

**Review of the WASH
Bottleneck Analysis
Tool (BAT): Improving
the WASH BAT as
a tool for planning
and partnering for
sustainability**

unicef 
for every child

SIWI




Disclaimer and Acknowledgements p.4
List of abbreviations and acronyms p.5
Executive Summary p.7

01 Introduction

p.14

1.1 What is the WASH BAT? p.14
1.2 Purpose of this report p.16
1.3 Objective p.17
1.4 Outline of the report p.18

02 Methodology

p.20

2.1 Desk review p.20
2.2 Online survey p.20
2.3 In-depth case studies p.21
2.4 Country visits p.22
2.5 Final analysis p.22

03 Findings

p.23

3.1 Rationale for using the WASH BAT p.26
3.1.1 Recommendations related to the rationale for using the WASH BAT p.28

3.2 Preparation for the workshop p.29
3.2.1 The length of the preparation period p.29
3.2.2 Tailoring the WASH BAT to country context p.29
3.2.3 Identification and training of facilitators and rapporteurs p.30
3.2.4 Leading agency engagement, government and stakeholder involvement p.32
3.2.5 Recommendations related to preparations for the workshop p.35

3.3 Implementation of the workshop p.37
3.3.1 The contents of the workshop p.37
3.3.2 Facilitation of the workshops p.38
3.3.3 Flexibility and tailoring of the workshop p.39
3.3.4 Recommendations related to implementation of the workshop p.45

3.4 The online tool p.47
3.4.1 General findings p.48
3.4.2 Software p.49
3.4.3 User experience p.50
3.4.4 Auto-generated report and filing system of the online database p.51
3.4.5 Recommendations related to the online tool p.52

3.5 Outputs of the WASH BAT p.54
3.5.1 The activities developed during the workshop p.55
3.5.2 The activity timelines and financing sections p.56
3.5.3 Ensuring endorsement by decision makers p.57
3.5.4 Follow-up p.59
3.5.5 Recommendations related to outputs of the workshop p.61

3.6 Outcomes and impacts p.63
3.6.1 Outcomes relating to the behaviour of the WASH BAT participants p.64
3.6.2 Summary of the enabling environment outcomes related to the WASH BAT p.65
3.6.3 Contexts where WASH BAT is likely to be more successful p.66
3.6.4 Contexts where WASH BAT is likely to be less successful p.68

04 Conclusions and summary recommendations p.72

- 4.1 Conclusions p.72
 - 4.2 Summary recommendations p.73
-

05 Annexes p.76

Annex 1. Stakeholders consulted p.76

Online annexes

Annex 2: The full list of recommendations included in the review, by section

Annex 3: The questionnaire sent to UNICEF country offices

Annex 4: The discussion guide for the in-depth interviews

Annex.5: The data available for each country carrying out WASH BAT using the 2.0 tool

Annex 6: The key OWNP actions mapped against the WASH BAT activities following the workshop in Ethiopia

Disclaimer

The text, tables and figures in this publication may be reproduced in whole or in part and in any form for educational or non-profit purposes without special permission from the copyright holder provided proper acknowledgement of the source is made. Photos may not be reproduced.

UNICEF and SIWI would appreciate receiving a copy of any publication that uses this publication as a source. No use of this publication may be made for resale or for any other commercial purpose without prior permission in writing from UNICEF and SIWI.

The designation of geographical entities in this report, and the presentation of the material herein, do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the publisher or the participating organizations concerning the legal status of any country, territory or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

Copyright © 2020, UNICEF
Copyright © 2020, Stockholm International Water Institute, SIWI

Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by Henning Göransson Sandberg (Programme Officer) at the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), together with other members of the Water and Sanitation Department at SIWI; Ricard Gine (Programme Manager) and Antoine Delepiere (Senior Programme Manager). Alejandro Jimenez, Director of the Water and Sanitation Department, provided support throughout. Guy Hutton, Senior WASH Adviser, UNICEF New York, guided the study. Those interviewed and contributing to the study are sincerely thanked; they are listed in Annex 1.

For citation:

UNICEF (2020) "Review of the WASH Bottleneck Analysis Tool (BAT): Improving the WASH BAT as a tool for planning and partnering for sustainability". New York. Authors: Henning Göransson Sandberg, Ricard Gine, Antoine Delepiere, Alejandro Jimenez, Guy Hutton.

Available from: <https://www.washbat.org/resources/Helpdesk>: <https://washbat.org/>



Kenya, November 14, 2012
© UNICEF/UNI262218/Gangale

List of abbreviations and acronyms

○ ASWA	Accelerated Sanitation and Water for All
○ CCM	Climate Change Management
○ CIG	Country Implementation Guide (WASH BAT)
○ CNAEHA	Comité National d'Action d'Eau et d'Assainissement (DRC)
○ CO	Country Office (UNICEF)
○ DG	Director General
○ DINEPA	National Directory of Water and Sanitation (Haiti)
○ DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
○ GAMM	Local Government of Montero (Bolivia)
○ IRC	International Reference Centre for Community Water Supply and Sanitation
○ JSR	Joint Sector Review
○ M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
○ MAM	Mutual Accountability Mechanism (of SWA)
○ NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
○ ODF	Open Defecation Free
○ OWNP	One WASH National Programme (Ethiopia)
○ PAP	Provincial Action Plans (Cambodia)
○ PDRD	Provincial Department of Rural Development (Cambodia)
○ PMAS	Municipal Plan for Water and Sanitation (Bolivia)
○ SENAGUA	National Water Secretariat (Ecuador)
○ SIWI	Stockholm International Water Institute
○ SWA	Sanitation and Water for All
○ SWAp	Sector-Wide Approach
○ ToR	Terms of Reference
○ ToT	Training of Trainers
○ UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
○ WASA	Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Bangladesh)
○ WASH BAT	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Bottleneck Analysis Tool
○ WHO	World Health Organization
○ WinHCF	WASH in Health Care Facilities
○ WinS	WASH in Schools
○ WRM	Water Resources Management

List of figures

- **Figure 1:** Milestones in the development of the WASH BAT **p.15**
- **Figure 2:** Methods for the WASH BAT review **p.22**
- **Figure 3:** WASH BAT version 2.0 workshops (up to and including January 2020) **p.23**
- **Figure 4:** Countries that held WASH BAT 2.0 workshops from July 2016 to March 2020 **p.24**
- **Figure 5:** Integration of climate change (CC) criteria in the water and sanitation groups **p.44**

List of tables

- **Table 1:** Country case study selection mapped against study criteria **p.21**
- **Table 2:** List of WASH BAT 2.0 countries **p.25**
- **Table 3:** Identifying the need and demand for a WASH BAT **p.26**
- **Table 4:** Matrix of technical requirements for workshop **p.47**
- **Table 5:** A selection of outcomes from countries implementing WASH BATs version 2.0 **p.65**
- **Table 6:** OWNP actions mapped against WASH BAT activities **p.67**

List of boxes

- **Box 1:** Bangladesh: training a core group of facilitators and rapporteurs for divisional WASH BATs **p.31**
- **Box 2:** Ecuador: A multi-stakeholder working group in charge of preparations for a national WASH BAT **p.31**
- **Box 3:** Cambodia WASH BAT to support the country becoming open defecation free (ODF) **p.32**
- **Box 4:** Ethiopia: WASH BAT supports the development of the One WASH National Programme (OWNP) in Ethiopia **p.32**
- **Box 5:** Adapting the WASH BAT to the local context: case studies from Syria, Ecuador and Bolivia **p.40**
- **Box 6:** Tanzania: Integrating a climate change perspective into the final Action Plan for WASH **p.43**
- **Box 7:** Endorsement of Action Plan in Somalia (Puntland) **p.57**
- **Box 8:** Different types of 'official' WASH BAT outputs **p.58**
- **Box 9:** WASH BAT with follow-up workshop in Montero, Bolivia, to support Municipal Plan for Water and Sanitation (PMAS) **p.60**
- **Box 10:** DRC WASH BAT less effective at strengthening the institutional framework in a politically unstable context **p.69**
- **Box 11:** Haiti political crisis limited the usefulness of the WASH BAT outputs **p.69**
- **Box 12:** Pakistan WASH BAT supports Joint Sector Reviews and helps inspire the Clean Green Pakistan initiative **p.66**
- **Box 13:** Ethiopia's One WASH National Programme (OWNP) activities inspired by the WASH BAT **p.67**

Executive Summary

The Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Bottleneck Analysis Tool (WASH BAT) is designed to enable the formulation of costed and prioritized Action Plans to remove the bottlenecks that constrain the WASH sector and hinder the delivery of sustainable WASH services. While the tool was created by UNICEF, it is an unbranded tool which is intended to be used by different stakeholders for the sector at large. It provides a step-by-step methodology for key stakeholders in the WASH sector to collaboratively identify and propose solutions for the problems afflicting the WASH sector through a structured discussion. The tool is designed for governments to lead the process, guided by trained moderators and facilitators, to reach a broad consensus on the major fundable activities to remove priority bottlenecks that inhibit sector progress, and integrate them into their systems as well as partner plans.

Throughout the development of the WASH BAT, key stakeholders were consulted to improve the tool design and process of implementation, leading to the current design of the tool (version 2.0), which includes an online component found at <https://washbat.org>. This review is the latest attempt to learn from prior experience including obtaining stakeholder feedback, with the goal of fine-tuning the tool. Drawing on experience from all WASH BAT exercises carried out from mid-2016 until March 2020, the study assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the WASH BAT in achieving its aims. It therefore covers the rationale for using the WASH BAT based on both need and demand, the preparation and implementation of the workshops, and the outputs and outcomes associated with the WASH BAT. This is the first comprehensive review of the revised WASH BAT since 2016, and its recommendations focus on how the tool design and implementation can be improved.

The study combines a quantitative and qualitative approach, reviewing final reports and other outputs from WASH BAT exercises, and collecting information through questionnaires to UNICEF country offices as well as in-depth interviews with stakeholders from six countries (Bangladesh, Bolivia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Pakistan).

At the time of writing, 58 WASH BAT workshops, a key stage in the WASH BAT process, had been

completed in 32 countries. The majority (81%) were implemented at the sub-national level, covering regions, districts or municipalities, while 36 per cent covered the national level. Some workshops covered both levels. The most common subsector was sanitation, covering both rural and urban areas with 43 workshops each; water was covered by 41 workshops (rural) and 38 (urban). WASH in schools was covered by 33 workshops while WASH in health care facilities was covered by 19 workshops. Half of the WASH BAT workshops (50%) have so far been conducted in sub-Saharan Africa.

The review found that, overall, the WASH BAT is a very well-liked tool. Most of the stakeholders interviewed – whether they were moderators, facilitators, UNICEF staff, government staff or other WASH sector stakeholders – agree that it has created the ideal environment for a structured and systematic discussion of the key bottlenecks hindering progress, and what can be done to resolve them. The WASH BAT workshop offers a unique opportunity to bring all relevant stakeholders into one room for several days, focusing on how the country and/or region can achieve sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

There is also evidence that the outputs developed led to positive outcomes in the countries where the Action Plan arising from the WASH BAT has been implemented. The majority of countries report that the activities developed are committed to because they have been developed as part of a participatory approach, with general agreement of all the stakeholders including the government.

Less easy to quantify are the behavioural outcomes of the WASH BAT process. Gathering the key stakeholders from the sector for an extended period in a workshop gives a unique opportunity for sector networking. This may lead to improved institutional arrangements, due to improved coordination, cooperation, trust and leadership. The workshops can also lead to increased sector accountability.

Some of the review's findings in terms of the rationale for implementing a WASH BAT, the preparation process for the workshop, the implementation of the workshop itself, the online tool, and the outputs and outcomes of the WASH BAT are summarized below.

¹ Sixteen of the 32 countries which have conducted WASH BATs are in sub-Saharan Africa.

Findings on the rationale for implementing a WASH BAT

- Before committing time and resources to a bottleneck analysis process it is essential to establish whether there is both a need and a demand for this specific tool. Both are essential for its success. Buy-in from the government is critical. It is important to ensure that all involved understand exactly what the process entails before it begins.
- It is important to ensure that the WASH BAT is scheduled at the most appropriate time. This may be a) in respect to the political cycle, ensuring continuity of the stakeholders and civil servants to implement the Action Plan resulting from the WASH BAT, or to b) take advantage of windows of opportunity, such as providing input to the reformulation of a national strategy. Findings suggest that WASH BATs are most successful when feeding into such a national process, such as a Joint Sector Review, or feeding into a new major WASH programme.

Findings on the preparation process

- The proposed three-month preparation period for the workshop is rarely followed, which can lead to rushed preparations. In particular, identifying the facilitators and rapporteurs for the workshop is often left late, which can lead to insufficient training. Lead moderators noted that it is important to hold teleconferences with the facilitators and rapporteurs in the weeks leading up to the workshop to sensitize them about their roles. In about one third of workshops such training was held the day before the workshop.

- Engaging a core group of key stakeholders with responsibility for adapting the criteria to the context, inviting the right participants, and setting the expectations for the output of the workshop is the best way to ensure a successful exercise. Senior stakeholders need to be engaged and it is also important that the participant list is diverse, representing all the key constituencies in the country, including women's groups and indigenous groups, if relevant. While UNICEF is commonly the lead implementing agency in the WASH BAT process, pre-workshop engagement from the government is key.
- The expected output of the workshop needs to be defined as part of the preparation phase, as well as the next steps and plans for follow-up. This will enable the right information to be documented during the workshop. A decision should be made on whether there is to be a declaration at the end of the workshop.

Findings on the implementation of a WASH BAT workshop

- A majority of respondents believe the workshops are highly effective, allowing for a structured discussion which avoids confrontation and systematizes agreement in a participatory and persuasive way. Many stakeholders see it as a unique opportunity to get broad sector agreement about the key bottlenecks and activities to resolve them, developing an Action Plan with realistic, budgeted activities.



- Generally, the facilitation of the workshop is seen as good, but many countries recognize that while strong facilitation and thorough knowledge of the tool is required this may not be available locally. Lead moderators reported that in such cases the role of a core group of facilitators and rapporteurs is even more important to ensure that the discussions are relevant to the local context.
- Although the online WASH BAT is available in four languages (English, French, Spanish and Portuguese), and a fifth language is under development (Arabic), the language used during the workshop is often not the local language, and this hinders a full understanding of the key concepts. Preparatory work can help with this as key concepts can be explained and put into context, and local translations made.
- Very few workshops include the topic of hygiene, although criteria for this topic have been developed and are available in the online tool. The fact that hygiene is not primarily a service, and is more related to behaviour change, might be a reason why it is not covered more in workshops. Several countries have also requested integration of water resources management and climate change management in the criteria, something which is ongoing at the time of writing, as well as adaptation for emergencies and fragile states.
- Some workshops have problems with the software, such as the loss of data, slow navigation and delayed saving function. Some participants had difficulty following the logic of the tool when the workshop used a different flow to arrive at the activities.
- When it comes to the presentation of the data, some participants expressed frustration that the criteria were difficult to adapt, with the final report template not producing a good overview. The template produced included a lot of sections not relevant for the country report, and as a result the template was not used.

Findings on the outputs of a WASH BAT workshop

- All of the consulted stakeholders agreed – at least to some extent – that the WASH BAT produces outputs in line with its stated aim: a list of actionable activities and sub-activities agreed on by a broad segment of the sector, ready for high-level approval and implementation.
 - For three out of every five workshops (61%), the Action Plan was completed and agreed upon by senior stakeholders during or soon after the workshop. In 85 per cent of cases the final report was completed soon after the workshop, showing the key bottlenecks and activities developed and containing the Action Plan (if this had been agreed on).
 - In some workshops, a lack of time was cited as a problem which could have resulted in a lower quality of agreed activities. A small number of stakeholders also believed that a lack of time may mean that innovative ideas were not suggested. Certain activities have to be prioritized at different stages of the workshop in order to come up with a shortlist of key activities to be included in the Action Plan, and this sometimes leads to important bottlenecks and activities not being developed further. There is a risk that these will be forgotten once the workshop is over.
 - Many workshop participants saw the cost and timeline modules as less useful than other modules. Many workshops do not invite the right participants who are able to give realistic costs and scheduling of activities and sub-activities, and this can lead to unrealistic, and therefore unusable, estimates.
- Findings on the online tool**
- Few workshops directly use and record information in the online tool; instead paper, flip charts and cards are used and information is also sometimes entered in an Excel sheet. In such cases, data are then recorded in the tool either at the end of each day or at the end of the workshop. For those countries which have been able to engage with the online tool thoroughly, e.g. by going through the User Guide available at the washbat.org website, the online tool has proved useful, both as a systematic record keeper and as a template for the final report.
 - Most moderators agree, however, that the tool is not practically useable during the workshop itself, either because of poor internet connection or because it may be distracting to the participants, while the paper-based method promotes engagement. An 'offline function' in the tool is available, which enables tool download to the computer desktop and synchronization once online, but it has not been widely used.

