that contribute to six distinct objectives:

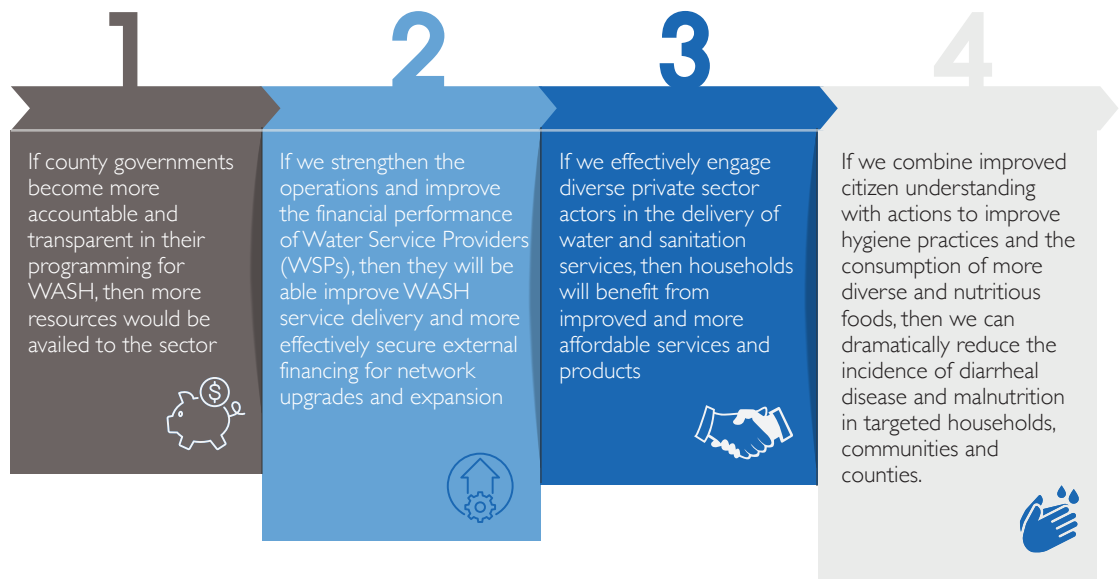
- Scale-up market-based WASH service delivery models.
- Increase and sustain access to finance/credit for WASH.
- Improved access to integrated WASH and nutrition services.
- Increased production and consumption of nutrient-dense, diverse foods Increased environmental sustainability of WASH services.
- Strengthen governance of WASH services and water resources institutions; and
- Support targeted policy reforms advanced to stimulate and improve access.

The KIWASH project focused on different core areas in each of the nine counties, with specific activities being selected at the national and county level in accordance with identified needs and gaps and USAID's overall WASH strategy in Kenya.



**A group of women fetching water from a kiosk managed by Tyaa River Water Project**

## Theory of Change



### Resilience Learning Activity

The Resilience Learning Activity (RLA) is a five-year, USAID/Kenya and East Africa-funded activity. RLA aims to strengthen resilience capacities in Partnership for Resilience and Economic Growth (PREG), Somalia, and the Horn of Africa Network (HoRN) Partnership Areas. RLA strengthens capacities by undertaking analyses and building local organizations' capabilities to lead, manage, and advance collaboration, learning, and adapting (CLA) that advances USAID's Journey to Self-Reliance (J2SR) approach. At the country level, RLA is the secretariat supporting the Partnership for Resilience and Economic Growth (PREG) and South Eastern Kenya (SEK) coordination and learning of local actors across Northern counties (Garissa, Marsabit, Turkana, Samburu, Wajir, and Isiolo) and (Makueni, Taita, and Kitui).

Through partnerships with local institutions and leaders, national government, regional actors, and implementing partners, the Activity aims to achieve the following:

- Increase analytical capacity for local and host country organizations.
- Facilitate learning for adaptive management by local and host country organizations.
- Improve knowledge management and strategic communication for local and host country organizations; and
- Establish and strengthen systems and networks for Collaboration Learning and Adapting (CLA).

## About the Case Study report

RLA commissioned the documentation of a case study from the KIWASH program implemented in Kenya. The case study sought to highlight the key approaches, successes, lessons learned, opportunities, and challenges from the program. The specific focus of the case study report is on strengthening the county government's participation, accountability, and commitments in the WASH sector in Makueni and Kitui Counties, Kenya.

The KIWASH program is a reservoir of knowledge and experiences worth documenting and sharing to inform other programs' learning and adaptive management. Further, given USAID's focus on the Journey to Self-Reliance (J2SR), the case study would benefit the resilience network stakeholders since it provides a deep-dive review of this thematic area of

focus as well as inform their ongoing program interventions and collaborations with county governments.

## Case Study Approach

The case study documentation involved several stages in promoting an understanding of the issues affecting the WASH sector and the strategies used by KIWASH in Makueni and Kitui. These include review and synthesis of the literature, key informant interviews, and field visits. The steps taken to gather data and information (desk review and KIIs) helped to clarify the programmatic aspects of the KIWASH project in Makueni and Kitui. Field visits were also embedded to ensure the study benefited from up-to-date cases of success. Each of the field visits provided different components that are packaged into case stories.



**A WASH forum session in Makueni County bringing together different WASH partners in the county.**

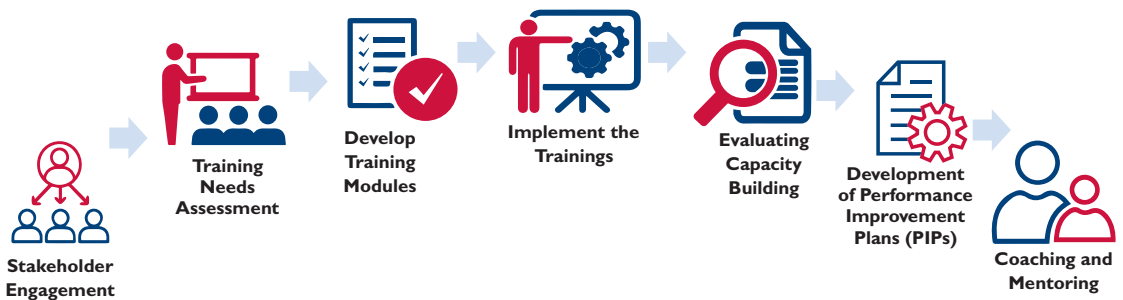
# Approaches and Strategies

## Capacity Building

Capacity building is the process by which individuals and organizations obtain, improve, and retain the skills, knowledge, tools, equipment, and other resources needed to do their jobs competently. The result of capacity building is improved performance for both individuals and organizations. Therefore, capacity building is a measurable improvement in an individual's or organization's ability to fulfill its mission through a blend of sound management, strong governance, and dedication to assessing and achieving results.

