

# Addressing governance and management challenges of community-managed water supply systems: The integrity management toolbox for small water supply systems

## 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 Kajado 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 main phases:

1. The **preparation phase**, to analyse 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 Ngong in close collaboration with County Governments, the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, the Water Services 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 Kajado 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?

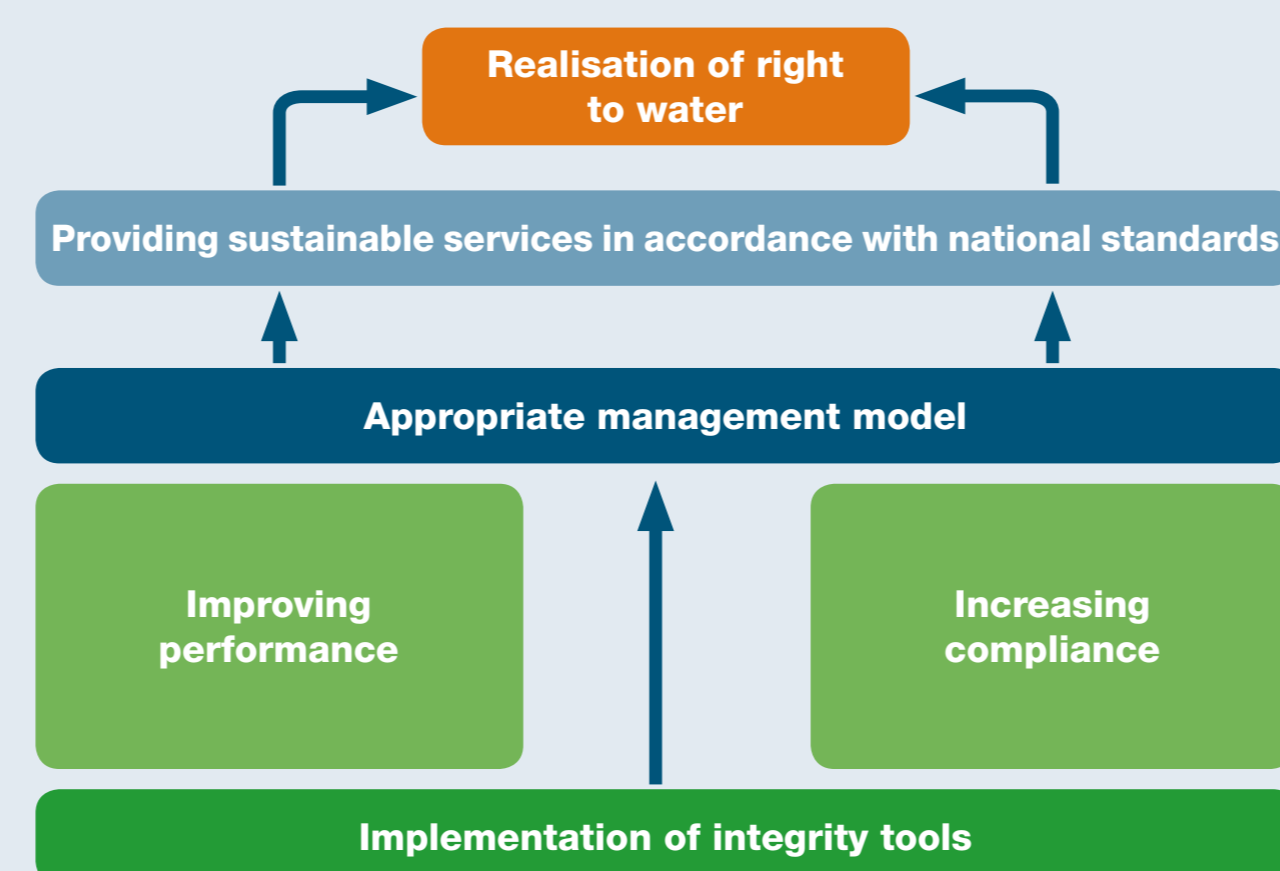
- A **methodology outline** and **guidelines for facilitators**
- Pre-drawn **water system cards** to visualise the water infrastructures, flow of water, the customers, money flow and problem areas
- Cards displaying **key stakeholders** of the Kenyan water sector, their mandate, and the **rules and 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, standards, legal procedures and management models
- **Materials for participative exercises**, such as a football pitch, tools matrix and an action plan



The IM toolbox provides tools to address management and governance problems related to:

- Administrative and public services
- Customer relations
- Financial management
- Governance and management
- Human resources management and employment
- Operation and maintenance
- Problems related to non-compliance
- Procurement and contract management

## 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 through 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 compliant by formalizing 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 fulfil the requirements that come along with the provision of water services.

## 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 infosheet that provides hand-on 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 accompaniment through weekly follow-up and monitoring visits is planned.

| Problem   | Problem   |
|---|---|
| Some customers refuse to pay  | Roles and responsibilities of committee members and staff are not clear   |
| <b>Tools that can address this problem</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting up regular meetings with customers and keeping meeting minutes</li> <li>• Having regular meetings as a committee and keeping meeting minutes</li> <li>• Setting up simple billing system</li> <li>• Setting up transparent tariff structure</li> <li>• Install water meter at every collection point</li> <li>• Setting up of bookkeeping system</li> <li>• Set up contract for individual connection and for institutions</li> </ul> | <b>Tools that can address this problem</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting up and signing a constitution</li> <li>• Developing governance and management structure</li> <li>• Agree on simple hiring criteria for each position</li> <li>• Issue employment contracts for each position</li> <li>• Having regular meetings as a committee and keeping meeting minutes</li> </ul> |

## 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 recognise 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.

## Acknowledgements

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