- Stakeholders taking part in a workshop where a declaration was prepared for the final session (a summary of key activities with a plan for follow-up) found this very useful. The document can ensure broad agreement on the key outputs of the workshop immediately after the workshop, rather than having to wait for a final report, which could take a couple of months to complete.
- The follow-up is rarely given enough attention, which can lead to weak accountability of taking the activities to the next step. Ideally this should be considered in the preparation phase. However, including a session on an accountability mechanism to ensure follow-up during the workshop could lead to better outcomes.

Findings on the outcomes of a WASH BAT workshop

- In the majority of countries a range of outcomes can be traced back to the WASH BAT process, from the formulation of a municipal water and sanitation plan for Montero in Bolivia, to developing open defecation free (ODF) district plans in Cambodia and integrating recommendations from the Action Plan into the second phase of the One WASH National Programme (OWNP) in Ethiopia. Many other examples are covered in this report.
- Findings suggest that the WASH BAT might be less successful in contexts where the WASH sector is especially weak. In these contexts the government and other institutions tend to have low capacity and poor coordination, and conflict or other political fragility may make prioritization more difficult (as there are more, and more serious, bottlenecks to prioritize). Hence actual implementation is more challenging, especially if the country is one of the least developed, with funding lacking in many sectors.
- Findings suggest that more successful WASH BATs are found in contexts where the WASH BAT has been adapted to the needs of the country, and integrated into national processes, directly feeding into a programme or strategy. Having regular follow-up of the outputs, ensuring that they are implemented and adapted to changing circumstances, can also contribute to better outcomes.

Overall recommendations

Enough time needs to be allocated for the preparation process in order to make logistical arrangements, secure the right participants to attend, and manage expectations for the workshop

- A short and concise template should be developed for a concept note and terms of reference for the stakeholders involved in the preparation phase for the workshop. This should include key milestones, including logistical arrangements, a timetable, roles and responsibilities, and level of engagement envisaged. It should also include the type of output desired and the plans for follow-up.
- Biweekly calls should be scheduled between the coordinating agency, the government representatives and the lead facilitator in order to monitor the process to ensure that the timetable is being followed.



- The participant invitation list should be sent out at least a month in advance, with senior government staff in the WASH sector invited, as well as other relevant sectors, such as environment, planning, education and health. It is also important to ensure that NGOs working in the sector are represented, as well as representatives from user groups, such as women's and youth groups, indigenous groups, and other marginalized groups.
- A training of the facilitators, rapporteurs and any other members of any core group responsible for the preparation of the workshop should be arranged two to four weeks before the workshop to go through the key aspects of the workshop and the roles and responsibilities of the different attendees. In this training, if not covered before, the key problems in WASH service delivery in the country should be discussed, focusing on the key bottlenecks to be tackled. The possibility of adapting the criteria based on this discussion should also be considered.
- A second training of trainers (ToT) of at least half a day should be held the day before the workshop to prepare the facilitators and rapporteurs for their tasks at the different stages of the workshop.
- A core group of stakeholders, ideally from a range of organizations, including the government, should be engaged and made responsible for leading the coordination, preparation and ultimately the follow-up of the outputs of the WASH BAT.
- The responsibilities of the core group should include adapting the criteria to ensure that the bottlenecks are relevant to the context, reviewing the agenda and invitation list, and ensuring the output is developed in the best format for implementation.
- The preparation work should include gathering key documents of relevance to the WASH sector, including existing policies, local data and global data sets (GLAAS and JMP data), reviewing the introductory sessions in the workshop on the enabling environment, the national or sub-national context in relation to WASH, climate change, etc., to ensure that all participants are on the same page when the workshop starts.

A core group, including ministry stakeholders, in charge of the key preparatory stages should be engaged in order to ensure government ownership and adaptation to the context.

Taking advantage of windows of opportunity and integrating the WASH BAT into national processes give the greatest chance that the outputs will be followed up and implemented.

- A WASH BAT should, as far as possible, be linked to a national process, such as a Joint Sector Review or a new version of a strategy or national plan, to improve the chances of follow-up and implementation of the developed activities.
- Local facilitators should be trained as part of the WASH BAT workshop to facilitate capacity-building and ensure any future processes are completed with little external support.



India, December 17, 2019
© UNICEF/ Narain

The workshop can be improved by clarifying the key concepts, in the local language if appropriate, updating the online software, and ensuring that there is enough time to make sure that the activities are specific, measurable and relevant.

- A template should be created which can be easily translated and shared with all participating stakeholders before the workshop. This should focus on the key enabling environment concepts, the purpose and methodology of the WASH BAT, and next steps.
- A paper-based workshop is recommended as this encourages participation.
- The online software needs to be updated to eliminate any glitches, e.g. that data are lost or not saved.
- The budget and the timeline modules of the online tool should be simplified.
- The online tool should be updated to produce better infographics and tables which can be used during the workshop and, if desired, integrated into any final report.

- The online database should be organized by a government stakeholder, with a dedicated person responsible for cleaning up the files and ensuring the latest file for each subsector is clearly labelled and shared with the core group.
- A session on improving the quality of the activities should be included in the final day of the workshop.

To ensure the Action Plan is followed up, an accountability mechanism should be set up for each subsector, with a dedicated stakeholder group responsible for the next steps in promoting the activities for implementation.

- The preparation period should stress the importance of an accountability mechanism for the follow-up of the WASH BAT Action Plans, which should also be included as a session during the WASH BAT workshop. A template for such a session should be created.
- A template should be created for a declaration or summary of the key outputs of the workshop, which should include plans for next steps. This declaration, regardless of its political content and approach, supports the dissemination of achieved outputs among sector stakeholders and decision makers.

WASH BAT Activities, Suriname
Credit: Robin Ward





01 Introduction

1.1 What is the WASH BAT?

The WASH Bottleneck Analysis Tool (WASH BAT) is designed to support the drinking water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector, by enabling the formulation of costed and prioritized plans to remove the bottlenecks that hinder progress. Specifically, it provides a step-by-step methodology to collaboratively identify and propose solutions for the problems afflicting the WASH sector by answering the following questions:

1

What are the key constraints to scaling up and sustaining quality WASH services?

2

How can these constraints be removed and at what cost?

3

What is the priority and sequencing of each step in doing so?

4

Who is responsible?

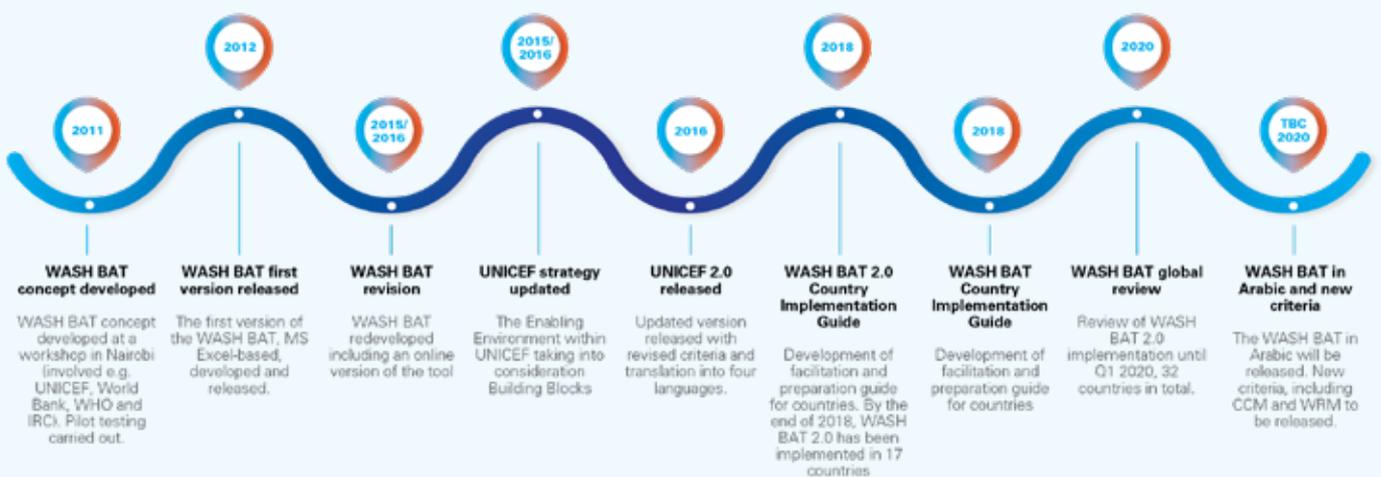




While UNICEF is a major force behind the WASH BAT design and implementation, the tool is unbranded and is intended to be a resource for the sector at large. Governments have been engaged at the early stages of tool implementation, and in most cases they own, or at least lead, the process. Key partners have also been involved at critical moments of tool design – in conceiving the tool in 2011 and revising it in 2015–16 – which has increased its external credibility.

WASH BAT exercises have been conducted covering different subsectors and different jurisdictions (levels of government). Since 2012 over 50 countries have used the WASH BAT – of which over 30 have used the updated version 2.0, which includes an online tool developed in 2016. This review focuses on this latest version of the tool and uses documentation obtained from the majority of these exercises. A brief timeline showing the main milestones of the evolution of the WASH BAT can be seen in [FIGURE 1](#).

Figure 1: Milestones in the development of the WASH BAT



² At a workshop in Nairobi with a handful of key partners such as World Bank, WHO and IRC.

³ International meetings of key partners in Stockholm and Washington DC.

1.2 Purpose of this report

This report seeks to answer the question ‘what is the value-added of the WASH BAT tool in diagnosing sector bottlenecks and ultimately in improving sector performance?’

It aims to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the WASH BAT in achieving its aims, particularly in relation to:

- bringing stakeholders around a common platform and providing space for joint assessment and problem solving;
- identifying WASH sector bottlenecks, and supporting sector diagnosis and planning, and
- triggering stakeholder buy-in, leading to coordinated actions towards removing bottlenecks, strengthening the enabling environment and thereby improving WASH services delivery.

Two additional outputs to the report are available separately: (a) a detailed mapping of workshops showing where the WASH BAT have been implemented and what documentation is available – this is available at www.washbat.org, and (b) a report on the most commonly found bottlenecks through the standard scoring of assessment criteria (by subsector).



1.3 Objective

The objective of this study is to gain an insight into the WASH BAT process and the tool itself, including the preparation process and the implementation of the workshop; and the WASH BAT outputs and outcomes, i.e., the suitability of the tool to trigger action. The focus is on how the WASH BAT can be improved, and recommendations are provided after each section. Findings related to potential areas for improvement take up most of the text, although each section summarizes the strengths of the process and highlights good examples and success stories through case studies.

The following specific research questions are addressed:



Is the preparation process used optimally for the implementation of the workshop and are supporting documents (e.g., the Country Implementation Guide) seen as useful by the country?

Are tool features (e.g., generation of reports, merging files, offline–online synchronization) suitable for the purpose of supporting collaborative development of an Action Plan? And for monitoring and update (M&E function)? Can the tool be improved in any way?

Is the tool flexible enough to be applicable in different contexts (e.g., emergencies, fragile states, lower levels of government, etc.)?

WASH BAT
outputs and outcomes



Is WASH BAT an adequate tool to identify the sector bottlenecks, i.e., to diagnose the sector and build consensus on the situation in the sector: inefficiencies, threats and opportunities?

Is WASH BAT an adequate tool to take action – plan, prioritize, implement – to improve service delivery? What outputs and outcomes have been generated as a result of implementing the WASH BAT?

What are the preconditions for a successful WASH BAT process leading to implementation of recommendations?

1.4 Outline of the report

This report is structured as follows. The next section (section 2) describes the methodology and methods employed in data collection and analysis. The Findings section (section 3) covers the following topics:

- the **rationale** behind the country request for a WASH BAT: why the country decided to conduct a WASH BAT exercise (section 3.1).
- **preparation for the workshop**: the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders involved in preparing the WASH BAT workshop, the strategic opportunities and threats of the context (section 3.2).
- **implementation of the workshop**: how was the workshop implemented in practice, what was the agenda, who attended the workshop, who facilitated the different sessions (section 3.3).
- the **online tool**: how was the online tool used during and after the workshop, was it useful for the facilitators and the rapporteurs, how has it been used since the workshop (section 3.4).
- the **outputs**: what were the concrete outputs of the workshop, how was the Action Plan formulated and endorsed by the government, what were the constraining factors – obstacles – and the opportunities – assets – to improving or scaling up the tool (section 3.5).
- the **outcomes** and the **impacts of the WASH BAT**: what were the mid-term (and long-term) outcomes, if they are measurable (section 3.6).

Section 4 summarizes the conclusions and main recommendations of this review.

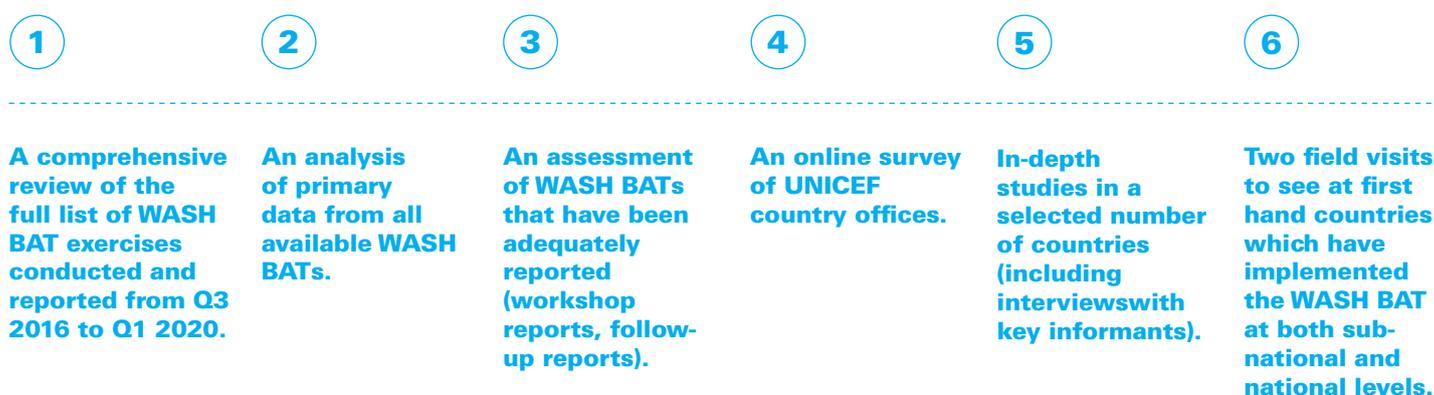
Sudan, November 04, 2019
© UNICEF/UNI233845/Noorani





02 Methodology

The methodology for this study combines both quantitative and qualitative approaches. It is based on:



Specifically, the following methods were used:

2.1 Desk review

UNICEF provided a list of WASH BATs conducted in the period in question using version 2.0 of the tool (from 2016 until January 2020; a sample of 54 workshops in 32 countries). As these data were not complete, UNICEF also provided SIWI with contacts and access to the relevant documentation at country level. This included reports of the WASH BAT exercises and related documents. SIWI reviewed all available information in order to complete the missing data as far as possible.

2.2 Online survey

Review of available documentation did not provide complete information for all countries, due to a lack of complete documentation and the inconsistent quality of the available reports. A Word document survey was jointly prepared with UNICEF and distributed via email to all countries where a relevant contact point was identified. The survey addressed major issues in relation to the rationale, implementation, the outputs and the outcomes of the exercise. The survey template can be provided on request.

The online survey obtained qualitative data and feedback from the primary contacts on the WASH BAT preparation process, workshop implementation and online tool, as well as immediate outputs, outcomes and medium-run impacts. These data, along with that from the in-depth interviews and country visits, form the basis for the assessment in this report.

2.3 In-depth case studies

Based on findings from the online survey, a list of six countries were proposed and agreed to take part in an in-depth study: Bangladesh, Bolivia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Pakistan. They were selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- The subsector and the building blocks covered in the respective exercises,
- The geographical context,
- The administrative level of government, and iv) a mixture of 'better' versus 'worse' outcomes of the tool. The selection was also made based on available information and availability / interest of key informants (a question on willingness to participate further in the study was included in the online survey).