While capacity building is a common term in the development sector, different organizations, projects, and institutions adopt varying approaches to undertake it. KIWASH built and strengthened the capacity of the county government, the WSPs in urban areas, and Community Water Supply Schemes in rural areas to provide quality WASH services to improve operational efficiency towards commercial thinking for sustainability as WASH enterprises.

The KIWASH project used a seven-step process in systematic and sustainable capacity building in Makueni and Kitui Counties. The steps are as seen below.



- **Stakeholder Engagement** - KIWASH overall approach to capacity building process calls for participation by all those involved. KIWASH believes that if stakeholders are involved and share ownership in the process of development, then they will feel more responsible for the outcome and sustainability of the development. Further, stakeholder engagement allows for more effective decision-making; it also makes development work more transparent. KIWASH, therefore, engaged the county government, the WSPs, and the WASH enterprises before deciding on what areas of capacity development to focus on.
- **Training Needs Assessment** - Any capacity building initiative should focus on real needs. Assessing pre-existing capacities allows the identification of areas that require training, prioritization, identification of interventions, and local/existing strategies that can be applied in the package. KIWASH believes that capacity building that is not rooted in a comprehensive study and assessment of the pre-existing needs do not go beyond the training to incorporate critical success factors after the training.
- **Develop Training Modules** - After the Training Needs Assessment was conducted, KIWASH analyzed the findings, identified the



gaps, and developed modules that matched the needs. The seven modules developed for capacity building were: Water Reforms and Right to Water and Sanitation, Know your Customer and Introduction to Marketing, Gender Mainstreaming, Basic Business and Financial Management (Budget Preparation and Monitoring, Staff Management, Business Planning, Access to Finance), Basic Computer Skills, Operations and Maintenance, and Environmental Sustainability. KIWASH also supported the WASH enterprises to develop Business Plans, Marketing Plans, and Operations & Maintenance Plans.

- **Implement Training** - KIWASH used the residential training approach to implement training and collaborated with County officers to implement them. Training methodologies included coaching and mentoring. Participants were selected according to their job description's relevance to the training modules.
- **Evaluating Capacity Building** - After training was conducted, KIWASH developed monitoring systems to ensure follow up on how tools were applied at work and in their enterprises. This capacity was measured based on perceived and observed changes in performance. The evaluation also involved a continual reassessment of evaluative indicators to measure the effects of initiated programs.
- **Development of Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs)** - During the capacity building evaluations, areas of further strengthening were identified. To correct these, Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs) were developed, more so for WSPs in each county. The PIP is a tool to enhance the success of performance deficiencies. It may be used to address failures to meet specific job goals or to ameliorate behavior-related concerns. The results of these assessments were disseminated to senior management

teams of the respective utilities to help with planning and prioritization of service improvements.

- **Coaching and Mentoring** - For continuous and more personalized capacity building, the KIWASH project developed a coaching and mentoring program that used one-to-one conversations to enhance an individual's skills, knowledge, or work performance. Tactics used included on-job training, one on one conversations, goal setting, role-playing and co-opting.

The KIWASH project's capacity building approach towards strengthening commitment, participation, and accountability in the WASH sector in Makueni and Kitui Counties focused on:

- **Corporate governance** - focused on the development of policies and guidelines, enhancing management standards, operations and management, business and financial management, customer service and outreach strategies, and management structures.
- **Infrastructure** - included supporting the institutions to ensure proper facilities both at workplaces and in the field, such as software and computer-based applications.
- **Staff capacity** - included training of staff on various key skill sets needed for working within the sector such as policy development, bookkeeping, monitoring, and reporting, customer relations, human resource management, gender mainstreaming, business development, and strategic plan development.

## Staff placements within the Counties

KIWASH believes that the WASH sector calls for partnerships. Smooth partnerships are built on the premise of trust, proximity,

and rapport. To ensure a healthy working relationship between the project and County Governments, KIWASH embedded staff in the County Government offices of Kitui and Makueni. Key staff hosted at the KIWASH county offices included service provider capacity building specialists, WASH governance specialists, sanitation and hygiene specialists, and Engineers. Embedding staff meant that technical support was readily available when needed by the County Government, WSPs, and WASH enterprises. It also meant that the project was implemented using government protocols, officials, and reporting channels.

## Community-Led approaches and Leveraging on local resources

One of the strategies promoted in USAID's Journey to Self-Reliance (J2SR) is local ownership and the use of local resources. To ensure this, KIWASH promoted the use of local human and material resources. KIWASH's entry point in Kitui and Makueni was through relevant County Government departments. For instance, KIWASH utilized Community Health Workers (CHWs) and Volunteers as WASH governance experts for Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) messaging to reach households. The CLTS approach mobilized communities to recognize needs and trigger collective efforts to improve the state of sanitation and hygiene in their communities.

KIWASH also used specialized local experts' contractors to implement the program, including engineers and artisans. Where available, KIWASH encouraged the use of local materials in the construction of WASH infrastructure projects. KIWASH's financing model demanded community contribution or County Government contribution and management of the ventures.

## Social Behavior Change Communication (SBCC)

SBCC, previously known as behavior change communication (BCC), is the strategic use of communication approaches to promote changes in knowledge, attitudes, norms, beliefs, and behaviors. The terms BCC and SBCC are interchangeable, and they both refer to the coordination of messages and activities across a variety of channels to reach multiple levels of society. Sanitation and Hygiene interventions call for behaviour change. KIWASH was aware of the need for change in critical behaviours among the recipients and community members, and County Governments to ensure that Sanitation and Hygiene practices were entrenched.

KIWASH's SBCC approach uses effective behavior change methodologies: promoting education through listening to impact consistent use of latrines for human waste disposal, safe disposal of baby waste, correct handwashing, and household water treatment and storage. House-to-house visits and community dialogue meetings, focus group discussions, and Barazas were used to reach communities with sanitation products and messages.

All county public health department staff working with KIWASH were trained on Education Through Listening (ETL) - a proven methodology for delivering, monitoring, reinforcing, and reporting on behavior changes in communities. The ETL technique is hinged on the need for the beneficiaries to find local solutions to the targeted behavior to achieve ownership and sustainability. CHVs delivered messages to the target audiences on correct and consistent use of latrines, correct and consistent hand washing, construction of tippy taps, and treatment and proper storage of drinking water. Further, the CHVs were trained on SBCC to promote, reinforce, and track the uptake of positive WASH behaviors at the household level.



WOWASCO\_KIMAWSCO SP launch.

## Governance and Policy Reforms

The sustainability of development projects is grounded in local ownership and governance, ensuring there are existing policy frameworks that act as the foundation upon which development is built. Governance and enabling policies are critical for WASH to ensure all stakeholders have their roles clearly defined and proper guidance for work.

