

## Issue 92 | March 15, 2013 | Focus on WASH Sustainability

This issue contains notices of upcoming events and links to recent studies, reports, and blog posts on WASH sustainability. The IRC Water and Sanitation Center's Triple-S project states that one out of three rural water supply systems in developing countries do not function at all or performs far below its promised level. There is no one-size fits-all sustainability model but organizations have identified a number of key actions or building blocks for sustainable service delivery.

### EVENTS

- **March 11–12, 2013 – 2013 WASH Sustainability Forum.** ([Presentations](#))  
The 2013 WASH Sustainability Forum was held at the World Bank in Washington, D.C., on March 11 & 12, 2013. This two-day event built on previous WASH sustainability forums held around the globe. The forum examined the role of collaboration, particularly with governments, in ensuring lasting WASH services. Presentations from this event are now available and a recording will be available soon.
- **April 9–11, 2013 – Monitoring Sustainable WASH Service Delivery Symposium, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.** IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre. ([Brochure](#))  
The three-day symposium will shine the spotlight on six important and interrelated topics on monitoring WASH services.
- **Costing Sustainable Services Online Course Schedule 2013.** IRC. ([Link](#))  
WASHCost offers a free online course for WASH sector professionals. The "Costing Sustainable Services" online course was developed to assist governments, NGOs, donors, and individuals to plan and budget for sustainable and equitable WASH services, using a life-cycle cost approach.

### REPORTS

- **Compilation of 13 Factsheets on Key Sustainable Sanitation Topics, 2012.** Sustainable Sanitation Alliance (SuSanA). ([Link](#))  
This factsheet book is a compilation of 13 thematic factsheets that were produced by

the 11 SuSanA working groups. The target audience for this document includes a wide range of readers who are interested in aspects of sustainable sanitation.

- **Ensuring Rights to Water and Sanitation for Women and Girls**, 2013. L Mehta, UN Commission on the Status of Women. ([Full text, pdf](#))  
Current water and sanitation indicators to monitor progress are inadequate. They ignore gender dynamics, sustainability, and equity concerns as well as regional variations. This paper outlines achievements and challenges in achieving the water and sanitation Millennium Development Goals and the gender implications.
- **Financing Capital Maintenance of Rural Water Supply Systems: Current Practices and Future Options**, 2013. C Fonseca, IRC. ([Full text](#))  
This working paper provides case-study evidence on current practices around funding capital maintenance, including the levels of funding provided and the resulting impact on services. In addition, it seeks to quantify the range of capital maintenance expenditure required to provide a basic level of service. It also reviews potential approaches to improve the way in which the financing of capital maintenance of rural water supplies is organized.
- **Getting Communities Engaged in Water and Sanitation Projects: Participatory Design and Consumer Feedback**, 2013. Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor (WSUP). ([Full text, pdf](#))  
Community engagement in water and sanitation service delivery is key to ensuring project sustainability and accountability. In all of its programs, WSUP works with local service providers, community groups, and local authorities to enhance stakeholder participation. This topic brief looks at community engagement approaches used by WSUP in three cities within the African Cities for the Future program.
- **Guidelines for Planning Sustainable Sanitation Projects and Selecting Appropriate Technologies**, 2012. Water and Sanitation Rotarian Action Group. ([Full text, pdf](#))  
This document reviews how to: evaluate sources of water supply, evaluate water quality, evaluate and select appropriate treatment technologies, plan and construct a project, and monitor performance of the constructed project. The document is designed for Rotarians with basic levels of understanding of water issues, yet it will lead the reader to advanced levels of system design and operation.
- **Making Aid Effective at the Local Level**, 2012. J Harpe, IRC. ([Full text, pdf](#))  
Water and sanitation services need to last indefinitely, but the duration of aid is limited. Aid must therefore be used to help local institutions not just develop infrastructure but also operate and maintain water and sanitation services well into the future. That requires a shift in focus from aid effectiveness to development effectiveness: funding becomes the catalyst for change, aid is channeled through the country's sector budget, and local agencies acquire the resources—both financial and

human—to ensure lasting provision of water and sanitation services throughout the life cycle of the infrastructure.

- **Multiple-Use Water Services (MUS): Recommendations for a Robust and Sustainable Approach**, 2012. Pacific Institute. ([Full text, pdf](#))

The MUS approach has generated significant interest among organizations working on agriculture and water issues, particularly those working at a community scale, as it offers an opportunity to meet the many needs of poor communities. Yet the approach also has some limitations that may hinder the long-term sustainability of MUS projects, including consideration of water resource sustainability, climate resilience, equity, sanitation, public health, and the environment.

- **Regulation in Rural Areas**, 2013. Triple-S Project IRC. ([Full text](#))

Regulation is a key function for delivering sustainable water services, both in urban and rural environments. In the context of small towns and rural areas, it may seem difficult to introduce regulatory mechanisms that are able to apply national rules while also balancing potentially conflicting interests at the local level. For this reason, it is often necessary to adopt a mix of approaches to regulate water and sanitation services, relying on a mix of contracts, national level regulatory bodies, and in some cases, regulatory relays at the local level.