Table 1: Country case study selection mapped against study criteria

Countries	Subsectors	Region	Level of jurisdiction	Comments
Bangladesh	Rural and urban water and sanitation, WinS and WinHCF	ROSA	Sub-national (8 divisional workshops);	Severe delays in getting Action Plan signed off. Regional workshops by local team of facilitators.
Bolivia	Urban water and sanitation, WinHCF	LACRO	2 WASH BAT workshops at sub-national (municipal) level, including 1 follow-up workshop	Good application and follow-up workshop. External facilitation.
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Rural water and sanitation	WCARO	1 workshop at national level	Detailed preparation but less good follow-up, partly due to staff/stakeholder turnover. Action Plan not fully implemented (but partially integrated into national programme). External facilitation.
Eritrea	Rural and urban water and sanitation, WinS and WinHCF	ESARO	1 workshop at national level	Good application. Findings fed into the Eritrea One WASH Strategy and Investment Plan 2019–2030. External facilitation.
Ethiopia	Rural and urban water and sanitation	ESARO	1 workshop at national level, including rural water at sub-national level	Rushed preparation but timely process; feeding into national programme preparation. External facilitation.
Pakistan	Rural and urban water and sanitation, WinS	ROSA	9 workshops; 1 national and 8 sub-national (1 district and 7 provincial)	Modification of methodology to fit JSRs. Regional workshops by local team of facilitators.

Interviews were held with key stakeholders from selected countries as well as UNICEF country offices. Interview questions were developed and validated by

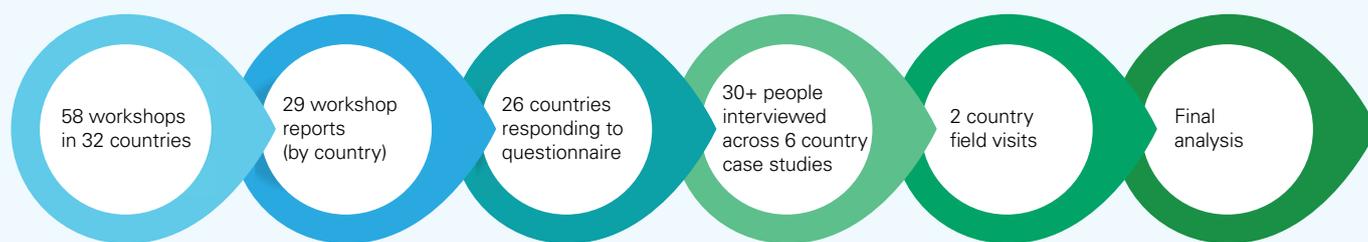
UNICEF based on the questions included in the terms of reference (ToR) for the assignment. The interviews covered the complete WASH BAT process.

2.4 Country visits

Country visits were made to Bangladesh and Bolivia as part of the in-depth study, to further refine the information gathered. In each country, interviews were conducted with the UNICEF focal points, rapporteurs and

facilitators of the WASH BAT workshops, including the lead facilitators, key government staff, service providers and NGO representatives involved in the process.

Figure 2: Methods for the WASH BAT review



2.5 Final analysis

The final analysis was conducted by triangulating the data from the questionnaires, in-depth interviews and country visits under the four main sections of the study.

⁴ Field visits coincided with other missions in order to add value to those missions and so as not to increase CO2 emissions from travel unnecessarily. The Bangladesh country visit coincided with the National Consultation workshop, validating the results of the eight divisional

WASH BAT workshops carried out in 2018. The Bolivia country visit coincided with a follow-up WASH BAT to the one conducted in Montero municipality in late 2018.



03 Findings

This section presents and discusses the findings from the review, along with specific recommendations for improving the WASH BAT process. It discusses the rationale of why the country decides to conduct a WASH BAT; the preparation and implementation of the WASH BAT; the online tool; the outputs, i.e. the Action Plan; and the outcomes and impacts.

FIGURE 3 gives an overview of the workshops that have been included in this study.

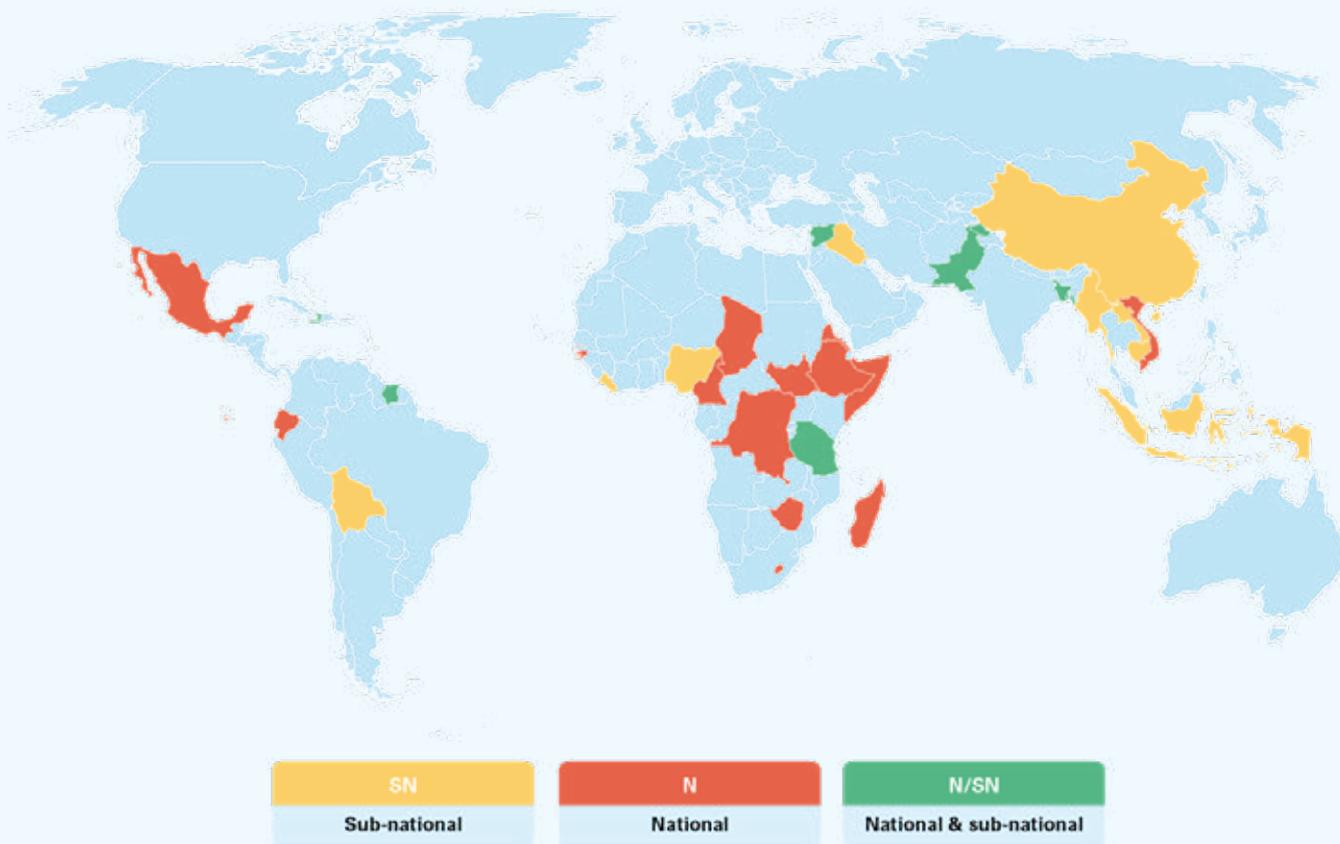
Figure 3: WASH BAT version 2.0 workshops (up to and including January 2020)



FIGURE 4 shows the countries that have conducted WASH BAT workshops. In terms of countries, half of version 2.0 WASH BAT implementations (50%) have so far been conducted in sub-Saharan Africa. However, the map doesn't show the number of workshops and levels implemented per country, such as sub-national

workshops. For example, Bangladesh conducted eight divisional workshops, in Pakistan seven provincial, one district and one national workshop were conducted, and in Iraq six governorates conducted workshops. Some countries only applied in WASH in schools (Mexico and Chad).

Figure 4: Countries that held WASH BAT 2.0 workshops from July 2016 to March 2020



3.1 Rationale for using the WASH BAT

The ultimate objective of the WASH BAT is to untangle the barriers constraining progress in WASH outcomes, with a focus on improving services for the poor and vulnerable populations. But, before committing time and resources to a bottleneck analysis process it is essential to establish whether there is both a need and a demand for this specific tool, and to determine its value-added and chance of success. **TABLE 3** shows how to determine whether there are favourable conditions for a WASH BAT based on need and demand.

Table 3: Identifying the need and demand for a WASH BAT

Criteria		Is there a need for a WASH BAT?	
		YES	NO
Is there demand for a WASH BAT?	YES	Conditions are met for the application of a WASH BAT	Stakeholders should collectively assess the relevance of the WASH BAT
	NO	Stakeholders need to be sensitized to the need for a WASH BAT	No action needed

⁵ See the Country Implementation Guide for further details, where the table is taken from.



With regard to the demand, it is important to ensure that all involved understand exactly what the process entails. While the WASH BAT has been presented in regional meetings and similar forums, the specificities of the process are not always well understood, particularly when it comes to the time and effort, and sometimes the cost, it entails. The main cost associated with the WASH BAT is often not the cost of the preparation, facilitation and logistics but the time required from the participants to take part. Buy-in from the government is critical.

It is also important to schedule the WASH BAT at the right time This may be in terms of:

- **synchronizing with the political cycle**, to ensure longevity of the administration in charge of implementing the Action Plan. If elections are due soon after the WASH BAT is scheduled, the key stakeholders in the government might not be in their roles when follow-up and monitoring of the process are due. This point is commonly raised with countries when discussing the rationale for the WASH BAT before it is scheduled but it is not always followed. OR

⁶ For example in Suriname the WASH BAT took place just seven months before the May 2020 general election. Similarly, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo a presidential election was held shortly after the WASH BAT, which resulted in political volatility and considerable turnover in the relevant departments so that many of the WASH BAT participants were no longer in a position to implement the activities developed.

- **taking advantage of windows of opportunity, such as providing input to the reformulation of a national strategy.** In both Pakistan and Bangladesh, the governments embraced the WASH BAT as part of successful Joint Sector Reviews (JSRs). Pakistan was one of the first countries to roll out sub-national WASH BATs, covering all four provinces and also carrying out a WASH BAT in the autonomous territory of Gilgit-Baltistan. In Bangladesh UNICEF suggested a national WASH BAT workshop to feed into the JSR, but the government took ownership of the process, instead deciding on eight divisional workshops to reflect regional challenges. This was a considerably larger effort, but as the WASH BAT was endorsed by the government as a key input to the JSR it was successfully implemented at the divisional level.

Linking the WASH BAT to a national process, such as a JSR, reflects the importance of the need. By connecting the use of the WASH BAT to a national process, government can assume ownership of the outputs, ensuring that they feed into policies which can be implemented to produce positive outcomes for the sector. This was the case in several countries, as detailed in this report. In most cases the process in [TABLE 3](#) is followed, with WASH BATs carried out where there is both a demand and a need.

⁷ A planned workshop in the autonomous territory of Azad Jammu and Kashmir had to be postponed because of COVID-19.



Nigeria, April 21, 2013
© UNICEF/UNI145739/Esiebo

3.1.1 Recommendations related to the rationale for using the WASH BAT

1 There must be both a need and a demand for the WASH BAT for it to be successful.

2 It is critical that the key WASH stakeholders and the government fully understand the process and the time, effort and cost involved. Senior-level engagement, including workshop attendance, is crucial, and there is a need for thorough engagement at all stages (before, during and after the workshop). If the country coordinator for the workshop cannot identify a credible list of engaged facilitators and rapporteurs, as well as a list of participants to send invitations to, at least a month before the workshop is due to take place, a postponement should be considered.

3 The government must ultimately own the process and be willing and able to take the lead in the implementation of the workshop and the subsequent follow-up, supported by the key WASH stakeholders and technical assistance. When discussing the rationale for the WASH BAT, efforts should be made to link it to a national process or programme which is already ongoing or planned in order to feed into this, ensuring that outputs and outcomes are integrated.

4 Delays and postponements of WASH BATs are relatively common; therefore contingency plans need to be made when planning a WASH BAT.



Madagascar, March 11, 2014
© UNICEF/Rindra Ramasomanana

3.2 Preparation for the workshop

A majority of facilitators and WASH BAT coordinators believe that the preparation process is key to set and manage expectations for the workshop, and to get clarity on the output needed. A majority of countries said that they used the Country Implementation Guide (CIG) and found it useful, particularly to visualize the different steps of the workshop and to ensure the logistics.

3.2.1 The length of the preparation period

The three-month preparation period suggested by the Country Implementation Guide is rarely respected, so there is less time to ensure the right participants attend, and this can mean the WASH BAT is less tailored to the local context.

Rushed preparations can have negative impact on the planning, logistical arrangements, the invitation list and the methodology of the workshop. Various reasons were cited for a lack of preparation time, ranging from the need to take advantage of an opportunity (e.g. the Ethiopia case described in [BOX 4](#)), a difficult context and limited communication and commitment from the coordinating agency (as was the case in Somalia).

3.2.2 Tailoring the WASH BAT to country context

Findings suggest that a WASH BAT is more successful if the key functions and criteria have been decided and adapted to the country context before the workshop. An example of this is Mexico, where the WASH in Schools Working Group defined and adapted the Building Blocks and functions of particular relevance to the context before the workshop. Such adaptation will also serve to reduce the time spent during the workshop prioritizing functions and tailoring criteria for the scoring and subsequent analysis.

However, tailoring the WASH BAT needs to be done with care. The WASH BAT functions are designed to be holistic and include all or most of the critical sector issues which should be discussed in a workshop. There is a risk that adapting functions and tailoring criteria may remove some critical issues which are then not discussed during the workshop. Moderators also mentioned that there have been instances of working groups deprioritizing certain issues in the preparation phase of the WASH BAT which they did not want to discuss, such as accountability, open defecation and water quality. It is important that the moderator, facilitators and the organizers of the WASH BAT are mindful of these issues when preparing the workshop.

There is more on the subject of tailoring the tool to country context in [section 3.3](#).



Congo, 17 September 2019
© UNICEF/UNI213409//Vincent Tremeau

3.2.3 Identification and training of facilitators and rapporteurs

Workshop facilitators and rapporteurs are crucial to the success of the workshop, and must be chosen to have legitimacy among the main stakeholders. The case study from Bangladesh (BOX 1) highlights the advantages of having a representative team in charge of the WASH BATs.

More information on facilitators and rapporteurs is given in [section 3.3](#).

The study shows that almost all WASH BATs were preceded by a training of trainers (ToT) for the facilitators and rapporteurs, to make sure that they understood and were familiar with the step-by-step approach of the tool.

In some cases, the identification of facilitators and rapporteurs was left late. This can lead to insufficient preparation, or not having enough facilitators and rapporteurs when the workshop starts.

Over half of the ToTs were conducted more than a week before the workshop, with most lasting two days. The majority of these were regional trainings, with representatives from several countries present (e.g. the training held in Amman in April 2018). Respondents believed these workshops were useful

as an introduction to the tool. However, it was not tailored for their country context, the way country-based training could be. Only about a third of WASH BATs had a ToT immediately before the WASH BAT, lasting from a couple of hours to a full day.

Training of facilitators and rapporteurs is sometimes lacking or insufficient, which can lead to lower quality discussions during the workshop.

Feedback from several experienced moderators and facilitators indicates that having a ToT immediately before the workshop, such as in Suriname and Tanzania, is a valuable exercise which can lead to a more successful WASH BAT. Feedback also suggests that more time for training is needed when there have been few or no introductory meetings during the preparation phase between the facilitators and rapporteurs and the lead moderator. However, when the lead moderator, or the in-country coordinator, has been able to introduce the process to the facilitators and the rapporteurs through meetings during the preparation phase, which may have been online, less face-to-face training may be needed immediately before the workshop.

⁸The workshop facilitator is responsible for a sub-sector/group work throughout a workshop. The duty of the workshop rapporteur is to record/insert the discussion agreements and outcomes of their sub-sector/group in the WASH BAT digital format and to perform other related tasks needed by table facilitators.



WASH BAT WG, Tanzania
Credit: A. Delepiere



Yemen, April 27, 2020
© UNICEF/UNI324884/

1

Box 1: Bangladesh: training a core group of facilitators and rapporteurs for divisional WASH BATs

- Eight WASH BATs were conducted in Bangladesh, and given the large size of the project a core group of facilitators and rapporteurs were trained at a ToT in Dhaka, with most of those trained participating in a majority of the divisional workshops.
- Of the 33 facilitators and rapporteurs trained, almost half came from the NGO sector (7 from UNICEF, 8 from other organizations), over a third from the government, three were consultants associated with UNICEF or the government, two came from the service provider (the Water Supply and Sewerage Authority, WASA), and one from academia. They formed the WASH BAT Forum, which met regularly to share knowledge and experiences and plan for the upcoming WASH BATs.
- Buy-in from government was secured by a series of explanatory meetings. UNICEF gave ownership of the process to the government, through linking the WASH BATs to a government-led JSR. The Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives acted as a champion moving the process forward. He supported the recruitment of facilitators and rapporteurs by sending a letter encouraging key stakeholders to take part. Those taking part were given a \$100 fee per day for their organization.