*“Governance, political goodwill, and policy frameworks for WASH are key if the sector is to remain successful,” said Japheth Mbuvi, the KIWASH Chief of Party. “Governance has no substitution. You MUST fix it.”*

The KIWASH project strategically supported the County Governments, Water Service Providers, and WASH enterprises with governance and policy reforms. These went a long way in ensuring participation by all stakeholders, commitment to service delivery, and utmost accountability.

The KIWASH project supported the domestication of the National Water Policy in Kitui and Makueni counties. They also facilitated the development of local policies, including:

- In **Kitui County**, KIWASH supported the development of a Water Policy and a Water Bill to guide the WASH sector’s service delivery in the County. Both documents are at the cabinet-level, awaiting approval. Further, the KIWASH project helped identify a consultant to support the County Government in developing guidelines for the WASH sector. These guidelines will guide the operationalization of the Water Policy and Water Act once being passed into law.
- In **Makueni County**, KIWASH supported Makueni County to develop the County Water Policy and a County Water Act. Both the policy and the Act have been passed into law. They are instrumental in providing a legal framework for water service delivery in the county. KIWASH, together with the County Government, completed the first draft of generic water regulations through a stakeholders’ review. The regulations will provide the county government with a legal framework for managing rural schemes and urban water service providers, which is critical for increasing access to safe drinking water within the counties.

KIWASH supported the development of the Makueni county Water Act. Both the Act and Policy are currently under operationalization. The county's WSPs metering policy was finalized and is now operational. The metering policy will guide the county WSPs when metering new and old customers to improve efficiency and curb wastage.

## Sanitation Marketing and Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS)

KIWASH worked with county and sub-county health management teams to identify and trigger villages to scale up CLTS activities, including prioritizing villages with low latrine coverage and helping identify and develop strategies to achieve Open Defecation Free status (ODF). The stakeholders also participated in monitoring and accelerating progress in CLTS processes.

KIWASH adopted a Sanitation Marketing Approach in Makueni and Kitui Counties to strengthen and expand coverage for rural sanitation. The Sanitation Marketing approach ensures that these communities are encouraged and motivated to increase sanitation and hygiene coverage in their own localities. KIWASH worked with public health departments and CHVs to sensitize communities and households to locally available low-cost sanitation technologies for the upgrade or construction of new, improved facilities. Increased awareness in communities resulted in increased uptake of sanitation technologies.

To reinvigorate sanitation markets, KIWASH worked with private sector actors and



*KIWASH worked with county and sub-county health management teams to identify and trigger villages to scale up CLTS activities, including prioritizing villages with low latrine coverage and helping identify and develop strategies to achieve Open Defecation Free status (ODF).*



community groups to develop pro-poor sanitation supply networks and increase the supply of sanitation products (SATO sanitation products, for example) and services to rural communities. KIWASH went to the field and looked at what products exist for sanitation and hygiene. KIWASH identified a set of two products to promote. KIWASH worked with the private sector and the community on Sanitation Marketing Approach to enhance scalability.

*We worked with SilAfrica and Lixil manufacturers who were producers of a brand we were promoting, but then we went down to the counties to look at how can we use local community groups to start up that supply chain. County departments can now aggregate demand and demonstrate to the suppliers that there is a demand for their product and that there would be a ready market waiting for them if they wanted now to invest. This was a very iterative process”, said Diana Mulatya, Sanitation, and Hygiene Advisor, KIWASH.*

## Grant Making

KIWASH is aware that public resources alone can never be enough for WASH sector success and incorporated grant-making as a mitigating approach. KIWASH adopted and championed a blended approach to financing the WASH sector, including grants (recoverable and non-recoverable), local financing (county government or community), and commercial financing (banks and micro-finance institutions).

KIWASH issued grants to Water Service Providers (WSPs) and community rural water supply schemes (WASH enterprises) in a model that included recoverable and non-recoverable grants. Both grants were given in the form of in-kind infrastructure support. The recipients of the recoverable grants are expected to pay back their loans at 0% interest monthly to the revolving funds so that others could borrow. Infrastructure interventions are targeted to complement technical assistance and aim to increase revenues and/or reduce non-revenue water, expand the distribution networks, increase billing accuracy, and reduce energy costs by installing solar power systems. Ultimately, these investments increase water coverage through new connections and improved access to water in both rural and urban communities while reducing the cost of production and operations. Solar power systems have significantly reduced water pumping costs by 50 to 80 percent, contributing to sustainable operations and improved water services provision. Increased revenue is used for water systems improvements such as rehabilitation and expansion of water distribution pipelines, serving more people in a sustainable manner.

KIWASH encouraged communities to contribute to their projects to promote sustainability and ensure that activities align with J2SR. Further, the KIWASH project urged County Governments to consider setting aside budgets to support the WSPs and WASH enterprises. Local funding is not only a means to ensure that projects are sustainable but also enhance ownership.

Commercial financing was also an intervention championed by KIWASH for the WASH sector. These are financial or material resources accessed from banks and micro-financial institutions. KIWASH did not only train the institutions and community projects on developing fundable projects but has also made

sure they become bankable in the long run. Where specific WASH products did not exist, financial institutions were supported to develop them.

*“We are preparing the projects to become bankable. We ensure we train them to maintain good books, to practice prudent financial management, to be effective in monitoring and reporting, apply good funds usage practices backed by budgets, adopt effective tariffs, practice proper costing, and adopt business case modeling,” said Alois Muthini David, the Service Provider Capacity Building Specialist, KIWASH project, Makueni County.*

## Gender mainstreaming and Inclusion

KIWASH believes that WASH is an inclusive sector, and thus the approaches must adopt an inclusive model. KIWASH’s gender mainstreaming and inclusion strategy integrated the needs of all people. It ensured that all projects consider the opinions and voices of women and the youth. KIWASH trained the WSPs, the WASH enterprises, and the County Governments on gender equality mainstreaming and supported them to develop and apply gender policies in their operations. This was achieved through training and capacity building of WSP and WASH enterprise boards and staff, sharing gender equality mainstreaming tools, guidelines, training manuals, templates for gender policies with WSPs, and on the spot coaching during follow-up activities.

For example, the Kitui Water and Sanitation Company (KITWASCO) eliminated a requirement to provide a title deed for the application of a new water connection. This helps ensure that women and youth, who do not historically own title deeds, benefited from their services. As a result, the company’s connections officer reported that most new applicants for

the water connections were women without title deeds. Eliminating this requirement helped to ease the burden of accessing water each day for hundreds of households.

## Environmental Protection and Sustainability

Environmental sustainability is responsibly interacting with the planet to maintain natural resources and avoid jeopardizing the future. WASH depends largely on the environment, and hence anything that degrades it hinders WASH success. KIWASH championed environmental protection aimed at maintaining (and recovering when necessary) a healthy natural environment. This is in line with sustainable development that embraces environmental, social, and economic objectives.

