What is the problem?

While community management continues to be the dominant model for rural water services in many parts of the world, it still faces huge challenges in terms of sustainability. Research on water projects in Kajiado County in Kenya shows that one third of the new community-managed water systems stop functioning within the first three years after completion (Kwena and Moronge, 2015). Studies of Caritas in Kenya demonstrated that community groups managing a water system often have poor governance, management and cost recovery systems, as well as operate in complete isolation from the regulatory system, leading to non-functionality of infrastructures and poor services (Caritas, 2014).

The IM toolbox: facilitating a long-term process

Rolling out the IM toolbox is a long-term iterative process and usually comprises the following eight main phases:

1. The preparation phase, to analyze the context and engage the water sector institutions.
2. The IM workshop, a two-to-three-day workshop during which the community groups assess, in a participative and entertaining way, their governance and management problems as well as their compliance status, and prioritize integrity tools and measures to address shortcomings.
3. The implementation phase, for the community group to implement the actions agreed upon during the IM workshop, supported through coaching, engagement and monitoring by the supporting agency and the local government.

Scaling-up of the IM toolbox in Kenya

Caritas Switzerland, Oxfam GB and Caritas Ngor once they had collaborated with County Governments, the Ministry of Water and Irrigation of Kenya and Caritas in Ngor regulatory Board (WASREB), the Kenya Water and Sanitation CSOs Network (KEWASNET) and the Water Integrity Network (WIN) are currently piloting the IM toolbox in Wajir and Kajiado Counties in Kenya. Outcomes of the process are being monitored in terms of improvements in governance, quality of services and sustainability. From beginning 2017, after a review of the piloting process and adjustment of the methodology based on learnings, Caritas and partners will embark on scaling up the IM toolbox and embedding it in the regulatory framework through WASREB.

What is in the IM toolbox?

• A methodology outline and guidelines for facilitators
• Pre-drawn water system cards to visualise the water infrastructures, flow of water, the customers, money flow and problem areas
• Cards displaying key stakeholders of the Kenyan water sector, their mandate, and the rules and regulations they set
• Cards with 29 pre-defined integrity problems to select from
• Cards with 22 pre-defined tools to select from
• Numerous other information cards including background information on terminology, standard, legal procedures and management models
• Materials for participative exercises, such as a football pitch, tools matrix and an action plan

How does it work?

1. After reflecting on the meaning of integrity and how the lack of it can impact the way they operate and their reputation, the groups assess, in an entertaining way, their compliance status, and agrees on actions that need to be undertaken to operate according to the regulatory framework.
2. Using participative tools, the group identifies three key problems that they are facing. In total, the IM toolbox contains 29 pre-identified problems, for which suggestions of tools to address them is provided.
3. The group selects the tools that they plan to implement in the coming three months. The IM toolbox contains 22 pre-identified tools. Each tool comes with an infographic that provides short details on how to implement it in practice, and a template.
4. The actions related to compliance and the selected tools are then placed in an action plan.
5. After three months, the progress in terms of compliance and performance is reviewed and new problems and tools can be selected and a new action plan agreed upon.
6. During the process, continuous accomplishment through weekly follow-up and monitoring visits is planned.

What makes it different?

• It is a long-term process and focuses on follow-up, accompaniment and slow withdrawal.
• It helps community groups to appreciate how the management of water services can be improved based on good business practices, and to recognize the economic value of water.
• It is in line with Kenyan rules and regulations (and could be adapted to other countries) and provides simple guidance on the path toward compliance to support the overall sector’s effort towards the realisation of the Right to Water.
• It is participative and fun, even when addressing compliance issues or controversial subjects such as corruption.

How does the integrity management toolbox help?

The Integrity Management (IM) toolbox aims to address these challenges and contribute to the realisation of the right to water by assisting community groups in strengthening performance and compliance though integrity tools. The IM toolbox accompanies community groups that are managing a water system in a change process:

• To improve their performance, in order to provide quality services to customers and ensure a sustainable access to water, and
• To become complaint by formulating with the existing regulatory framework and integrate in the sector.

By linking up with the local government and the designated water service provider, the community group will be guided to fulfill the requirements that come along with the provision of water services.