2

Box 2: Ecuador: A multi-stakeholder working group in charge of preparations for a national WASH BAT

- The national WASH BAT in Ecuador was successfully prepared by a core group of 11 experts from a wide variety of stakeholders: the UNICEF Country Office, the National Water Secretariat of Ecuador (SENAGUA), and three local NGOs: Fundación Avina, PROTOS and WaterStep; under the guidance of SIWI.
- One specific challenge was the inclusion of a new set of criteria to integrate a **climate perspective** in the assessment, as well as a new function to address the rights of nature. Therefore, this working group was in charge of the following tasks: i) elaboration of the agenda; ii) selection of participants and advice on the invitation process; iii) fine-tune and adapt the whole list of standard criteria, for the subsectors of water, sanitation and schools; iv) review the climate criteria; and v) develop the criteria for the rights of nature, as these are recognized in the Ecuadorian constitution
- This preparatory work included a number of videoconferences, a one-day workshop to review all the criteria, and a one-day ToT conducted the day before the workshop.

3.2.4 Leading agency engagement, government and stakeholder involvement

UNICEF is often the instigator and lead coordinator, but pre-workshop engagement from the government is key for a successful process.

UNICEF has commonly been the lead implementing agency in the WASH BATs reviewed. The ownership of the process often depends on where the demand

for the WASH BAT originates. Findings suggest that the WASH BAT is perceived as more successful if linked to a government process, such as in Cambodia or Ethiopia. In such cases the WASH BAT can be used to inform an ongoing process, as shown in the case study from Cambodia (BOX 3), or to validate findings from consultants, as shown in the case study from Ethiopia (BOX 4).

3

Box 3: Cambodia WASH BAT to support the country becoming open defecation free (ODF)

- In Cambodia the WASH BAT was linked with the Accelerated Sanitation and Water for All (ASWA) programme and open defecation free (ODF) district planning. The WASH BAT was planned as part of Provincial ODF Planning Workshops in two provinces, Kampong Speu and Svay Reing, focused on supporting rural sanitation ODF achievement. The workshops, held in December 2018, resulted in the development of Provincial Action Plans (PAPs). These were presented and discussed with Provincial Department of Rural Development (PDRD) officials, including their visions beyond the PAP. Provincial ODF initiatives were introduced as a result and the provincial ODF plans were disseminated in workshops which further validated the WASH BAT findings.
- The workshops allowed senior WASH practitioners and other relevant stakeholders and partners to review and provide additional feedback on the provincial plans, and to identify opportunities to help districts to set and achieve ODF targets, as aligned with provincial targets.

4

Box 4: Ethiopia: WASH BAT supports the development of the One WASH National Programme (OWNP) in Ethiopia

- In Ethiopia the WASH BAT was linked to the sector-wide approach (SWAp) under the umbrella of the One WASH National Programme (OWNP), which brings together ministries, development partners, academia and civil society organizations with a common goal of one plan, one budget, and one report. The WASH BAT was held in October 2017, while the sector was revising and updating the OWP for phase 2.
- The political commitment which was evident through the OWP, endorsed at both national and regional levels, ensured that there was sufficient buy-in to the WASH BAT and to the resulting Action Plan. A majority of the key long-term activities and the short- to medium-term actions that form the basis for creating a robust water and sanitation sector to meet the needs of urban and rural WASH in Ethiopia are inspired by the activities developed as part of the WASH BAT. While some of these recommendations were developed prior to the WASH BAT workshop by the OWP consultants they gained more acceptance as they came out of a systematic and participatory process.
- A more in-depth look can be found in BOX 13 in section 3.6 of this report, mapping the OWP actions and goals against the WASH BAT activities.

Despite efforts to give ownership to the government at the start of the preparation process, some interviewees highlighted that the WASH BAT is seen as a UNICEF process.



The WASH BAT is still seen more as UNICEF-driven and not fully owned by government.”

Somalia (Central)
UNICEF staff member

Feedback suggests that bringing the right stakeholders from the government, particularly senior staff, is the biggest challenge, while it is often easier to get stakeholders to attend from NGOs or other partners. This requires careful planning, and that the colleagues coordinating the process, including those from the government, are able to identify those who need to attend from the different government departments and other public and private sector institutions. It is important that there are representatives of the water and sanitation sectors, but also related sectors depending on the country context (e.g. environment, planning, health or education), at the national and regional levels as appropriate.

However, it is equally important that civil society and groups representing users, the private sector and independent regulatory bodies, as well as donors, are represented among the participants. Representation from user groups from a variety of regions and demographics is crucial in order to get their concerns, wishes and needs respected. This would ideally include representatives from women’s groups, indigenous groups, youth groups, as well as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer groups and others if appropriate. Female attendance across WASH BATs is not regularly recorded, and not regularly reflected on, but from limited evidence women make up around a third of participants. The involvement of youth is rarely mentioned in final reports, nor is the involvement of minorities.

Apart from inviting the right participants it is also important to define their level of engagement and to manage their expectations from the start.

Clearly explaining the process, the overall methodology, and the topics of discussion will help ensure that people at the right level are invited to the workshop, and that they come ready to discuss the topics under review. In some workshops, for example in Somalia (Puntland), some participants were disengaged and left the workshop in the afternoon, and on one of the days for the last hour there were only two participants in the rural sanitation group.

The expected output of the workshop needs to be defined as part of the preparation phase, as well as the next steps and plans for follow-up.

The expected output of the WASH BAT workshop is linked to the purpose of the exercise, and therefore needs to be carefully defined at the start of the process. This will determine the functions and criteria covered, but also what format the output should be in, including the structure of the report. This will also help to define what is expected from the table facilitators and rapporteurs so that the right information can be documented during the workshop. If the discussions take place in a local language there will be an additional effort needed to translate the notes of the discussion for the online tool or into the final report.

It is also important to specify whether there needs to be a declaration at the end of the workshop summarizing the key activities. Such a declaration most commonly takes the form of a document which can be signed by the participants as a provisional agreement of the output of the WASH BAT before the report has been finalized. This could also be used to secure high-level endorsement, if representatives at the right levels from the relevant ministries are participating in the workshop.



3.2.5 Recommendations related to preparations for the workshop

- 1 **The three-month preparation period** needs to be better respected, with the coordinating organization, e.g., the UNICEF country office, having a role to play to ensure that this is adhered to. The leading government agency will need to be identified at the start of the preparation period, with a contact point in the organization willing to assist in the organization. Ideally, a timetable should be drawn up with milestones which would make following up easier.
- 2 **The facilitators and rapporteurs** need to be identified at least a month before the workshop, taking part in at least one online call which should cover the process, schedule, and roles and responsibilities.
- 3 **To ensure the preparation process** is on track, recurring biweekly calls around 1.5 months before the WASH BAT should be scheduled with, at minimum, the coordinating agency and the lead moderator, and ideally also the government representatives. These calls can be short, but they will still keep the planning top of mind for the coordinating agency and the government. In these meetings the logistics can be followed up, as well as discussing the contents, the building blocks, functions and criteria, to make sure that discussions during the workshop are relevant to the context.
- 4 **Ideally, a core group should be formed** with participants from the key sector organizations, including government departments, responsible for parts of the preparation process. This group can include the facilitators and rapporteurs, but this is not necessary. They should be part of the biweekly calls. The main task of the group should be to ensure that the WASH BAT is tailored to the country context and to the output which is desired. They should also review the sector legal framework before the workshop, and ensure that the key knowledge products and sector information are available before the workshop.
- 5 **While tailoring of the WASH BAT** and the criteria covered is important, care also need to be taken not to deprioritize any issue relevant to the country. This may happen because the government or core group wish for a topic to be taken off the table, or because the coordination group attempts to streamline the workshop to save time. As far as possible, tailoring should not remove any function, criteria or issue, and adaptation should only happen if it is needed to be relevant to the context. Therefore, the lead moderator and the coordinating agency should be part of the core group tailoring the WASH BAT to the context.
- 6 **In order to specify the level of engagement and commitment** for the stakeholders involved in the preparation process, including the core group, it might also be helpful to develop terms of reference (ToRs). This could include all the preparatory tasks, including for the lead moderator and the coordinating agency, table facilitators and rapporteurs. This could also be helpful to establish the milestones. While the CIG does highlight this, it is rarely followed closely, which means that a template ToR may need to be created to be adapted for each WASH BAT. The key milestones should include (but not be limited to) the final list of participants, details of the venue, the agenda, a session to review and adapt the criteria to be covered during the WASH BAT before the workshop, and the scheduling of a ToT for the table facilitators and rapporteurs. The ToR could also include the post-workshop activities, related to follow-up, monitoring and accountability.
- 7 **The level of engagement required** of participants needs to be better explained before the workshop, including any preparatory material required for the participants to read such as a concept note, preferably in the local language. A concept note is currently being prepared in English, and will be available in the WASH BAT languages, but a shorter version to be translated more easily is advised. Similar explanatory documents on the enabling environment, functions and criteria could also be produced, so that participants can prepare themselves adequately for the level of discussion at the workshop.

⁹ For example GLAAS, SDG baselines (national or JMP), finance data.

8 **The coordinating organization**, e.g., UNICEF country office, needs to ensure ownership is passed to the government for the workshop. Examples of successful ways of doing this are described above, in the case studies from Cambodia, Bangladesh and Ecuador, either through linking it to a national process (as a key activity feeding into the process) or to give over ownership of the workshop to a core group of key stakeholders to ensure that the content is adequate for the context and purpose of the WASH BAT. Ensuring that there is government demand to implement the WASH BAT should secure their involvement in the preparation.

9 **The key to a successful WASH BAT** is that the right participants are invited and attend the workshop. Enough time and effort need to be spent on ensuring that the list drawn up is representative and adequate for the purpose. A short discussion of the representation of key stakeholders, women, youth and minority groups should always be included in the final report, with a specific section dedicated to this in the template.

10 **The expected output of the workshop** needs to be defined during the preparation process, including the report structure, whether a summary document for the end of the workshop is desired, and the format of the activities and Action Plan. This should be included in the concept note to be prepared before the workshop.

11 **A ToT is strongly recommended**, ideally the day before the workshop, regardless of whether the facilitators and rapporteurs have participated in similar trainings before. This should last at least half a day. A guiding document or PowerPoint training slide deck will be available on the online portal (www.washbat.org), in several languages, to accompany the tutorial there (available in three languages).

12 **The ToT should include** creating the files in the WASH BAT online tool, with all the relevant building blocks, functions and criteria defined. Thus, in the workshops, the rapporteurs will already be familiar with the tool and it will be set up with the most relevant information (however, this can of course change during the workshop depending on the discussions).



Syrian Arab Republic, June 03, 2017
© UNICEF/UN067453/Souleiman

3.3 Implementation of the workshop

3.3.1 The contents of the workshop

The median length of a WASH BAT workshop is three days. On average, 48 participants take part in a WASH BAT workshop. It rises to 53 if the workshop is covering four or more subsectors, with 37 participants being the average for a WASH BAT covering three or fewer subsectors. On average, 4.5 subsectors are covered in a WASH BAT.

The WASH BAT workshop's systematic and structured, participatory approach is seen as its main strength, facilitating a discussion and analysis of the key bottlenecks hindering reform of the WASH sector.



The methodology systematizes agreements and priorities and avoids confrontation."

UNICEF Bolivia WASH BAT coordinator

Feedback from questionnaires and in-depth interviews shows that stakeholders see the main benefits of the workshop to be that it allows for a systematic analysis which helps to assess the enabling environment of WASH service delivery. Structuring the discussion around the building blocks and governance functions allows for a comprehensive and well-organized diagnosis.



The participatory and persuasive process led the government to own the plan and make a commitment to it."

UNICEF Cambodia WASH BAT coordinator

Stakeholders also believe that it is an important tool to create a critical mass and consensus on the priorities, which is valuable in a sector which can be fragmented with uncertain responsibilities and accountability lines. By getting the key stakeholders and decision makers to agree on the critical functions and criteria, the bottlenecks and the activities to remove these bottlenecks, a prioritized list of actions can be agreed upon at the workshop which can then be taken further to be implemented. The WASH BAT gives confidence to decision makers that there is an agreement on the priorities in the sector and shows the next steps to address them. The case study on Ethiopia (BOXES 4 AND 13) highlights this.



3.3.2 Facilitation of the workshops

Facilitation is sometimes mentioned as a weakness, with experienced moderators and facilitators being important for a successful process, especially given the time constraints.

Several countries implementing WASH BAT, such as Cambodia and Somalia (Central), highlight the need for advanced facilitation skills, and that knowledge of the WASH BAT is rarely available locally. Some countries expressed concern that bringing in consultants connected to UNICEF contributed to the perception that the WASH BAT is a UNICEF tool and process, rather than owned by the government. The most cost-effective approach for a country

seeking to conduct several regional workshops is to conduct a ToT with local moderators, facilitators and rapporteurs which will then be able to autonomously organize and facilitate local workshops, as has been done in e.g. Bangladesh, Pakistan and Myanmar.

A small number of WASH BATs have been less successful because of a combination of poor understanding of the tool and inadequate facilitation skills of the lead moderator or the table facilitators. These risks are higher if there has been no previous WASH BAT in the country. However, in most cases, the feedback on the facilitation is positive.



Guinea-Bissau, January 16, 2020
© UNICEF/UNI284675/Prinsloo

3.3.3 Flexibility and tailoring of the workshop

One of the strengths of the WASH BAT, its generic nature, is also seen as a weakness, with tailoring to the local context often required in order to get the most out of the exercise.

Several countries pointed to the WASH BAT being too general and not adequately tailored to the local context. This is particularly the case for sub-national or regional WASH BATs, where the local context may matter more than at national-level workshops.

This is generally because the preparation time is too short, as explained in section 3.2. However, with engaged stakeholders the WASH BAT does offer some flexibility, and evidence from countries supports this. For example, the Syria, Ecuador and Bolivia workshops used the standard building blocks and functions, but added functions and criteria adapted to the local context to ensure that the WASH BAT was aligned with the national strategy (BOX 5).



Uganda, October 23, 2019
© UNICEF/UNI232821/Bridger

5

Box 5: Adapting the WASH BAT to the local context: case studies from Syria, Ecuador and Bolivia**Adapting the WASH BAT to the humanitarian context in Syria**

- In September 2019, during the preparation process, a key group of stakeholders from the WASH sector revisited all functions and criteria related to the subsector in English and ensured appropriate translation to Arabic as the workshop was planned to be conducted using both languages.
- Additional criteria were introduced within the standard governance functions in order to adapt the methodology further to the context of humanitarian crisis, covering criteria developed for emergency, fragile states, or climate change affected contexts (developed by UNICEF, Global WASH Cluster, SIWI and Oxford University/REACH Consortium).

Including the rights of nature in the Ecuador WASH BAT

- As part of the preparatory meetings participants pointed out that in the Ecuadorian legal system nature itself, including water, has rights. It was decided that the concept of 'good living', or *sumac kawsay*, should be incorporated in the functions. *Sumac kawsay* is a vision of 'well-being' that integrates the individual with the community and nature as one living organism. The result was the addition of a new function within the 'Broader Enabling Environment' block made up of seven criteria, based on the Ecuadorian constitution. During the workshop the participants evaluated these criteria and agreed that they were not fully implemented (none of the criteria was scored green or blue). In the final Action Plan, participants prioritized the need to create a national Action Plan on how to respect the rights of nature and the collective rights of communities to live under the *sumac kawsay*.

Integrating a social protection perspective in the WASH BAT in Bolivia

- During preparations, the Social Protection department of UNICEF Bolivia showed interest in joining forces with the WASH department to integrate their perspective into the WASH BAT exercise. Their interest originated from the fact that the WASH BAT would target marginalized peri-urban areas, where their target population live.
- The exercise of integrating social protection criteria (and tailoring the standard criteria to better highlight the social protection aspects) proved to be enriching for the process, as it identified both risks and opportunities for WASH actors when delivering their services to this population. Activities in the Action Plan included training the WASH service provider staff on how to report violence against women if they encounter any such situations during their work, and to create a code of conduct that defines sexual harassment and abuse against children and youth.