One of the interventions used was climate change adaptation and planning. KIWASH made significant progress in building the capacity of the Kitui and Makueni County Governments and their respective water resource and service institutions. KIWASH included mainstreaming climate change into planning and project implementation to achieve climate-resilient water service delivery and water source protection. KIWASH's water security modules were used to train the government officials. In addition, institutions (WRMA, WSPs, County water departments, environment and climate change organizations, and WRUAs) were subjected to the Climate Change Capacity and Performance (CC CAP) Assessment Tool to obtain baseline information of these institutions to plan for water resources using climate data.

KIWASH introduced participants to approaches and tools on Water Safety Plans and demonstrated how flood and drought management tools are applicable to planning and resilience to climate change. KIWASH also facilitated the recruitment of six (one in Makueni

and five in Kitui) WASH enterprises, WSPs, and other institutions as corporate members of Water Resources Users Associations (WRUAs). This increased synergy between WRUAs and WSPs, who are the main water abstractors. For instance, they held joint source protection activities such as afforestation exercises and community environmental sensitizations.

## Knowledge Management and Learning

KIWASH project was built on a foundation of learning and sharing through effective knowledge management. To facilitate learning, KIWASH intentionally documented project outputs to share them with stakeholders during WASH forums. Further, KIWASH organized and conducted exchange visits to other WSPs and WASH enterprises for benchmarking in other counties. The project organized joint planning and M&E to enhance synergy and avoid duplication.

To strengthen sector coordination, KIWASH established active working groups comprised of sector representatives, including WSPs, civil society, and the private sector, which meet quarterly to plan and coordinate efforts towards improved WASH services.

KIWASH also encouraged peer-to-peer learning for improved WASH operations within Kitui and Makueni counties. KIWASH facilitated a benchmarking staff visit from Kitui and Makueni WSPs to two of the best performing WSPs in Kenya – The Nyeri Water and Sewerage Company and The Embu Water and Sewerage Company. The staff focused on understanding strategies used in non-revenue water management and management efficiency. A key output was an action plan to address weak performance areas based on learning from the visits.

# Successes

## **KIWASH has strengthened County Government's capacity to manage the WASH enterprises and the WSPs better**

Even though the main WASH providers in Kitui and Makueni Counties are the WSPs and WASH enterprises, the County Governments did not have a good working relationship with them before KIWASH.

*"Before KIWASH, the County Government of Makueni was not aware whether this company, other WSPs, and the community WASH enterprises were under their jurisdiction. KIWASH organized workshops where we were invited, and the County Government were the conveners. Through these workshops, it has become evident that the county government now knows that we exist",*

*said Mr. Stephen Mutiso, Managing Director, Kibwezi Makindu Water and Sanitation Company (KIMAWASCO).*

Through capacity building, KIWASH helped the County Government recognize the role played by the rural water projects and water service providers; Makueni County has now allocated specific budget lines to support them.

*"We have come to appreciate the work done by KIWASH around the WASH forums, and now we have made a decision that we will be holding quarterly WASH forums in Kitui County. We have allocated budgets to support two forums in a year and left the two forums to be supported by partners on a willing basis following the KIWASH partnership models for the WASH forums," said Augustus M. Nding'o, WASH Coordinator, Kitui County.*

## Case story

### **Excelling in service delivery courtesy of KIWASH project**

Kibwezi Makindu Water and Sanitation Company Ltd (KIMAWASCO) was inaugurated on August 16, 2011, in a merger between Kibwezi- Mtito Andei Water Company and Makindu Water Company. KIMAWASCO provides water services to towns of Kibwezi, Makindu, Kambu, Mtito Andei, and their environs.

While the company's area of jurisdiction is 2,450 km<sup>2</sup> with a population cover of 285,530, it only covers about 308 km<sup>2</sup>, which is 13% of the total coverage and serves 102,784 people representing 36% of the population.

KIMAWASCO has two primary sources of Water (Umani springs and Kwa Venge springs) with a total capacity of 3,767 m<sup>3</sup> per day against an estimated demand of 11,421 m<sup>3</sup> per day. Umami springs produce a water capacity of 2061 m<sup>3</sup> per day and use pumping and gravity for supply, while Kwa venge springs has a production capacity of 1706 metres cubic per day and uses pumping for supply to the population.

KIMAWASCO has a total of 8,400 connections, out of which 5,400 are mainly active due to lack of enough water to supply these areas.

KIWASH capacity built KIMAWASCO in corporate governance and supported the development of its strategic plan. Moreover, due to the Performance Improvement Plans implemented by KIWASH and installation of smart meters, the company realized a reduction of Non-Revenue

Water from 32% to 28% and is now able to collect over 90% of the revenue from the billings to cater for over 90% of its operational costs.

KIWASH also supported the company's board on benchmarking tours to the best utilities in the country so that they can replicate the best practices at KIMAWASCO.

"As a result of these KIWASH interventions, as a board, we have managed to move the company from non-creditworthy status to creditworthy status among the 27 utilities nationwide." Stephen Mutiso, Managing Director KIMAWASCO. "We are also at number two among the medium utilities with connections between 5,000 – 10,000."

However, the company still faces challenges from aging pumping sets, which are 15 years old, and aging pipelines out of which close to 20% of water is stolen. Further interventions that can improve the operations of KIMAWASCO include.

- Replacing four out of the six pumping sets, acquiring; pipeline locators, leaking detectors, meter testing, and an assembling bench. Moreover, to improve on the billing revenues, the company needs to utilize an integrated billing software.
- Acquisition of two standby generators- one in Kibwezi and one in Makindu to address the constant challenges of low voltage from KPLC.
- To bridge water deficits, the company has identified two prime sites to sink boreholes. Each of these boreholes will require a pipeline of 2KM to join the existing pipeline system.
- Monitoring the production and consumption of water by acquiring the following master meters; 1 no. Eight inches; 7 no. 6 inches; 3 no. four inches; 2 no-two inches; and four no. one inch.
- Capacity building on governance training, especially in policy formulation, including the formulation of billing policy and human resources policy.

Based on the county performance contracting, the company has already arranged with a local university to train them on risk management and conflict management, among other governance issues.

"Before KIWASH, the County Government of Makueni has improved relations with the company. In this regard, the county government realized that the company is better capacitated than the contractors in extending pipeline coverage, and in this regard, the county government has extended funding of Kshs 10 million to the company." Stephen Mutiso, MD KIMAWASCO.

As a result of this KIWASH engagement, KIMAWASCO is corruption-free where all the revenue collected is directed to its intended purpose" Chairman of KIMAWASCO board.