- **UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking Water: The Challenge of Extending and Sustaining Services**, 2012. United Nations. ([Full text, pdf](#))

This report presents data received from 74 developing countries. As this report shows, in many countries, policies and programs have far too little emphasis on ensuring adequate financial and human resources to both sustain the existing infrastructure and expand access to sanitation, drinking water, and hygiene services.

## JOURNAL ARTICLES/BLOG POSTS

- **Governance, Sustainability and Decision Making in Water and Sanitation Management Systems**. *Sustainability*, (4) 2012. M Alejandro. ([Full text](#))

This article explores the connections between the concepts of governance and sustainability and discusses their possible roles in water and sanitation management. The authors see governance as a decision-making process that drives the relationship between social institutions and the public affairs of a given society.

- **Learning from Failure in Sanitation**. *The BPD Blog*, Dec 2012. A Zeri, BPD. ([Blog post](#))

“What do we mean when we talk about ‘failure’? How can NGOs in the development sector and in particular in the field of sanitation, use ‘failure’ as a learning mechanism? Is it prudent to ‘market’ ‘failure’ and if so is there a right way of doing it?”

- **A Life-Cycle Approach to Improve the Sustainability of Rural Water Systems**

**in Resource-Limited Countries.** *Challenges*, 3(2) 2012. S Jones. ([Full text](#))

A WHO and UNICEF joint report states that in 2008, 884 million people lacked access to potable drinking water. A life-cycle approach to develop potable water systems may improve the sustainability for such systems. However, a review of the literature shows that such an approach has primarily been used for urban systems located in resourced countries. In this paper, the authors present a first step toward using life-cycle assessment to develop sustainable rural water systems in resource-limited countries while pointing out the needs.

- **Striving for Sustainability in Rural Tanzania.** *Huffington Post*, Nov 2013. D Winder, WaterAid. ([Blog post](#))

This blog discusses the author's visits to two rural Tanzanian villages where WaterAid is applying a local approach to community-led total sanitation. He notes the enthusiasm in the local community, resourcefulness of international and local players, and a long-term plan for the upkeep of new water and sanitation services. While lauding WaterAid's technical approach, the author points out that solutions must be paired with education and full participation of local community members in order for programs to be sustainable.

- **A Sustainability Assessment Tool for Rural Water Services.** *IRC Source*, Mar 2013. ([Link](#))

Ryan Schweitzer and James Mihelcic from the University of South Florida have developed a Sustainability Assessment Tool for community-managed rural water systems. The tool is novel because it focuses specifically on community management during the post construction phase. It can be used to characterize specific needs of rural communities in the management of their water systems, and identify weaknesses in training regimes or support mechanisms.

## WEBSITES

- **Sustainable WASH** - ([Website](#))

In early 2012, individuals from a consortium of organizations (Aguaconsult, Global Water Challenge, IRC, and WASH Advocates) came together to build on previous work around sustainability and create SustainableWASH.org as a dynamic hub for the sustainability conversation.

- **USAID Sustainable Water and Sanitation in Africa (SUWASA)** - ([Website](#))

SUWASA is a regional initiative of USAID with the mission of fostering the transformation of water and sanitation delivery services in Africa to achieve long-term financial sustainability through the application of market-based principles.

- **WASHCost** - ([Website](#))

WASHCost is a five-year action research program. The WASHCost team is gathering information related to the true costs of providing water, sanitation, and hygiene services for an entire life cycle of a service—from implementation all the way to post-

construction. IRC International Water and Sanitation Center is leading the WASHCost program and works with several partners to collect data in the rural and peri-urban areas of Burkina Faso, Ghana, India, and Mozambique.

- **Water Services That Last** - ([Website](#))

A resource for building sustainable rural water services from IRC's Triple-S initiative.

Each WASHplus Weekly highlights topics such as Urban WASH, Indoor Air Pollution, Innovation, Household Water Treatment and Storage, Hand Washing, Integration, and more. If you would like to feature your organization's materials in upcoming issues, please send them to Dan Campbell, WASHplus knowledge resources specialist, at [dacampbell@fhi360.org](mailto:dacampbell@fhi360.org).



About WASHplus - WASHplus, a five-year project funded through USAID's Bureau for Global Health, creates supportive environments for healthy households and communities by delivering high-impact interventions in water, sanitation, hygiene (WASH) and indoor air pollution (IAP). WASHplus uses proven, at-scale interventions to reduce diarrheal diseases and acute respiratory infections, the two top killers of children under five years of age globally. For information, visit [www.washplus.org](http://www.washplus.org) or email: [contact@washplus.org](mailto:contact@washplus.org).

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