Uganda, September 26, 2019
© UNICEF/UNI217975/Abdul

The moderator needs to ensure that the format of the workshop is flexible enough to allow for context-specific issues to be addressed, and that the criteria and bottlenecks discussed are relevant to the country.

The criteria are seen as generally good, but some stakeholders suggested that they might be both too generic and too prescriptive. While this is deliberate, there may be a danger that underlying bottlenecks not covered by the criteria may not come up for discussion. This is particularly the case if the moderator does not have experience of the country context, which can sometimes be the case if they are external and the coordinating organization does not have anyone available to facilitate. The best way to ensure that criteria are relevant to the context is to have them reviewed during the preparation phase by a core stakeholder group involved in the workshop.

It is important that the facilitator is able to discuss the sector more broadly at the start of the workshop, in order to discover the key problems in the sector, or any underlying issues which the workshop should also address. For example, technical problems might be easier to conceptualize than procedural-, accountability-, autonomy-, or delegation-related problems, which highlights the importance of an open discussion at the start of the workshop, where the key challenges to the sector are discussed unprompted by the WASH BAT criteria. The Accountability Triangle exercise, when included and given an appropriate amount of time, may also be useful to address this.

The need for adaptation is particularly evident when it comes to WASH in schools and health care facilities, where there may be more national or regional peculiarities than for the other subsectors. Here the need to adapt the functions and criteria to the local context, and the early engagement of key stakeholders, is more important than for other areas.



The tool has excellent support documents for the Accountability, and Regulations, for instance, but when working in WASH in Schools, its utility is not so clear because of the specific characteristics of the Education sector.”

Mexico WASH BAT coordinator

Similarly, the criteria for hygiene may need more tailoring to be usefully included in the WASH BAT. Hygiene criteria are rarely included specifically in WASH BATs, and bottlenecks and activities are rarely prioritized and included in the Action Plan. While some countries (e.g. Bangladesh and Zimbabwe) included some hygiene criteria in their scoring, no country included the full list. As hygiene is not a service it does not fit very well in the WASH BAT structure. This is mainly because hygiene is more related to behavioural change and awareness raising than to access to infrastructure and services, as well as the fact that hygiene is often a responsibility of the health ministry, rather than water and sanitation.

It is also important to consider how the workshop is facilitated in terms of the effect it may have on the criteria, bottlenecks, and activities which are discussed and developed. An example of this is the newly introduced criteria on water resources management (WRM) and climate change management (CCM), which have been piloted in certain workshops. As these concepts were introduced as new, some of the participants may have been primed to see them as prioritized over others, hence giving greater weight to them in the scoring of priority activities for the Action Plan.

Language is a problem for certain countries, which limits understanding of the process and specific concepts, as well as the local ownership of the process.

¹⁰ See UNDP Water Governance Facility/UNICEF (2015) ‘WASH Accountability Mapping Tools’, Accountability for Sustainability

Partnership: UNDP Water Governance Facility at SIWI and UNICEF Stockholm and New York. Available from www.watgovernance.org

Although the tool and supporting documents are translated into several languages, some countries (such as Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar and Viet Nam) reported difficulty in understanding some of the concepts included in the WASH BAT. Those related to the enabling environment framework caused a particular problem, as did distinguishing clearly between a cause and a bottleneck (which is a common source of confusion even when using a translated version of the WASH BAT). The terminology and the different concepts can become a problem, which can limit the value of the WASH BAT methodology and the engagement in the discussion. Once again, an adequate understanding of both the tool and the process is vital to minimize this weakness, and an area where the core group leading the preparation process is very important. For example, in the workshop in Syria the lead moderator and the core group spent considerable time discussing the translation of key concepts, such as 'accountability' into Arabic and to the context.

The length of the workshop is seen as a problem, creating some issues with availability, continuity and engagement.

A common complaint is that the WASH BAT workshop is too long, and senior decision makers and stakeholders have great difficulty in setting aside three days or more for a workshop. At the same time, many countries also mention that the workshop is sometimes rushed, particularly on the final day. This can lead to a failure to formulate an Action Plan, as in Chad and Liberia, or a failure to produce a declaration which all participants agree on before the end of the workshop.

The workshop might also include additional sessions that put pressure on the agenda, such as on regulation and financing. A session on the Accountability Triangle is also often included to provide an overview of the sector accountability lines before focusing on the particular governance functions, but in most cases only the first part of the exercise is conducted. Despite its added value to better understand the roles, functions and accountability relations between sector stakeholders, the link to the prioritization of functions and criteria is not always well understood by the participants.

To reduce the burden on participants, Madagascar divided the workshop into two sessions of two and three days respectively, conducted four months apart in May and September 2018. Such an approach will need to ensure as far as possible that momentum is not lost between the sessions, and that the same participants, or at least a core group of them, attend both workshops for continuity.



Three days are not enough for such a workshop. However, longer than a three-day workshop is not possible in Viet Nam for such a big group of people from various Ministries to gather together."

Viet Nam WASH BAT coordinator

The length of the workshop may also leave some participants disengaged, or not taking part in certain exercises because of leaving the room. The importance of engagement in all exercises need to be stressed before and during the workshop, with participants committing to dedicating the full three days to the workshop.



¹¹ English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Arabic (ongoing).

The CIG recommends conducting the workshop away from the capital city centre, to ensure participants are physically present and committed for the full three days; however this is not always adhered to. Feedback from lead moderators suggests that this generally contributes to increased engagement by participants, as they cannot easily leave the workshop which increases attendance and focus. However, this also increases the cost of the workshop, potentially quite substantially, as hotel costs and per diems may need to be paid. It might also be more difficult to get more senior attendees as they might not be able to dedicate three full days to the workshop.

Many stakeholders expressed a need for the WASH BAT to focus more on water resources and climate change management as these are issues increasingly facing countries.

Stakeholders, especially from the government, expressed a need to address these issues, and suggested that the WASH BAT could be a good forum. This limited the usefulness of the WASH BAT for certain countries. Zimbabwe was the first country to adapt the WASH BAT tools to develop criteria to support inclusion of analysis of the WRM sector, but other countries, such as Lesotho, did lighter-touch analysis as part of their WASH BATs. The tool is currently being developed to include WRM and CCM as standard after pilots in Ecuador, Bolivia, Suriname and Tanzania (explained further in [BOX 6](#)).

6

Box 6: Tanzania: Integrating a climate change perspective into the final Action Plan for WASH

- As a preparatory step, additional Climate Change Management criteria developed by SIWI were shared with UNICEF Tanzania for their consideration and review before being finalized for use in the WASH BAT workshop. UNICEF Tanzania decided to engage some leading academics and practitioners working in the country on climate change issues to review the criteria and propose any changes to ensure that the criteria fit well with the Tanzania context.
- During the workshop a group of climate change experts discussed the criteria and assessed to what extent each had been achieved. Based on that analysis, they prioritized 10. There was further analysis of the relative relevance of each of the prioritized criteria to water or sanitation (or both) and whether relevant at sub-national or national level (or both), after which they were integrated into each of those groups, as seen in [FIGURE 5](#).



Lebanon, 2020
© UNICEF/UNI317998/Choufany



Myanmar, May 16, 2019
© UNICEF/UN0337676/Htet

Figure 5: Integration of climate change (CC) criteria in the water and sanitation groups



The term 'WASH in institutions' is too broad and could lead to a less robust analysis of WASH in schools or WASH in health care institutions

3.3.4 Recommendations related to implementation of the workshop

- 1 **Facilitators, especially the lead facilitator,** need to be experienced with the tool. Each workshop should make sure that local consultants or staff are trained adequately so that they are able to assist or lead any future WASH BATs. More effort should also be made to build the capacity of local staff in facilitation of workshops. This is also important in order to transfer ownership of the process to local stakeholders, if not already done.
- 2 **The length of the workshop is a controversial issue.** It is often seen as too long, but it should not be less than three days. Efficiency can be achieved through efforts before the workshops, e.g. greater tailoring of the workshop to the local context, explanation and translation (if needed) of key concepts, better prepared participants, facilitators and rapporteurs, and a well-crafted agenda with contingency plans. The workshop could also be split in two, but participants will need to commit to both workshops. Recommendations for how a split workshop could work should be elaborated in the CIG or in an annex.
- 3 **Delays or overrunning of workshop sessions do happen** and are sometimes inevitable, e.g. when senior members of the government attend sessions of the workshop on short notice. Contingency plans ensure that this does not need to delay the workshop too much. If participants are residents at the workshop location, for example, it is easier to continue the group work into early evening or start earlier the next day.
- 4 **So as not to risk ignoring some critical contextual bottlenecks** the workshop should have a session on the main challenges for WASH service delivery in the country at the start of the workshop (including, if applicable, CC and WRM issues). This may trigger discussions and issues which are not covered by the criteria, or which can tailor the criteria more closely to the context.
- 5 **Having plans worked out for the next steps after the workshop** ensures that any sessions which were not finalized during the workshop can be finalized afterwards, with some of the key participants engaged. This should be discussed in preparatory discussions with the coordinating agency, the lead government agency and the core group, if this exists. On the final day, a new session on the next steps after the workshop should be planned (time permitting).
- 6 **Facilitators need to be mindful of the impact** their facilitation might have on the outputs, e.g. if participants are instructed to vote on at least one activity from a particular function. This needs to be carefully considered at the start of the workshop with the key WASH stakeholders and the government, in order to ensure the Action Plan is as useful as possible for its purpose.
- 7 **Facilitators need to ensure that they have ways to keep the participants engaged** should they become bored. Recommendations include rotating tasks, e.g. reading of the criteria, writing of the bottlenecks and putting the sticky notes on the wall, or mixing sitting down and standing up during the exercises.
- 8 **More clarity should be provided on the difference between a bottleneck and a cause,** while keeping in mind that it is a fluid definition as a bottleneck in one building block might have several levels of causes, and these themselves might be perceived as bottlenecks in their own right. Hence a flexible approach is needed, with the facilitator and lead moderator prepared to bring clarity to a working group that might have lost its way.



India, December 24, 2018
© UNICEF/UN0269632/Hajra

9

The link between the Accountability Triangle exercise and the prioritization of functions needs to be better elaborated by the facilitator, in order for this exercise to provide added value. The Accountability Triangle exercise helps to explain the existing functions and accountability within the service delivery. This will clarify roles and responsibilities, as well as map all the actors involved in the service delivery in the different subsectors under review.

10

A WASH BAT slide deck should be available on the online portal (www.washbat.org) in languages other than English, and available in PowerPoint so it can be adjusted.

11

'WASH in Institutions' is too broad a term and should be split into WASH in schools and WASH in health care facilities. These are treated separately in the majority of workshops, and by splitting them focus is kept on either subsector, which may also increase participation and engagement from the relevant Ministries and other key stakeholders.

12

It is suggested that three templates be developed:

- A. A checklist at the end of each day for the facilitators to ensure that they are conducting a proper debrief and preparing adequately for the next day.
- B. A template for a workshop summary or declaration of agreement, if the facilitators and coordinating group decide that this is desirable for the end of the workshop.
- C. An evaluation form for the participants to fill out. This should take a maximum of three minutes as there is rarely a lot of time at the end of the final day of the workshop to carry out a substantial workshop evaluation. This should cover, e.g., the quality of the methodology, facilitation, logistics and content of the activities and Action Plan. Consideration should be given to doing this online, using Mentimeter or other similar apps, as it might have more engagement from participants at the end of the workshop.

3.4 The online tool

This section covers the WASH BAT online tool. Recommendations for improvement are made in relation to software issues and user design, as well as the auto-generated report and the online database.

There are different ways of conducting a WASH BAT workshop, depending on technical requirements, resources available (such as internet connection speed), and the preferences of the organizers, moderators and facilitators. Table 3 shows the technical requirements of each modality.

Table 4: Technical requirements for the workshop

Technical requirements	Full online software	Offline software, screen based	On screen, outside software	Off screen
High speed internet connection	X			
Video projectors and screens (1 per working group)	X	X	X	
One computer per group	X	X	X	(X)
Guarantee of unbroken electricity supply	X	X	X	
Availability of materials, stationery, walls for display of colour cards, etc.	(X)	(X)	X	X

¹² See the Country Implementation Guide for further details



3.4.1 General findings

The available data show that the majority of workshops are conducted outside the WASH BAT software, meaning that the online tool is not used during the workshop. Only about one in seven (15%) workshops are online, meaning that the tool is used either during the workshop to fill in data, or as part of the facilitation. The offline mode does not seem to be used regularly, probably because this is a relatively new feature and may not be well known. Most commonly, due to facilitator preference or poor internet connectivity, the online tool is used simply as a data management tool, with data entered at the end of each day of the workshop for record keeping and to generate the final workshop report.



“[The online] Tool quickly captures discussions as they progress and website allows comparison on progress and relates to what other peer countries are doing.”

Somalia (Central)
WASH BAT coordinator

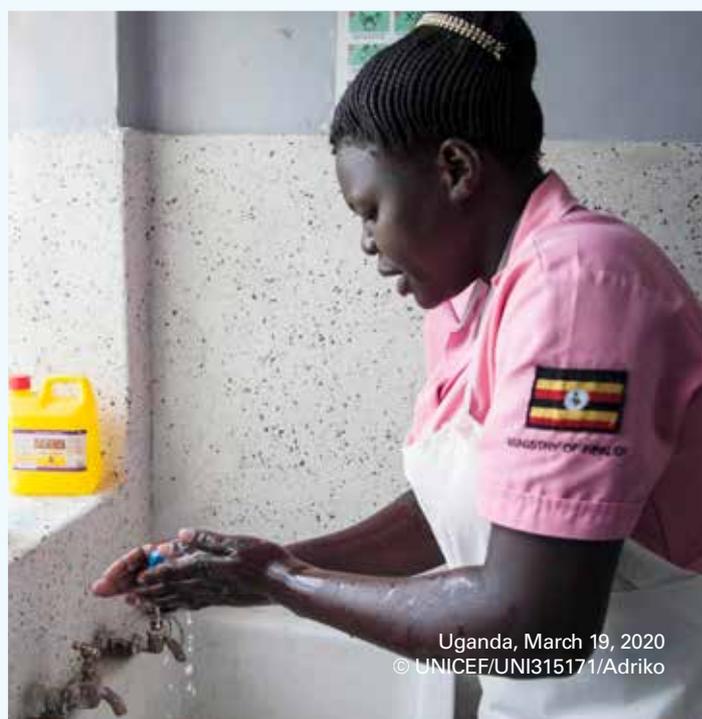
For the countries which engage with the online tool, e.g. consulting the User Guide at washbat.org, the online tool can be a way of capturing the key elements of the discussions and to present the agreements made during the workshop in a concise yet comprehensive way. Some countries, such as Somalia (Central) and Nigeria, praised the systematic and comprehensive nature of the tool, allowing for detailed capture of the discussions during the workshop.

One major benefit of the online tool, the website and resource database, is the credibility it gives to the process. As they are able to access the information relating to the WASH BAT online, as well as see resources relating to its implementation and previous applications, participants become more engaged with the workshop.

The majority of countries do not see the online tool as practically useable during the workshops.

Although feedback from some participants and facilitators of WASH BATs indicates that they would like the tool to become a more integrated part of the workshops, the majority believe that it should be left to be used after the workshop, when the data are entered into the tool. To avoid leaving all the data entry until after the workshop, rapporteurs have sometimes filled in data at the end of each workshop day, which helps identify where there are gaps and hence what the working group has to cover in order for the data entry to be complete. Repurposing the tool to be used during facilitation would require a large amount of work on the software with very little obvious benefit.

Some facilitators have highlighted the benefit of working outside the tool, stating that using paper, sticky notes and flipcharts increases the engagement of the stakeholders, contributing to the participatory nature of the workshop. Showing the software on the screen can be distracting because the text is small and any delays to load or navigate between pages (even if this is only a few seconds) can disrupt the conversation flow. This therefore requires the rapporteur to ensure good notes are taken, conclusions are made on what text should be used, and no gaps are left.



Uganda, March 19, 2020
© UNICEF/UNI315171/Adriko

3.4.2 Software

Some rapporteurs (e.g. in DRC and Somalia (Puntland)) reported that the tool sometimes loses data; for example, when a rapporteur changed the title of a file the data was wiped and had to be uploaded again. Similarly, rapporteurs mentioned that additional criteria sometimes disappear after being added even if the file was saved.

Rapporteurs often work simultaneously in files, and sometimes in the same files. However, only the creator of the subsector files can enter new stakeholders, which can cause issues for those who are not the creator of the file, or if this section is completed later (e.g. in Tanzania).

Rapporteurs also think that it should be easier to integrate parallel analysis in the system when working on two files for the same subsector, and to allocate funds to several funding sources with a lump sum, which is not currently possible.