## **KIWASH revolutionized the way WSPs and water enterprises manage projects**

Community- owned water projects and WSPs were not focused on profit because rural/ community schemes were being run by people who lacked the necessary skills and without proper records. KIWASH's entry into these counties has been a game-changer.

*“The model that KIWASH introduced us to working with the County Government is unique. Previously, water projects were treated as a social service run by retirees and idle people. KIWASH ... came with the WASH enterprise approach. Now water projects can generate money, are run professionally, employ people, and are able to keep track of production and consumption. That is where the game changed,” said John Ngiti, County Water Engineer, Kitui West Sub-County.*

### **Case story**

#### **Revitalizing critical water projects to increase access to water in Kitui County- the case of the Tyaa water project.**

Started in the 1960s by the Ministry of Water, the Tyaa Water project closed after ten years due to mismanagement that was only generating a loss. Tyaa is a water project that is in Mwingi town, beside a river that inspired the name of the project. The project that used to serve the community closed and stayed inactive to a point where the infrastructure corroded and aged.

The Kenya Integrated Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (KIWASH) project gave life to this very important water source renewing hope of water access for the community.

“After this project collapsed, it went into a limbo since around the 1970s,” said Fredrick Maithya, Water Distribution in charge, Kiambere-Mwingi Water and Sanitation Company (KIMWASCO). “After some time, we made a proposal to KIWASH to rehabilitate the process, and our request was granted.”

KIWASH, through the county government, worked closely with KIMWASCO in the rehabilitation of the project. Among the works done was desilting of the sump, reinforcement of the walls, installing the sump's upper slab, installed a master meter and non-return valve, installed a 3 km pipeline from the sump to the two reservoir tanks, each holding 24 cubic meters of water, installed solar panels and electric power for pumping the water, and then completed with ensuring the site was secured with a fence and 24-hour security. Water pumping is done using the hybrid system of power and electricity to ensure an all-around supply.

Not only did KIWASH do the rehabilitation of the water project, but it also ensured the quality of the work done by local contractors was of the highest quality.

“One thing that I must say is that the quality of work done by KIWASH speaks for itself. If you look at the installations that have been done in our water enterprises like Kithambangii, Musengo, Tyaa, and others, you will find that what I am saying is not hearsay. Despite working with local contractors, KIWASH ensured that all the materials were of the best quality,” said Augustus Nding'o, WASH Coordinator, Kitui County.

“Since this project was handed over to us in 2018, we have not had any bursts. The entire line of 3 km has never burst because of the quality of pipes that KIWASH used. The HDPE pipes are very strong and can withstand a lot of environmental pressure,” said Kyalo Mwendwa, Plumber, KIMWASCO.

The Tyaa project is not only a source of water for the community and other customers of KIMWASCO but has also led to revenue increment and is a source of employment. The coverage by KIMWASCO has increased, water supply is assured since the Tyaa water project fills the gap, especially when water from the major source of KIMWASCO is low, and customer confidence in KIMWASCO has increased.

“After the rehabilitation of the project and handing over to us, we have got 400 new connections, we have built four new water kiosks, and we have been able to connect existing dormant customers to this water source to assure them of a steady supply,” added Mr. Maithya.

After the rehabilitation of the Tyaa water project, KIWASH did not stop there but went ahead to strengthen the capacity of KIMWASCO to manage the water project. The staff of the company went through the capacity building training and were beneficiaries of the gender mainstreaming, project management, and operations & maintenance training. The project also benefited from the grants - non-recoverable grants - from KIWASH.

However, given that the project keeps growing, there are still challenges that the project faces, which they would still want support from KIWASH. These challenges include the need for more water storage, expanding the water source as the demand keeps rising given this project is in the ASAL areas and lack of a management board.

If KIWASH would help sink more boreholes, add extra reservoir tanks, and connect these to the existing lines, that would really support the project to meet this ever-rising demand.

The Tyaa water project is an example of the excellent work that the KIWASH project has done towards strengthening the county government’s ability to deliver water to its people. Through this, the county government is now supporting the project by giving them a subsidy for electricity and subsidizing salaries of staff who work on the project.

### **KIWASH enabled WSPs and WASH enterprises to increase access and coverage for water, sanitation, and hygiene services**

Through the use of community-led approaches and local resources, KIWASH has helped

local community members innovate and stock materials for the construction of latrines. KIWASH has helped WSPs, and WASH Enterprises increase their connections. Overall, WASH service access has widened tremendously in Kitui and Makueni counties.

## Reduction in non-revenue water (NRW) and increase in revenue collection for WSPs and WASH enterprises

KIWASH focused on supporting WSPs to recruit qualified staff, introduced the use of quality materials for pipe laying and water metering, operations, and maintenance to reduce NRW. WSPs and WASH enterprises were suffering

from the loss of water due to burst pipes, inability to accurately record water produced versus sold, inability to get correct records of customers, inability to trace payment for water consumed, and more. Metering was a big issue for the WSPs, and KIWASH introduced them to new systems that have seen them solve the issue of non-revenue water. KIWASH also ensured that infrastructure quality could withstand pressure.

### Case story

#### From social ventures to bankable enterprises towards the Journey to Self-Reliance

“Before the KIWASH project came, we would spend over KES 200,000 per month on electricity. We would have no savings. We did not have our records straight. Attempts to acquire loans failed,” says Peter Nganda, Chairperson, Makutano Community Borehole.

When the novel COVID-19 broke out, one of the lifesaving practices that was recommended was handwashing with flowing water and soap. The World Health Organization (WHO) issued guidelines on how to wash hands, recommending, among others washing hands for at least 30 seconds with flowing water.

For residents of Makutano Sinai village in Makueni County, just like other people residing in ASAL regions, water is a very expensive commodity. Therefore, washing hands in flowing water is just too much of a dream for these people.

Luckily for some 600 families, the Makutano Community Borehole provided a new relief. The water project has done over 600 individual connections following the support from the KIWASH project. This project was started in 2010 and is managed by a committee of 13 members from within the community.

“KIWASH has enabled us to do the water project as a business with ease,” added Peter Nganda. “They took us through training covering several topics, they gave us infrastructural support (solar installation, metering) and provided technical support through ensuring one of their staff, Mr. Alois, is always here with us when we need any support.”

The cost of production of water for this community water project was dramatically reduced, from KES 200 000 per month to just below KES 60,000 per month. They are now able to pump water day and night. They now also have six lines of water, up from just three. Their kiosks increase from 7 to 23, and they also benefited from a water chlorination point to ensure the water supplied is treated.

The management team of the water project was trained on all the modules that KIWASH developed. Specifically, they say they have benefited from the financial training, including record keeping and budgeting. Currently, they have a bank account they use for storing all the revenue using a mobile money payment system.

“I have known KIWASH to have been engaged with water projects within the county, and one major one is the Makutano Community Water project in Kathonzweni Ward,” said Damaris Makau, Chief Officer, Water and Sanitation, Makueni County. “KIWASH has strengthened its ability and capacity in water sanitation and hygiene. Specifically, they have supported this project to make sure they supply their customers with clean water that is safe for drinking.”

Because of the relationship built with KIWASH, former staff who transitioned to another employer, and the good bookkeeping practices, Makutano Community Borehole has been granted funds to strengthen its COVID-19 response from a granting scheme. The project has been awarded KES 950,000 in the form of a grant, and are hopeful that they will use this resource to widen their reach. KIWASH project supported the project to prepare documentation towards their application of the COVID-19 response fund.

The community project is also applying for a commercial loan of KES 2.5 million from Sidian Bank, Kibwezi Branch. This money is to go towards sinking, equipping, and solarizing a new borehole, tapping into the same rich aquifer to hopefully add over 20mcubic meters per hour production into their system to boost their supply from the current 13 cubic meters per hour. KIWASH supported a hydrological survey that found the feasibility of another aquifer.

“We are really grateful to USAID, KIWASH, and our county government for coming to our rescue by supporting us to run this project. We are now able to reach every corner of the village, and we believe that with more support, we can do better,” said Angeline Musembi, Treasurer, Makutano Community Borehole.

For the Makutano Community Borehole, customer relationships are key in any union - You need to listen carefully to what the customer needs are and what they say for effective response.

### **Increase in revenue collection for WSPs and WASH enterprises**

KIWASH-continued support in strengthening WSP governance systems led to a considerable increase in annual billing and revenue collection because of the reduction in NRW, improved efficiency in billing and revenue collection, change in staff attitude, and sealing loopholes in revenue

management. The increases were re-invested into operational efficiency and coverage. Most WSPs recorded a commendable improvement in billing and revenue collection and reduction in NRW; for example, Kitui saw a reduction from 66% to 43% and an increase in new water connections.

## Kitui and Makueni Counties Open Defecation Free

Kibwezi East and Kibwezi West sub-counties in Makueni County have been declared Open Defecation Free, whereas Kitui County became the 3<sup>rd</sup> County in Kenya to be declared open

defecation free. This was a result of people accessing basic sanitation through KIWASH's intensified CLTS campaign. Adoption of SAFI latrines and SATO pans increased sanitation in Kitui and Makueni counties on the way to ODF declarations.

### Case story

#### Transforming villages to be Open Defecation Free (ODF) -the Sanitation and Hygiene way in Makueni County

Before KIWASH came to KIBWEZI East, only two villages had been triggered and attained an ODF status. Reported cases of faecal-oral diseases were rampant within the medical facilities and were hugely attributed to cases of open defecation and poor hygiene and sanitation practices.

For instance, before KIWASH's intervention, the Ivigoni-Nzambani ward with 132 villages and a population of 36,301, only 2,596 out of the existing 6,595 households had pit latrines while all the 6,595 households had no handwashing facilities. In Masongaleni ward, with a population of 42,610, and 198 villages, 4,810 out of the existing 7,624 households had no pit latrines, and 6,058 households had no handwashing facilities.

"For a village to attain an ODF status, all the households must have pit latrines which ensure privacy and has with it a squatting lid. The handwashing facilities must also be fitted with running water and soap. Moreover, there should not be cases of open defecation." Joshua Mutuku, Kibwezi East CLTS sub-county coordinator.

KIWASH used three key approaches to expand sanitation coverage for rural sanitation in both Makueni and Kitui Counties. "We used the Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS), Sanitation marketing, and Social Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) as our key approaches to ensure our work on sanitation and hygiene yielded the intended fruits," Diana Mulatya, Sanitation and Hygiene Advisor, KIWASH.

Through the CLTS approach, KIWASH brought onboard Public Health Officers, Community Health Volunteers (CHVs), community leaders, and resource persons to form committees to map out possible sites of open defecation and households with no pit latrines in each of the villages. Thereafter, KIWASH working closely with the county government focal persons, came up with implementation schedules for triggering the villages towards attaining ODF status.

For example, through faeces calculations, demonstrations were conducted to determine the quantity of human faecal matter each person produces yearly, monthly, and weekly and how the various quantities contaminate water sources. Thereafter, the community was informed of the costs which could be saved if open defecation was prevented. The community committee was also empowered to conduct community-led assessments and submit reports to the Public Health Office (PHO) for verification, certification, and declaration towards ODF status.

Through the SBCC training program, the Community Health Volunteers were empowered to cascade hygiene and sanitation training to the household levels so that the households can identify areas they go wrong and make informed decisions with a permanent impact towards preventing a revert from open defecation.

Moreover, under the sanitation marketing component, 15 artisans and community health volunteers (CHVs) were also trained on the construction and installation of sustainable and low-cost sanitation technologies, i.e., construction of SAFI latrine, production, and use of Makiga interlocking bricks technology and installation of SATO products. 29 health units were also trained on sanitation marketing strategies on SATO products, including the elimination of odour, elimination of fly breeding in latrines, and easily cleanable materials to promote adoption of SATO products.

Finally, KIWASH then supported the CHVs and artisans through grant making whereby KIWASH matched every purchase of SATO product from LIXIL Africa in the ratio of 1:1 to improve on the artisan's stock to meet the increasing demand.

“One CHV in this sub-county has gained huge success from installing SATO pans. He is now more empowered to educate his children in better schools, and he has constructed a big house for his family. To increase his market reach, he has also bought a motorcycle for his wife to conduct house-to-house visits.” Mutuku asserts.

“As a result of KIWASH intervention, we have achieved ODF status for 330 villages. Actually, the two wards were the first to achieve the ODF status in Makueni County.” Matuku adds. “We have also witnessed a reduction of faecal-oral diseases by 77% in the 2 wards. We believe that with the empowerment of the artisans and CHVs on sanitation technologies, the wards will climb the sanitation ladder towards achieving the highest standards of sanitation. “

As a result of the SBCC training by KIWASH, the community has also developed monitoring and enforcement initiatives to prevent households from reverting to open defecation. Moreover, the good hygiene and sanitation practices exhibited in the two wards have been cascaded to nearby villages that have never been triggered.

However, this program also encountered several challenges, including slow uptake of hygiene practices due to negative attitudes of the community and limited number CHVs in relation to the expansive area they are expected to cover.

“This program has largely been successful because of KIWASH strategy of involving community members and relevant local authorities in every sphere of the program, including Chiefs, Village Elders, Ward Administrators, and Community Resource Volunteers. Another crucial factor was the fact that KIWASH used varying implementation strategies for each village.” Mutuku concludes.