WASH BAT Plenary, DRC
Credit: A.Delepiere

3.4.3 User experience

When moving to the costing intervention and fund allocation screen, the activities developed in the online tool are separated from the building block and criteria they relate to. This may not always matter, as the activities may be self-explanatory and be valid on their own, but sometimes the activities are specific to a particular bottleneck, and divorcing this from the bottleneck and criteria reduces the tool's usefulness. This is particularly the case for those not taking part in the workshop, or if the report is reviewed several weeks or months after the workshop, when the links may have been forgotten. While the final report screen in the online tool does go some way to summarize the analysis, countries do not seem to make full use of the table when writing the final reports (as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Haiti final reports), possibly because they feel that the full report generated isn't tailored to their needs; instead of taking the key parts of this report to include in theirs they disregard it completely.

Rarely included in the final report is the list of bottlenecks or activities which have not been included in the Action Plan, i.e. those which were not prioritized in the final step of the process. As it is likely that the final report will be seen as the final output from the workshop, rather than the online report, which will be revisited less, these bottlenecks and activities may be forgotten after the WASH BAT.

Some facilitators believe that the online tool should facilitate linear analysis as this is the way the majority of workshops are structured. This means

that the tool should allow the rapporteur to sequence the filling criteria-bottleneck-cause-activity, without needing to skip between screens. Some rapporteurs have been struggling with the difference in sequencing compared to the workshops. However, once the rapporteurs have got used to the setup it does not seem to have caused major problems.

The stakeholder responsibilities section is sometimes confusing for participants, as they have to skip between the managing stakeholders section and the responsibilities section.

Modifying criteria slightly can tailor them to the local context, but some rapporteurs reported that they found it difficult to adapt them.

One country, Cambodia, also said they found the process of filling out the tool time-consuming, particularly as it was not available in their language, and this was hinted at by rapporteurs from several other countries. This also meant that any output generated was less useful than it could have been. Hence countries need to make their own assessment of what is the best process for capturing the workshop outputs, and making sure it is all carried systematically into the workshop report (in MS Word), and a database of the findings (most likely in MS Excel). Most countries use the tool as a record keeper, but rapporteurs typically use an MS Excel sheet or an MS Word template to capture the discussions during the sessions, filling in the data into the tool at the end of each day.



3.4.4 Auto-generated report and filing system of the online database

Many stakeholders interviewed said that the current online repository for reports is not useable; there is no way of identifying the final versions of the files, there are many test or temporary files saved, and the files names are often confusing. For many countries it is difficult to orientate among the files, and there are files for countries which have not completed a WASH BAT, probably because they have been used as test files in the past but never deleted.

Many stakeholders see the timetable and budgeting section as the most complicated in the tool, with those present not always being in a position where they are able to accurately predict the cost for a particular activity, or to be able to schedule it. This often results in widely inaccurate budgets and Gantt charts, which have little if any use after the workshop.

The template report has been criticized by several countries for not being fit for purpose. There are several autogenerated parts which are rarely used (e.g. the costing and Gantt chart sections). Furthermore, the prioritization analysis is missing in the template available. While it is possible to delete sections not used, and to extract by module, countries seldom seem to use these features. This could be because they are not aware what can be done in relation to exports, reports, etc., but also because countries may feel more comfortable producing their own reports, or because lead moderators are responsible for writing the reports, and they use their own templates.

Actual use by countries of the online tool, beyond the findings presented above, may need to be more thoroughly assessed and understood, together with its potential uses. The development of a new version of the tool, if needed, should take these agreed priorities into consideration.



Madagascar, November 11, 2018
© UNICEF/UN0267003/Raolison

3.4.5 Recommendations related to the online tool

1 An overall recommendation is to advise countries to implement a paper-based WASH BAT, filling out the discussions and outputs of the day after each day in the online tool. This will allow for a more interactive workshop, while also making sure that the discussions are captured as soon as possible so that no information is lost.

2 Enhanced security features should be introduced in the online tool to ensure analyses are not lost (e.g. when sharing an original, a copy is saved so that changes made or deletions by the new user do not mean the original is lost forever).

3 It should be easier to integrate parallel analyses in the system, when working on two files for the same subsector. The workflow in the tool should be identified in order to make this easier.

4 The online database of files needs to be reorganized in order to be useful. Recommended updates include:

- A. To group all the reports in a file system (instead of a long list) by country, with each report associated by the country included. It may also be useful to include a function to group the report by subsector. While it is possible to sort the files at present, there are over 1,000 files so this option is untenable. Having one folder for each country should reduce the number of folders in this first stage to fewer than 35.
- B. Autogenerate names for the files, to improve the structure of the files in the system. Options could be added to mark a file as e.g. draft or final.
- C. Tagging test files or ToT files so that they can later be removed more easily and to avoid them being mixed up with the final files.

5 To facilitate context-specific adaptation, it should be easier to modify the criteria. In order not to lose the connection to the original criteria, the tool could make it easier to modify them but keep the original criteria in the same row to allow for comparison with the original criteria and across regions and countries.

6 The activities developed should always be linked to the bottlenecks, criteria and the building blocks. This could be clearer in the online tool (even if the report section does maintain some continuity). It should also be emphasized that the final presentation of the activities in the final report needs to be linked to the criteria and building blocks, as this is not always done. Countries should be encouraged to include those bottlenecks and activities developed during the workshop but not included in the Action Plan in the final report to ensure they are recorded (online and in the report) and can be easily referred to and implemented if there is an opportunity to do so at a later stage. This can be in the main body of the report, with a discussion about the final stage of prioritization, or in an annex.

7 The budget section of the online tool could be simplified by including an option showing ranges for the timetable (e.g. short term, medium term, long term) and costs (e.g. low cost, medium cost, high cost). This could be set in dollars with equivalent figures in the local currency in case an approximate, or average, cost needs to be set during the workshop.

8 It is not possible to allocate funds to several funding sources with a lump sum; this section should be adapted to make this possible.

9 The stakeholders' section could be made clearer, by removing the need to manage stakeholders separately from the main analysis (in the 'administration' tab).

- 10 **An improved template**, common across all countries, in Word or MS Excel to be used during the workshop and later for pasting into the tool would make reporting easier, as mostly countries fill out the output from the day's discussion at the end of each workshop day.
- 11 **Adding additional languages** to the tool should be considered. However, as is proving for Arabic, it is a significant effort to translate all the software terminologies correctly. Hence, the value of translating the tool to new languages will have to be weighed against the cost and effort of doing so. Translation should not be committed to until a country has used the tool and decided that translation will help its application in the medium to long term, e.g. for regional application or for regular follow-ups.
- 12 **It should be possible to upload the final report** (in MS Word or PDF format) into the online system; this should be encouraged for all countries and will help with cross-checking and record keeping.
- 13 **The data visualization of the automated report could also be improved**, and this should also be possible to extract separately (something which is currently possible but needs to be made clearer). The system could easily generate tables or graphs showing the functions prioritized, the criteria prioritized and the scoring per function summarized. It may also be possible to improve the Gantt chart, making it more visually appealing. This will also make the tool more useful during the workshop as the data visualizations can be shown to the participants when relevant.
- 14 **The system would benefit from having a responsible person** for each report, as well as one person (who could be the same person) responsible for all the reports for the country. This person could be from the coordinating agency or from the government, but ideally someone who took part in the workshop as a rapporteur, giving them experience with the tool.
- 15 **The online tool would benefit from a dedicated person** responsible for the quality assuring of all files and reports, as well as making sure the database overall is complete and easy to navigate, e.g., that the final file is clearly labelled, with any test files deleted.
- 16 **To increase use of the generated reports and outputs from the online tool**, more needs to be done to make countries aware of what can be done using the tool. The website includes a User Manual, but this seems to be seldom accessed. It may be useful to create a separate, short document or annex which focuses only on the outputs which the online tool can generate, including this in a PowerPoint training as well as part of the ToT.



Indonesia, September 09, 2019
© UNICEF/UNI206458/Wilander

3.5 Outputs of the WASH BAT

This section analyses the outputs of the WASH BAT, which primarily relate to the developed activities, Action Plans and final reports.

Overall, data from the questionnaires show that in three out of five workshops (61%), the Action Plan was reported as completed during the workshop or soon after. Of those workshops completed before 2019, 71 per cent have started at least partial implementation of the Action Plan, with no country stating that the full Action Plan had been implemented at the time of writing. Only 10 per cent of countries have started monitoring the implementation of activities. The final report of the workshop has been completed in the vast majority (85%) of workshops.

All countries consulted believe that the WASH BAT produces useful outputs, in line with the stated aim of the tool.

The vast majority of WASH BAT participants agree that the output of the WASH BAT, primarily the activities developed and the Action Plan, are generally of high quality, producing a list of actionable activities and sub-activities agreed on by a broad segment of the sector, ready for high-level approval and implementation.

When asked about the objectives initially set for the workshop, all respondents interviewed agreed that they were achieved in their country, at least to some degree.



Mali, July 09, 2012
© UNICEF/UNI134610/Dicko

3.5.1 The activities developed during the workshop

The list of prioritized activities reflects the needs of the sector, although the overall quality can sometimes suffer due to a lack of time at the end of the workshop.

Stakeholders agree that the final list of activities included in the Action Plan summarizes and visualizes the top priorities of the sector. In this regard, the workshop acts like a funnel, concentrating the attention of the sector to the most pressing bottlenecks and activities to address them. The Action Plan, which clearly presents these actions, along with sub-activities, a budget and timetable, has broad stakeholder support which provides good conditions for follow-up and implementation.

However, some countries, such as The Gambia, South Sudan and the State of Palestine, claimed that the quality of activities and sub-activities were not optimal, mainly because they were not sufficiently realistic and specific. Some lead moderators noted that the lack of time towards the end of the workshop sometimes forces the final development of sub-activities and the completion of the Action Plan to be rushed.

In some cases, such as in Chad, Viet Nam and The Gambia, the Action Plan was not finalized during the workshop. Various reasons were given for this, such as a lack of time, disagreement over accountability for the activities, or that no decision makers were present to endorse the Action Plan. In such cases, the Action Plan needs to be refined and completed after the workshop, which can mean missing the window of opportunity the WASH BAT process provides to present a sector united behind a number of priorities for implementation. There is also a danger that the momentum is lost and that the Action Plan is delayed indefinitely, as has been the case in Chad.

Concerns were raised by some stakeholders that the activities developed during the workshop were not innovative, leading to similar proposed solutions which may not be effective in achieving positive change. The speed at which activities need to be developed may not favour new and innovative approaches to solving the bottlenecks existing in the sector.

Some stakeholders have concerns that many bottlenecks and activities are deprioritized because

of the requirement to come up with a manageable number of activities representative for all the subsectors at the end of the workshop.

One of the greatest strengths of the methodology, i.e. the prioritization into a manageable set of activities, is sometimes seen as a weakness. A small number of stakeholders, for example from Haiti and Bangladesh, were concerned that the workshop methodology, prioritizing at several stages for each of the subsectors, led to a set of activities which would not completely remove the bottlenecks in each subsector.



The process does not allow us to retain a number of actions that can completely remove the bottleneck. There are too many restrictions in the prioritization.”

Haiti WASH BAT coordinator

The WASH BAT workshops may sometimes seem to be too concerned with coming up with a reduced number of activities per subsector, e.g. 5–10 activities per subsector. One ‘self-imposed’ rule is often to distil and translate major sector weaknesses and concerns into top priorities, resulting in a manageable number of actions to produce a clear and focused Action Plan by the end of the workshop. The rationale behind this is that a succinct Action Plan seems more manageable and promotes ownership by decision makers, making implementation more likely, while a more comprehensive plan to remove all bottlenecks may seem daunting. There is a trade-off to be made between having a manageable list of activities, which could be timetabled, budgeted for and actually implemented, with stakeholders feeling like more criteria scored amber and red should have their bottlenecks addressed. However, if a strong follow-up mechanism is in place, and the scoring and bottlenecks have been recorded, it will be possible to revisit progress and address the next set of bottlenecks. This was done in Montero, Bolivia, in a follow-up WASH BAT 15 months after the first WASH BAT.

3.5.2 The activity timelines and financing sections

Balancing different levels of scope and detail: budget and costs are often not well covered in the workshops.

As workshops usually run on a tight schedule, particularly the final day, the final few sessions on defining sub-activities, timelines and costs are often rushed. Participants sometimes need to decide whether the focus is on defining the scope of the activity – i.e. number and type of sub-activities – or providing in-depth detail of the main activity (timeline, budget, type of costs, funding, etc.), as time may not permit detailed analysis of both. The costing and timeline sections are also frequently mentioned as problematic, with several participants noting that basing these sections on rough estimates ultimately produces budgets and timelines that are both inaccurate and unrealistic. However, this weakness is more related to the implementation approach than inherent to the tool itself.



Financing constraints are not well reflected in the analysis.”

Lesotho WASH BAT coordinator

Facilitators have pointed out that those involved in the workshop are often not in a position to make budgetary decisions and that they may have little knowledge of the budgeting process, planning process, prioritization of different funding sources. Indeed, some respondents have cited the budgeting section of the tool as the least useful. On the other hand, some UNICEF and government representatives said that the cost figures are important as they show decision makers and donors rough estimates of the budget needed to cover the prioritized activities. As an in-between solution, participants in some workshops (e.g. in Ecuador and Bolivia) opted to provide a qualitative analysis of budgetary needs, then referred to them as large, medium or small investments.

The actual cost figure included in the budget may not be seen as a crucial output of the WASH BAT. Instead, the aim of the workshop is to get buy-in to the Action Plan and thereby create broad agreement around activities to be implemented to solve sector bottlenecks.



Malawi, June 24, 2010
© UNICEF/UNI89544/Noorani

3.5.3 Ensuring endorsement by decision makers

Securing ownership and endorsement of the Action Plan by the relevant authorities is a key output.

As mentioned previously, a decisive factor in a successful WASH BAT is securing the participation of decision makers, which promotes ownership and endorsement. Not surprisingly, one recurrent

complaint raised in some workshops relates to the lack of official or decision maker representation during the workshop or at the closing ceremony, meaning that the results of the workshop could not be endorsed. An example of the problem of not having senior representation throughout the workshop for the endorsement of the Action Plan is given in the case study from Somalia (Puntland) in **BOX 7**.

7

Box 7: Endorsement of Action Plan in Somalia (Puntland)

- At the start of the WASH BAT workshop in Garowe in October 2019, the Puntland Ministry of Health, which played an important role in successfully implementing the WASH BAT workshop, expressed its intention to support the outputs of the exercise. During the opening remarks, the Director General (DG) indicated that the Ministry would continue to offer a strong coordination role in all government commitments, stating that the WASH BAT exercise offered an opportunity to look critically at the challenges faced by the sector and review the activities that can resolve them.
- During the closing session, the Action Plan was presented to the representative of the Ministry of Health (deputy of the DG), since he did not participate in the major part of the workshop. He was surprised by the final results, and did not agree with some of the bottlenecks identified by the stakeholders. Thus, there was no agreement on the Action Plan at the end of the workshop. This meant that the workshop report had to go into detail about all the steps of the workshops, including the discussions of each table, explaining all arguments regarding the prioritization process in order to secure agreement and endorsement by the Ministry of Health. As a result, several of these activities have been included in the annual work plans of the Ministries of Health, Water and Education.



Bangladesh, January 11, 2016
© UNICEF/UN07004/Lynch

Similarly, some government representatives pointed out that the Action Plan can never be fully completed during the workshop, as the participants are rarely, if ever, the ones that have the full authority to develop an Action Plan which is to be implemented. For example, in some countries, ministers could not approve the Action Plan without the consent of the planning commission. While a WASH BAT allows the key activities to remove bottlenecks to be agreed on using evidence generated during the workshop, how it will be reflected as a programme in the country is a different discussion. This is a next step which needs to be agreed on at a higher level, with other stakeholders present.

A declaration is a useful way of securing official agreement of the activities developed during the workshop, but this needs to be prepared in advance.

The expected outputs of the workshop should be planned and decided in advance. Feedback suggests that having a written statement at the end of the workshop which participants can either verbally agree on, or if time and circumstances allow, sign, is a good output. It gives closure to the workshop,

while also giving participants a document which can be presented to their colleagues or to a decision maker, and be used as a foundation for the next steps. This reduces the potential for misalignments or misunderstandings after the workshop. As the finalization of the report can sometimes take several months, the declaration can serve as a summary of the main findings until this is finalized. By way of example, the following three options have been implemented in various workshops (examples from countries are included in [BOX 8](#)):

- An official declaration approved by all participants and signed by sector authorities and representatives of main institutions participating in the workshop.
- A declaration agreed on and signed by the participants. This declaration can be presented to all authorities after the workshop.
- An executive summary of the workshop, including main agreements and a summary of the Action Plan. This can be written in a neutral tone and prevent any potential political bias.