## **KIWASH has elevated the quality of work in the water sector**

Despite engaging local contractors to install various water infrastructure, KIWASH ensured

procurement of high-quality material and supervision, resulting in infrastructure quality that is second to none.

# Lessons learned

## **Governance is key and has no substitution**

For successful and sustainable WASH interventions, the institutional management issues and governance of the enterprises and institutions must be of the highest quality. You MUST fix governance for success in the WASH sector. Challenges facing governance such as tenure of the management boards, professionalism in recruitments, ensuring performance is evaluated, and guidelines to guide policy implementation must be dealt with to ensure the sustainability of the WASH sector interventions and the WASH enterprises.

*“And we can say that to a large extent that good governance translates directly to increased revenues in several ways. Proper governance leads to improvements in the collection. The Kiembere-Mwingi Water and Sanitation Company (KIMWASCO) WSP had non-revenue water as high as 66% in 2018, but now it has reduced to around 43%. Now they can plan and reduce losses that we saw before”, said Engineer Dan Owore, Governance & Policy Manager, KIWASH.*

## **Political goodwill and leadership support are important for the success of the WASH sector and MUST be interpreted in the right way.**

Political goodwill and leadership support are critical to providing the foundation and guidance frameworks. County Governors and Politicians in both Makueni and Kitui counties showed support for work done by KIWASH. This ensured that other county officers would follow, helping the project become successful in the two counties. Both counties have provided office space for KIWASH projects hosted within the County Offices. The governors themselves have been part of KIWASH activities from the launch, even paying visits to some of the WSPs. With goodwill and leadership support in place, the KIWASH project was able to run efficiently.

*“We really appreciate the way the KIWASH project has been run. Even though the project is hosted in the county, it has not been abused or used politically as some projects are usually abused. This has meant that the project was able to remain focused on service to the target audiences. The project had clear objectives and was tailored to deliver with urgency; hence no room for interference.” said Augustus Nding’o, WASH Coordinator, Kitui County.*

For projects to succeed, political goodwill and leadership support are central and should never be treated as a carrot and cake issue, allowing projects remain clear on their objectives.

## **Policies, legislation, and rules and regulations are critical for the sector’s success.**

Development of operational policies for institutions cements relationships and interactions for improved performance. They should be formulated or reviewed, implemented/ operationalized, and followed.

*“The reason why water policy and the act are critical is because of governance. Governance is a big issue that must be dealt with if the sustainability of a water project is to be guaranteed,” said Damaris Makau, Chief Officer, Water and Sanitation, Makueni County.*

## **Community engagement is inevitable**

Project ownership and sustainability warrant engaging communities in which the project is based. WASH sector interventions must be gender-sensitive with a focus on responsibility and integrity. County engagement and participation in a project’s life cycle enhances ownership and accountability in WASH service provision. Meaningful community engagement enhances accountability and acceptability in the entire project delivery cycle. This is central in ensuring the success and sustainability of projects implemented at the local level.

## Blended financing is key for the WASH sector

Adequate financing is critical, yet public resources are never enough. To ensure sustainability, alternative funding sources and deliberate budgetary allocation is critical. This calls for a blended approach to financing the WASH sector that includes grants, community and County Government contributions, and commercial financing that is availed through partnerships with institutions such as banks and MFIs. While endeavouring to ensure the sector is well resourced, there is a need to ensure that the necessary structures are in place.

“Access to finance for the WASH sector cannot happen automatically - institutions should be first strengthened to be able to attract resources and track usage while monitoring and reporting resource use effectively,” said Nancy Ndirangu, Service Provider Capacity Building Manager, KIWASH.

It is not enough just to be bankable. Collateral issues and lead-time are quite a concern and should be simultaneously addressed to widen access to resources for water. The financial institutions still demand collateral, which is a challenge to most community-owned enterprises; thus, an amenable way both financial institutions and enterprises should be found to address this.

## The WASH enterprises MUST be run as business ventures for success and sustainability

By working within Kitui and Makueni counties, we have learned that one key success factor of the WASH enterprises and institutions has to run them like businesses, with the following key characteristics:

- A business model with rules and regulations,
- Professional staff,
- Systems for record-keeping, monitoring, and reporting,

- Working meters (both master and customer),
- Systems that help in tracking water production versus sales,
- Costing using market-based models,
- Boards that have specified term limits,
- Links to resources.

They cannot be run as social ventures. However, the government has the responsibility of regulating them, with the aim of protecting the consumers.

## Case Story

### Musengo Water Project

Musengo Water project started in 2007 between the community in Musengo within Kitui West sub-county and the Danish Government. However, two years after its inception, it collapsed. The project is currently managed by a management committee consisting of representatives from the community and County Government.

In 2017, KIWASH started engaging the community by rehabilitating the project borehole and recruited consultants to conduct surveys between the borehole and the storage tanks. The consultants proposed the construction of four new pipeline extensions.



KIWASH capacity built the project management committee on financial management and marketing so that the project is run as an enterprise, not a social venture.

KIWASH also constructed six new water kiosks and rehabilitated six existing water Kiosks. KIWASH then constructed two raised water tanks with a total capacity of 150 m<sup>3</sup> that use gravity flow to reach the population. KIWASH also extended grants to the project of KES 438,000 as a recoverable grant. The project currently serves a population of 5,000 people with 143 individual connections, including institutions like churches and schools.

The KIWASH supported the project with advice on how to manage the scheme towards sustainability using a project manager model through which the project manager would periodically monitor the results. This culminated in the project hiring a project manager with a technical background to oversee the day-day running of the project.

Due to the KIWASH capacity building, revenue collection has increased from monthly Kshs 50,000 to Kshs 190,000- 200,000 by adopting a non-cash payment policy of using MPESA business number (Its business number because a/c number must be applied). Through the installation of quality water infrastructure pipes and meters, the project realized a reduction in NRW from 67% to 35%.

Further efficiency can be achieved through interventions such as;

- Provision of an additional storage tank and increased network coverage to meet the rising demand for water.
- Installation of solarized booster stations to pump water to the hilly areas where there is a ready market.
- Improving the Kiuukuni-Syathani line, which frequently experiences bursting of pipes due to capacity mismatch of the pipes from the storage tank and the supply pipes. The pipe diameter from the main storage tank is 6 inches, while the supply pipe is 2 inches.
- Installation of master meters to monitor the water supply in the mainline from the main storage tank.
- Acquisition of a big chlorine dispenser to meet the increased demand for treated water from the community.

### **Capacity development is an interactive and continuous process.**

Building capacities of WASH sector players cannot be a one-off endeavour. This is a process designed to mitigate and solve systemic issues, among other skills issues. It should be structured

and spread over time with learning adapted to design and develop capacities at government and community levels. Structural community challenges cannot be solved within a short span of project capacity building interventions.

## **Partnerships are key for success at various levels.**

Establishing and sustaining partnerships, both private and public, are critical for the WASH sector. The sector is integrated and calls for multiple players from various government ministries and departments that must work together in partnership. The private sector is critical in the WASH sector. They not only come in handy to fill the gap when the public sectors have fallen short, but they bring new models and prototypes that the public sector can learn from. The private sector players also can lead to widespread scaling up of interventions and innovations, as has been the case with sanitation marketing. This is also key in accelerating the extension of WASH services.

## **Learning and knowledge management is indispensable**

Given that there are a lot of stakeholders involved with different needs, each of them should be served with special products requiring effective knowledge management practices. Therefore, documentation, monitoring, and reporting are central to ensure results are captured and packed into different products. Knowledge products are central to learning. Furthermore, WASH projects should strive to create platforms for learning such as the WASH forums, knowledge or web portals, exchange programs, and field visits. Plenty can be shared through these platforms, ranging from innovations, experiences, new technologies, etc., which are essential for learning.

## **Sustainability in the WASH sector is not only built within strengthening the software but also the hardware**

Beyond strengthening the software, KIWASH also dealt a lot on the hardware side of the WASH sector, ensuring the installation of quality infrastructure. Quality water distribution

infrastructure, including master meters, led to a reduction of NRW. Technology is key when installing new equipment. The hardware should also adopt new technology to stand the test of time. New WASH equipment should be of the latest technology as this ensures efficiency even when monitoring progress and assessing where leakages and losses may happen.

## **Coordination of actors and stakeholders is challenging BUT paramount.**

Proper coordination at national and county levels among implementing partners is important. The sector has several stakeholders who need to be coordinated to ensure synergies, avoid duplication of efforts, facilitate learning from each other, save on resource use, allocate priority areas of implementation, and overall to ensure joint monitoring and reporting where necessary. Therefore, there must be coordination of the sector with the respective government departments taking lead roles allowing for lobbying and capacity building.

## **Integrity and professionalism are the key to success**

Success in the sector calls for integrity at all levels. The leadership and management must remain steadfast and focused on ensuring service delivery. Issues of corruption and mismanagement of resources are detrimental to the sector. In terms of infrastructure, they must be of the highest quality to ensure sustainability and durability. Water treatment is inevitable – no matter the water source, testing and treating water is critical to guarantee quality and safety.

# Challenges and Mitigation

Challenge	Mitigation
Ingrained bad institutional management practices in the WSPs leading to water and revenue losses	<p>Introduction of PIPs to address critical operating deficiencies with WSP partners.</p> <p>Discussions, field verification, target setting, and development of a formula for improving the operational and financial performance of WSPs.</p> <p>Replacement of non-functional meters with smart meters for large consumers</p>
High costs of inputs for water treatment and water supply works in the rural water supply schemes	KIWASH has been subsidizing this through grants to the rural water schemes
Lack of professionalism in the sector, especially on the management of community-managed water projects primarily in rural areas	KIWASH has advocated for hiring technical managers to run the rural water schemes and designed a curriculum for on-going training, coaching, and mentorship
Inadequate resources for the sector	Advocating for blended financing that includes grants, local contributions, and commercial financing.
Lack of enough automated and secure systems, including billing and collections software	Lobby county governments to secure these systems to improve transparency and accurate reporting
Politicization and political interference of some of the WASH projects lead to them not functioning optimally	Continuous sensitization of all county staff and members of county assemblies on their responsibilities and management of the water sector according to the Water Act 2016 and WASREB regulations.
Aging and capacity mismatch of water distribution infrastructure including pipes, meters, and storage tanks	KIWASH has a module on operations and maintenance that supports the identification of such needs and address them
Weak reporting and availability of data for decision making	WSPs to be deliberate in investing adequate staff capacities to improve on reporting and data management

# Opportunities

There are several opportunities that still exist within these counties for partnerships to strengthen the WASH sector. These include:

- Harness solar energy and gravitational flow for the production of renewable and cheap energy in pumping water.
- Protection of water sources and catchment areas through afforestation and reforestation.
- Exploring water storage facilities, including damming.
- Partnering with and involvement of the private sector in revenue collection for WSPs, e.g., payments through Post Bank and other banks.
- Government and development actors can tap into financing instruments, e.g., blended finance models or village level microenterprises, to leverage additional capital for WASH investments—for instance, KIWASH's SRF model.
- Explore modern technologies, including the use of HDPE pipes, smart and tamper-proof water meters, to reduce NRW.
- Further capacity building of staff in the county and staff of the WSPs.
- Operationalizing the Water Policy and the Water Act to ensure the county government remains on course and sector institutions are strengthened and held accountable.
- Institutionalizing learning and knowledge management to ensure more sharing of best practices and success with the wider WASH sector stakeholders must be central.
- Work in containing the spread of COVID-19 – the pandemic has created a demand for more water, more handwashing stations, and even face masks.
- Water companies still have unstable boards, and some do not have boards at all – there is room to help them institute them to solve governance challenges.
- Engage learning institutions like the Kenya Water Institute to take on some of the modules and support processes like water harvesting. These institutions can also adopt the modules as part of their training.



Solar panels installation

# Conclusion

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) is multisectoral in nature and therefore demands integrated approaches. The stakeholders in WASH range from the various departments at the national level, the county level, the sector players, both public and private, and the community. The sector is unique in that all these stakeholders have a role to play and are recipients at some given point.

WASH service provision is a multi-level scheme where the Water Service Providers (WSPs) oversees the urban areas, and the community water schemes / WASH enterprises oversee the rural areas. These ventures have different challenges that hinder them from performing at optimal levels. It is the work of the county government to support these providers considering that WASH is a devolved service.

Strengthening county governments' accountability, participation, and commitments in the WASH sector is a continuous process that involves several techniques and approaches. The process has several stakeholders who play critical roles in the cycle, with each of them contributing to the overall results and impact on the county government's success.

The KIWASH project is working towards strengthening the actors (county government and the WASH providers), using a few high impact approaches that include capacity building, grant-making, coordination of actors, learning and knowledge management, gender mainstreaming, and championing partnerships. It



**A member of Nthongoni Community Unit involved in sanitation enterprise selling a SATO pan**

is evident that using these approaches has gone a long way in not only building the capacity of the county government but also resulting in great success for the WASH providers.

Several successes emerged, with key lessons and opportunities from the KIWASH case study that are worth adopting. For the challenges that were identified, there are already strategies in place to curb them.

Quality infrastructure, integral staff, blended financing, continuous training and capacity development, learning and sharing, use of technology, and cashless systems are some of the best practices from the KIWASH project in Kitui and Makueni counties.

# References

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