8

Box 8: Different types of 'official' WASH BAT outputs

- One key output of the workshop, together with the Action Plan, might be a short declaration summarizing main findings and the consensus agreements that have been reached during the workshop. The political tone, the type and number of key representatives participating in the closing session, the possibility of enforcement, and the need to engage key actors in the implementation of the Action Plan will influence the type of output that can be prepared. Examples are:
- **Official Declaration**, in Montero, Bolivia. Key sector institutions in the municipality agreed to the signature of a two-page Declaration (*Declaración de Montero, 2018*) which summarized all activities included in the Action Plan. Signatories of the Declaration included representatives of the Municipality, the service provider, UNICEF CO and the Swedish Embassy.
- **Declaration of Ecuador**. In Ecuador, national-level representatives did not attend the closing ceremony. However, all participants agreed on the need to prepare and sign a formal declaratory (*Declaratoria de Puenbo, 2019*) that outlined main agreements and set the strategic lines for the sector. Shortly after the workshop, this Declaratory was officially presented at the ministry level, among other national stakeholders.
- An **Executive Summary** of the WASH BAT in Suriname. The need for a signed document was not agreed on. Instead, the organizers prepared an executive summary of the workshop, including the methodology and major consensus. A copy of the document was given to all participants.

3.5.4 Follow-up

At the end of the workshop, the foundation for the follow-up is not always clear.

Many stakeholders worry about the government commitment to the activities after the workshop, particularly that they may not be implemented. In a number of cases there is no clear plan for follow-up of the Action Plan after the workshop, and no stakeholder or group of stakeholders accountable for this follow-up to take place. Ideally details of the follow-up of the Action Plan will have been agreed before the workshop, but in reality this rarely happens.



An Action Plan was drafted but not finalized. This was partially because there was no agreement on which stakeholder would take the lead due to lack of clearly defined roles within the sector.”

The Gambia WASH BAT coordinator

Again, key here is connecting the WASH BAT to a process already happening in the country and having a core group responsible for carrying the results forward into policies to be implemented. The case study from Bolivia (BOX 9) highlights a successful follow-up workshop a year on from the original WASH BAT workshop.



Kiribati, January 28, 2016
© UNICEF/UN0202171/Sokhin



Guinea-Bissau, January 18, 2020
© UNICEF/UNI284645/Prinsloo

9

Box 9: WASH BAT with follow-up workshop in Montero, Bolivia, to support Municipal Plan for Water and Sanitation (PMAS)

- In 2018, UNICEF collaborated with the Local Government of Montero (GAMM) in the elaboration of a Municipal Plan for Water and Sanitation (PMAS). A sector-wide and participatory diagnosis of WASH services delivery was conducted in December 2018, through WASH BAT. The resulting Action Plan, fully supported by the GAMM and all sector stakeholders, launched relevant initiatives, such as registration of informal sanitation service providers, implementation of a faecal waste treatment plant, and creation of a municipal WASH department. Two important milestones were reached: i) the holding of a summit on water and sanitation on 26 February 2019; and ii) the creation of a multi-stakeholder platform to promote dialogue and participatory decision making on WASH-related activities and processes. This platform was also in charge of monitoring and following up the implementation of all actions included in the WASH BAT Plan.
- the PMAS was officially published in 2019, with the governance component based on inputs, recommendations and actions discussed and agreed during the WASH BAT. To accelerate progress towards implementing the PMAS, particularly in the short term, UNICEF CO and GAMM organized a follow-up WASH BAT in January 2020. This workshop was conducted to assess progress in relation to i) the 2018 WASH BAT Action Plan and ii) the PMAS, and iii) to conduct a new sector diagnosis, including of WASH in schools, as well as integrating the perspectives of climate change and child protection in the analysis. Inputs from these three complementary approaches were clustered and consolidated into one single Action Plan, which will guide the sector in the coming years towards safe drinking water and sanitation for all.

3.5.5 Recommendations related to outputs of the workshop

1 **The quality and level of detail of the Action Plan** needs to be adequate for the steps that are to follow, ensuring that all activities included are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely. It should be the responsibility of the lead moderator and table facilitators to make sure that the final activities and sub-activities are ambitious but realistic, have clarity in language and that they are easily linked to the bottleneck(s) being removed, also integrating major consensus reached during the sessions. For this purpose, various alternatives could exist to guarantee that the Action Plan is completed soon after the workshop. For instance, if a core group has been identified before the workshop, they could be made responsible for this. Alternatively, each table could nominate a small number of people responsible for the follow-up work. The lead moderator or the coordinating agency should be in charge of following up with the group to ensure that the Action Plan is finalized, as well as quality assuring the final output.

2 **Taking time constraints into consideration**, the moderator and table facilitators should encourage, as much as possible, innovative solutions to prioritized bottlenecks. They might need to be developed further and refined after the end of the workshop.

3 **The follow-up and monitoring of the Action Plan should be agreed** on during or shortly after the workshop, which includes the who (lead organization), the what (which activities need to be monitored) and the how (accountability mechanisms in place, set of indicators to measure progress, etc.). A session on follow-up for the final day should be developed, where the next steps and responsibilities are discussed. This can be prepared at the end of the second to last day, when the facilitators will know the types of activities prioritized, and accountable stakeholders can be identified. The benefit of having such a session during the workshop means the momentum of the workshop can be used to agree on the lead agency as well as on the accountability mechanisms that

should be employed. An alternative approach is to entrust the monitoring of the Action Plan to the core group in charge of preparing the WASH BAT. Whatever the outcome, the commitment to follow-up and those accountable should be detailed in the Action Plan.

4 **If the budget section is incomplete or of poor quality**, or if the timetable does not cover all main activities and sub-activities, the moderator should emphasize that these aspects will need to be worked out after the workshop, before implementation can start. In particular, the budget should be reviewed after the workshop by technical and financial experts in cooperation with decision makers, in order to prioritize funds.

5 **In order to improve the budget section**, relevant stakeholders that have information and knowledge on sector finance management could be invited to the workshop, either taking part in the whole workshop or only in the final day. The preparation phase could also prepare relevant documentation on the sector finance information to improve the discussions and reporting.

6 **A declaration should be considered for every workshop, using a template to be developed.** The declaration should focus on the main activities developed for each of the subsectors and describe any commonalities between what the different groups developed. It is useful for the declaration to distinguish between short-term and long-term activities, with immediate next steps clearly indicated. The declaration does not need to include a detailed timetable or a budget, as these will be included in the Action Plan and final report, with further refinement needed involving decision maker and technical staff. The declaration should however include a short description of the WASH BAT methodology and the workshop, including the subsectors covered, the key activities agreed on, and the next steps, including the plans for follow-up and those accountable.



Uganda, October 22, 2019
© UNICEF/UNI232782/Bridger
<https://www.unicef.org/wash/>

3.6 Outcomes and impacts

This section presents a summary of outcomes reported as being linked to the WASH BATs. The focus is on four case studies from different countries, with different experiences:



3.6.1 Outcomes relating to the behaviour of the WASH BAT participants

An often overlooked but important benefit of the WASH BAT process is the potential behaviour change of the participants. As mentioned previously, in some countries the WASH BAT workshop may be one of the few times the key stakeholders from the sector are gathered in the same room for an extended period of time, giving opportunities for networking. This in turn may lead to improved institutional arrangements, due to improved coordination, cooperation, trust and leadership. For example, the launch of a dialogue between the local government and the service provider was one of key results from the workshop in Bolivia in 2018, creating the conditions for a follow-up workshop two years later (see [BOX 9](#)).

The workshops may also lead to increased sector accountability if the participants see the value of a structured, participatory and inclusive exercise, and capacity-building of the participants through improving their individual capacities, knowledge generation and learning. Lastly, the workshops increase understanding and encourage discussion of the enabling environment, promoting these principles in the sector.



Haiti, June 10, 2011
© UNICEF/UNI121165/Dormino

3.6.2 Summary of the enabling environment outcomes related to the WASH BAT

In several countries, such as Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Cambodia, the WASH BAT has been one of the key inputs to new plans, strategies, or large-scale national programmes in the WASH sector, often for several years to come. This is a valuable way to get consensus on the priorities which need to be addressed from all concerned stakeholders,

but also highlights the need to follow up on the implementation of the WASH BAT, and the strategic plan, a few years down the line. In some countries, the WASH BAT has also contributed to additional funds being made available or earmarked for WASH initiatives. Table 5 lists some of the outcomes linked to the WASH BATs in those countries.

Table 5: A selection of outcomes from countries implementing WASH BAT version 2.0

Country	Outcomes and impact following the WASH BAT workshop
Bangladesh	Eight regional five-year plans are being developed based on the findings of the WASH BATs, with workshops in each division to launch these.
Bolivia	Formulation of the municipal Water and Sanitation plan of Montero (and planning for M&E).
Cambodia	ODF district plans developed, theory of change and leadership strategy developed.
Chad	The recommendations from the WASH BAT were included in the national strategy.
Ethiopia	Recommendations integrated in the second phase of the One WASH National Programme (OWNP) – including citywide WASH plans.
Guinea	A technical working group was formed and a coordinator was appointed by the minister, ensuring clear leadership. The development of a road map to end open defecation by 2025 was finalized in April 2020.
Indonesia	Public expenditures for WASH were identified and analysed for the last 3 years. Province WASH working group conducted advocacy to district and city governments.
Iraq	Following a ToT, six governorates implemented WASH BATs in 2019, with 12 more planned in 2020 and 2021 respectively. Advocacy lobbying workshops have been hosted to advocate for funds to be leveraged for wastewater services, and a committee has been formed to develop and implement a programme to distribute budgeting authorities.
Lesotho	Schools and health facilities were provided with improved WASH facilities (23) and rural sanitation strategy/guidelines adapted by DRWS for further implementation.
Madagascar	Increase of annual WASH budget through advocacy with the government; WASH sector coordination plan developed; recommendations form a part of WASH sector plan.
Nigeria	The various states commenced the process of policy review and are also considering some of the key elements (such as climate change, inclusion and pro-poor approaches as captured in the WASH BAT); A WASH unit has been set up in all states; all the states have set up steering committees/stakeholders' platforms for policy dialogue and coordination purposes.
Palestine	Mobilization of financing for the Action Plan (fundraising) – a debriefing session with donors is planned to be organized, along with coordination and M&E of Action Plan implementation.
Pakistan	The national-, district- and seven provincial-level WASH BATs fed into the national JSR report. The national JSR report was used for two major developments in 2019: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWA commitments, 5 constituencies used the national JSR, what are the bottlenecks and what can we contribute. • Informing the Clean Green Pakistan initiative.
Somalia	Through the support of UNICEF, the Somalia WASH policy has been completed and is awaiting cabinet approval. Urban WASH master plans and technical assessments have been conducted and capacity-building of implementers is under way.

3.6.3 Contexts where WASH BAT is likely to be more successful

The key for successfully implemented WASH BAT activities is political leadership and political will, with responsibility for the implementation resting with the responsible Ministries.

If the WASH BAT can take advantage of a window of opportunity or be integrated as a condition for a national process, e.g. feeding into a successful JSR, it is more likely that outputs will be taken into account in future policy programmes.



The WASH BAT by itself would not achieve much, there are lots of reports written ... you need to have the right context, feed into the right strategy, at the right time for it to be useful."

WASH consultant involved in the WASH BAT in Ethiopia

The case study from Pakistan (BOX 12) shows a sub-national WASH BAT (at provincial level) which contributed to a national JSR, the results from which fed into a new national initiative announced by the president.

12

Box 12: Pakistan WASH BAT supports Joint Sector Reviews and helps inspire the Clean Green Pakistan initiative

- In Pakistan, the first round of provincial WASH BATs were conducted in the end of 2017, as part of a national JSR. This allowed the organizers to tailor the tool to the needs to the JSR, specifically to the provinces, developing provincial WASH sector master plans. The provincial outcomes included:
 - Baluchistan: the WASH BAT outputs were used for multi-year government public sector budget allocation prioritization.
 - Punjab: the report fed into the economic growth strategy and WASH sector master plan.
 - KPK: the WASH BAT was the foundation for a new WASH sector master plan.
 - Sindh: the UNDP growth strategy for the government used the WASH BAT results.
- The WASH BATs informed drafting of revised water and sanitation policies. A majority of the recommendations coming out of the WASH BAT workshops were also included in the national JSR report, published in 2019. This included SDG costing and targets and major bottlenecks from the WASH BAT exercise. The findings also fed into the Sanitation and Water for All commitments as part of the Mutual Accountability Mechanism.
- The WASH BAT is now a key part of the conceptual frameworks for the enabling environment of the WASH Sector in Pakistan. Annual provincial JSRs are conducted using the WASH BAT methodology, which aligns targets with the SDGs and sets bi-annual targets with sector financing needs. Data are collected and the Action Plans created are used for advocacy for budgetary allocations through dialogue at national, regional and international forums.
- Additionally, when the Prime Minister launched the Clean Green Pakistan initiative in October 2018, the majority of the identified bottlenecks were addressed with the national WASH BAT held in December 2018 informing the roadmap for the initiative. The initiative is built on five pillars: plantation, safe water, safer sanitation, hygiene and liquid waste management, and solid waste management. The programme uses WASH indicators and proposes to implement many of the activities developed during the provincial and district WASH BAT workshops.

The case study from Ethiopia (BOX 13) exemplifies a WASH BAT directly informing a national initiative,

used to build consensus around the main priorities of the programme.

13

Box 13: Ethiopia's One WASH National Programme (OWNP) activities inspired by the WASH BAT

- The recommendations established at the WASH BAT workshop were a key input for the development of the OOWNP (see BOX 4). This was the main objective of the workshop and contributed to build consensus and bring attention to a number of Enabling Environment issues. TABLE 6 shows how some of the key activities coming out of the WASH BAT influenced the key actions in the OOWNP Phase II document (the full list can be found in Annex 6).
- Three key activities coming out of the WASH BAT were citywide planning, capacity development and establishing a national regulatory body. These activities were refined and split into short term and long-term actions and goals and included in the OOWNP programme document.

Table 6: OOWNP actions mapped against WASH BAT activities

Subject	One WASH National Programme Phase II Programme Document	WASH BAT actions and recommendations
Urban master planning	<p>Short- to medium-term actions: Development of integrated citywide water supply and wastewater master planning prior to feasibility study, design and construction of infrastructure</p> <p>Moving towards long-term goals: Complete development of master planning for all towns of the country</p>	<p>City (or clustered) wide planning. For urban and water and sanitation services, moving towards planning that includes larger administrative units, such as the entire cities, woreda-wide plans, or clustered-kebeles, was identified as a possibility to make better use of economies of scale and achieve more sustainable progress.</p> <p>E.g. urban sanitation activity: Citywide sanitation master plan</p>
Capacity development	<p>Short- to medium-term actions: Capacity development for improved delivery of WASH services at all levels including high level of services from water utilities, strengthening NWCO and RWCOs and forming Zonal WASH Coordination Offices. Develop efficient programme communication strategy and sharing of good/best practices</p> <p>Moving towards long-term goals: Fully developed capacity in terms of public and private WASH skills, water abstraction licensing, safe water quality monitoring in all towns and villages supported by sufficient accredited laboratories throughout each region, monitored and enforced pollution control (both dispersed and point source)</p>	<p>Capacity development. The Ethiopian WASH sector needs increased capacities across all areas. This relates not only to opportunities to take part in trainings, but more broadly to issues of human resources management, salaries, exchange visits and involvement of young professionals.</p> <p>E.g. rural water activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen implementation of capacity development activities (national level); and • Review the HR strategy with standards for deployment and plans for needs assessment-based capacity-building (sub-national level).
Clustering	<p>Short- to medium-term actions: Development of integrated citywide water supply and wastewater master planning prior to feasibility study, design and construction of infrastructure</p> <p>Moving towards long-term goals: Complete development of master planning for all towns of the country</p>	<p>Regulation. It was clear that there is a strong interest and government commitment towards the establishing a regulatory body for the WASH sector. There was a keen interest in exploring the meanings of and possibilities for regulatory functions in the WASH sector; a momentum that should be further built on.</p> <p>E.g. urban sanitation activity: Establish a regulatory agency and revise regulatory framework.</p>

¹³ <https://www.unicef.org/ethiopia/media/1111/file/OWNP%20Phase%20II.pdf>

3.6.4 Contexts where WASH BAT is likely to be less successful

WASH BAT activities are less likely to be implemented in low-capacity contexts and where accountability lines are unclear.

While the WASH BAT can be extremely valuable in contexts where the WASH sector is weak, pointing to the areas of highest priority to improve the sector, the implementation of the Action Plan may be more difficult. If funding is lacking, if there is no coordination between responsible ministries, if the country is experiencing conflict, or if the WASH access is very low, the WASH BAT might be less effective as it takes as a starting point the ideal situation in any given country.



With the existing weak capacity, at both the national and sub-national WASH sector, it is a challenge for participants to fully appreciate the WASH BAT process.”

South Sudan WASH BAT coordinator

In a case such as South Sudan, where the ideal situation represented by the criteria is a long way off, a large number of criteria will be scored amber or red. This could make it difficult to prioritize the bottlenecks and activities. Furthermore, the chances of implementing the activities will depend on the stability of the country, which is outside of the sector’s control. The case study from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (BOX 10) shows a WASH BAT which has been less successful for a number of reasons, including a fragmented WASH sector, weak coordination and a fragile context.

¹⁴ *As the South Sudan final report concludes: “Underpinning much of the discussion was the need for the prioritizing of peace building processes in all WASH activities to safeguard the WASH infrastructure, the WASH supply chains and the WASH economy that are a necessary pre-requisite for the efficient functioning of WASH service delivery.”*



Sudan, November 04, 2019
© UNICEF/UNI233865/Noorani

10

Box 10: DRC WASH BAT less effective at strengthening the institutional framework in a politically unstable context

- In DRC, UNICEF supports the government to strengthen its institutional framework for WASH. As part of this support, a WASH BAT implemented in late 2017 aimed to assess the enabling environment of WASH delivery in DRC by identifying the bottlenecks to achieving sustainable and efficient services at national, regional, service provider and community levels. The major bottleneck in DRC is the financing of the WASH sector, making it crucial to have political support for the process in order to increase the possibility of increased funding for priority activities.
- While UNICEF was committed to supporting the DRC Action Plan developed during the WASH BAT workshop, the fragile socio-political context made this difficult. The political commitment was not strong, given the uncertainty about the political situation in the country and the presidential elections taking part in late 2018. Additionally, there was a lack of a clear mandate for any ministry to take the lead and the National Committee for Water and Sanitation (Comité National d' Action d' Eau et d' Assainissement, CNAEHA) lacked authority to lead implementation. UNICEF has continued to push the initiatives to strengthen coordination mechanisms and sector planning, which has led to some WASH BAT activities being integrated into the National WASH programme 2020–30 endorsed by the government.

Similarly, before and after the Haiti WASH BAT in January 2019, the country experienced a serious

political and institutional crisis, which meant that the legislative power was unable to function properly (BOX 11).

11

Box 11: Haiti political crisis limited the usefulness of the WASH BAT outputs

- In Haiti, the WASH BAT was linked with to the review of other sector analysis done previously by the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. Because of the fragile socio-political situation in the country the workshop planned for November 2018 was rescheduled for the end of January 2019.
- The focus of the workshop was threefold: to improve the rural water sector; to identify opportunities to help municipalities set and achieve ODF targets; and to assess the situation for WASH in schools and health care facilities. At the end of the workshop a declaration was prepared, known as the 'Declaration des Arcadins'. This was endorsed by the key stakeholders. However, the political crisis continued, with the election postponed several times. This led to an absence of deputies, resulting in the parliament not being able to pass laws, leaving the President free to govern by decree without institutional checks and balances.
- While this meant that the Action Plan remained unimplemented, stakeholders and key partners were able to develop a theory of change for each sub-section to link sector bottlenecks (integrating WASH BAT results and other institutional analysis done in the past) with the enabling environment framework and the objective of the sector. This helped to define the National Directory of Water and Sanitation (DINEPA) and UNICEF strategic plan for 2020–2021, with a follow-up workshop planned for late 2020/early 2021.



Mozambique, September 26, 2017
© UNICEF/UN0139474/Prinsloo

The experiences from South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Haiti suggest that the WASH BAT process might work less well in the following circumstances:

- 1 In contexts with a centralized system where it may be more challenging for district-level stakeholders and partners to see the big picture for system strengthening, particularly when conducting a national WASH BAT.
- 2 In contexts where commitments in the Action Plans are linked to funds that have not yet been made available, as they fail to take place if the funding is not available.
- 3 In contexts where there is weak capacity at the national or sub-national level, e.g. due to conflict, natural disasters or humanitarian crises, it may be a challenge for the participants to engage with the process (as of the chances of implementing certain activities will depend on the stability of the country), prioritize the activities (as there is likely to be a larger proportion of criteria scored amber or red), or for the activities to be implemented.
- 4 In contexts where the activities are not integrated into routine workplans of the various sectors to facilitate their timely implementation.
- 5 In contexts where a strong coordinating body or mechanism is lacking, such as in Somalia or the Gambia, proper finalization of the Action Plan and subsequent implementation is less likely. However, the WASH BAT could be the catalyst for such a body to be established, such as in Suriname where the WASH BAT triggered the creation of an intersectoral water task force to discuss the priorities discussed during the workshop and operationalize them across the different ministries involved.



04 Conclusions and summary recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

The WASH BAT is a very well-liked tool. Most of the stakeholders who were interviewed or responded to the questionnaire, whether they were moderators, UNICEF staff, government representatives or other WASH sector stakeholders, agreed that it has created the ideal environment for a structured and systematic discussion about the key bottlenecks hindering progress, and what activities can be implemented to solve them. Together with the UNICEF convening power it offers a unique opportunity to bring all relevant stakeholders into one room for several days, focusing on how the country can achieve and ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

There is also evidence that the tool and the outputs produced lead to positive outcomes in the countries where the Action Plan has been implemented. The majority of countries report that the activities developed are trusted and taken seriously because they have been developed as part of a participatory approach, with general agreement of all involved stakeholders, including the government.

However, where UNICEF cooperation with governments is weaker, or where governments do not buy into the tool, the outputs and outcomes are less positive. The evidence gathered as part of this review suggests that the WASH BAT is most successful when linked to a government priority, process or programme, and provides guidance for their implementation. This included Joint Sector Reviews and national strategies or programmes.

In lower capacity contexts the WASH BAT faces more challenges, both in staging the workshop and implementing the resulting Action Plan. There could be several reasons for this, including the capacity of the government to implement the activities, persistent conflict impeding change, or limited budget or access to funds. The WASH BAT tool itself could also be problematic for these countries. Since the criteria included show the ideal situation of the WASH sector, if most of the criteria for a particular function are scored as amber or red, prioritization becomes more difficult. The tool also does not give any advice or pathways for which functions or criteria may be the most important to start with in situations where few or none of the criteria are met, and this must therefore be the result of dialogue and agreement among stakeholders. Hence facilitation of dialogue through the process is important to address questions such as 'Where do we start addressing our problems in the sector?'



4.2 Summary recommendations

These summary recommendations are based on the recommendations included after each section of this review.

For a WASH BAT to be successful, both a need and a demand for the process should be established before the start of the process.

Enough time needs to be set aside for the preparation process in order to make logistical arrangements, secure the right participants, and manage expectations for the workshop.

Findings show that the preparation process is key for a successful WASH BAT. While the Country Implementation Guide and the preparation checklist included in Annex 1 of the Guide describes the process well, it is rarely followed. This could be improved by a simplified document which described in the right amount of detail the role of those involved in the preparation process, as well as the key milestones. A concept note is being developed and would be useful for all participants.

A core group should be engaged to take charge of the key preparatory stages in order to ensure government ownership and adaptation to the context.

Engaging a core group of stakeholders, ideally from a range of organizations, including the government, who are able to lead the coordination, preparation and ultimately also the follow-up of the outputs of the WASH BAT, should be part of the preparation phase. A 'terms of reference' developed for this group could describe the roles and responsibilities, including the timetable of the actions to be completed before the workshop. The group could also gather the relevant documentation and data before the workshop to make sure the discussions are based on the most up-to-date information.

Coordination between the key stakeholder groups is key during the preparation phase.

Scheduling biweekly calls between the coordinating agency, the government representatives and the lead facilitator will also help to monitor the process to ensure the timetable is being followed. The invitation list to the workshop should be sent out at least a month in advance, with senior government staff in the WASH sector invited, as well as other relevant sectors, such

as environment, planning, education and health. NGOs working in the sector should also be represented, as well as user groups, such as women's groups, indigenous groups, and other marginalized groups. Special attention should be given to ensuring gender balance and youth representation.

Training of the facilitators and rapporteurs is recommended for a more effective workshop.

Training of the facilitators, rapporteurs and any other members of any core group responsible for the preparation of the workshop should be arranged in the lead-up to the workshop, preferably as close to the workshop as possible, to go through the key aspects of the workshop and the roles and responsibilities of the different attendees. The training should last at least half a day.

The workshop can be improved by clarifying the key concepts, in the local language if appropriate, updating the online software with adapted functions or criteria, and making sure there is enough time to ensure the activities are specific, measurable and relevant.

The concepts included in the enabling environment are not always well understood, particularly if the WASH BAT is not available in the first language of the workshop participants. Preparation work to clarify these concepts can help with this, but a short concept note which can easily be translated and shared with the participants before the workshop can also help.

A paper-based workshop is encouraged as this facilitates participation. The online software needs to be updated to eliminate any glitches. The budget and the timetable sections also need to be simplified. As few workshops have time to go through the online tool User Manual a shorter document with the key concepts should be created, focused on the usability of the online tool for referencing and reporting. The online tool should also be updated to produce better infographics and tables which can be used during the workshop and, if desired, integrated into any final report, even if the country chooses not to use the template generated by the online tool. The online database could be a useful repository for previous reports, but is currently not well organized. It should be organized by country, with a dedicated person for each country responsible for cleaning up the files, ensuring that the latest file for each subsector is clearly labelled in each folder.

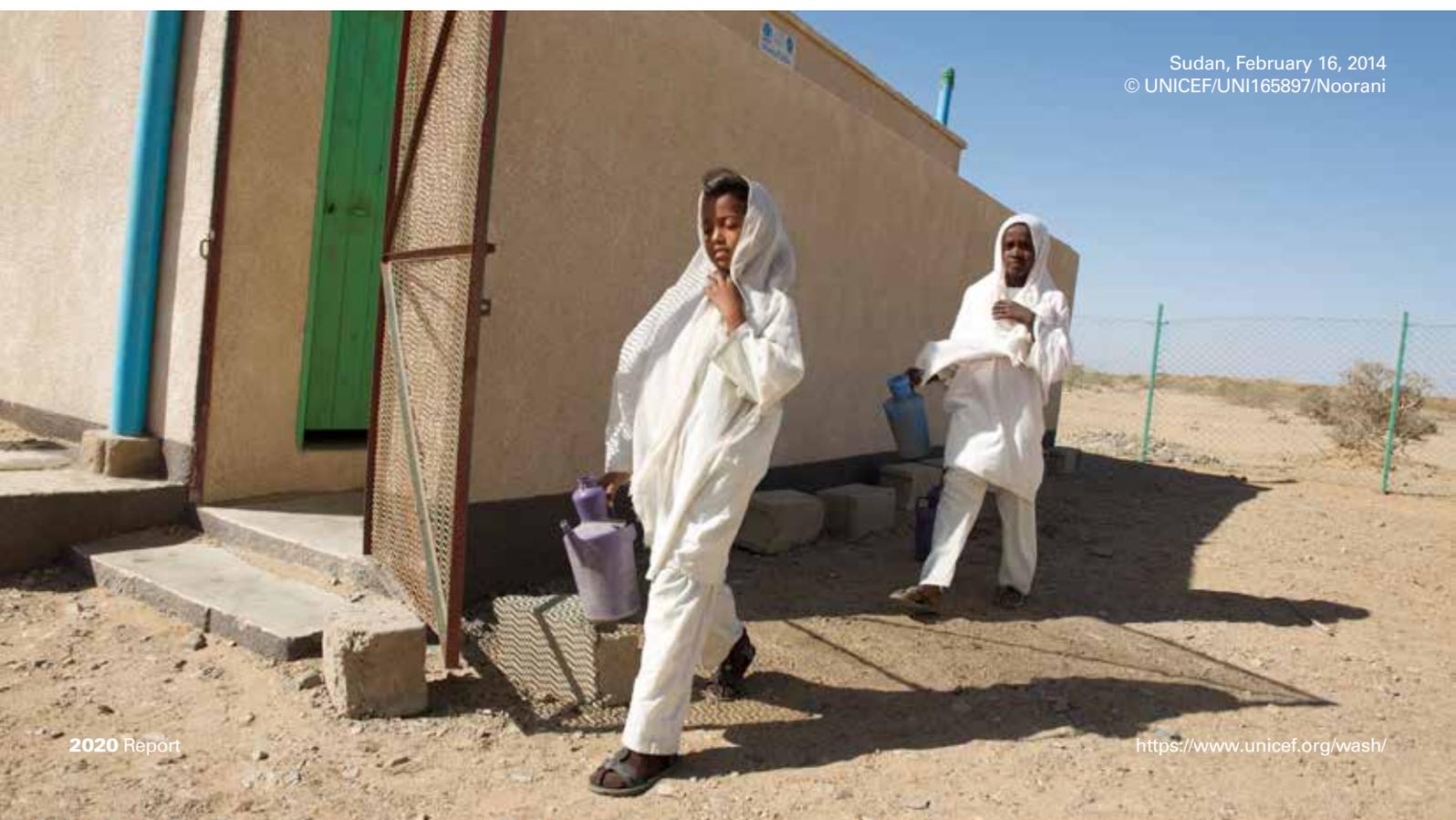
To make sure the activities developed are the highest quality they can be, a session on developing SMART activities should be held at the start of the final day, when typically the participants are prioritizing and refining the activities for the Action Plan. The activities should be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely, but need not be perfect; it is more important that the Action Plan is finalized. The activities will still need to be refined further before implemented after the workshop.

Taking advantage of windows of opportunity and linking or integrating the WASH BAT to national processes give the greatest chance that the outputs will be followed up and implemented.

Linking the WASH BAT to a national plan or strategy, or to a successful Joint Sector Review, which has been done in for example Bangladesh and Pakistan, ensures that the WASH BAT is feeding into a wider review process, lending the methodology of a structured discussion to come up with an agreed list of priority activities which can be put forward for implementation in the next budget cycle. Embedding the WASH BAT as one of the activities to feed into a national process, programme or strategy will also give over ownership to the government and ensure that they are taking the lead in the preparation and follow-up. Ideally, local moderators and facilitators can be trained as part of the first workshop in order to enable future WASH BATs to be organized with little or no external support.

To ensure the Action Plan is followed up, an accountability mechanism should be set up for each subsector or sub-national level, with a dedicated stakeholder group responsible for the next steps in promoting the activities for implementation.

An accountability mechanism integrated into the WASH BAT would increase the chances of the outputs being implemented. Ideally, the stakeholders responsible for the next steps should be identified before the workshop. However, this may not always be possible or appropriate, given that the activities developed could come under a number of different ministries. Instead, the preparation period should stress the importance of an accountability mechanism, which should also be included as a session during the WASH BAT workshop. If a declaration or a summary of the outputs are to be created for the end of the WASH BAT, which is encouraged, this should include details on this accountability mechanism. A template for the session should be created and included in a PowerPoint presentation on the washbat.org website to be used during WASH BATs, and a template for the declaration or summary should be available in the same place.



Sudan, February 16, 2014
© UNICEF/UNI165897/Noorani



Haiti, November 16, 2018
© UNICEF/UNI310593/LeMoyne

<https://www.unicef.org/wash/>

05 Annexes

The following Annex is contained within this report:

- **Annex 1:** The list of stakeholders consulted as part of the in-depth interviews and country visits

The following Annexes are provided as supplementary material in an Online Annex (see 'WASH BAT assessment report' section at <https://www.washbat.org/resources/>).

- **Annex 2:** The full list of recommendations included in the review, by section
- **Annex 3:** The questionnaire sent to UNICEF country offices
- **Annex 4:** The discussion guide for the in-depth interviews
- **Annex 5:** The data available for each country carrying out WASH BAT using the 2.0 tool
- **Annex 6:** The key OWNP actions mapped against the WASH BAT activities following the workshop in Ethiopia

Annex 1. Stakeholders consulted

The section lists the stakeholders consulted as part of the in-depth interview

Bangladesh (8 WASH BAT workshops at subnational (Divisional) level, covering rural and urban water and sanitation, and WASH in schools and health care facilities, and 1 national workshop to synthesise the divisional WASH BATs)

Aklima Khatun, Hygiene Specialist at Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor (WSUP) and rapporteur for six WASH BATs in Bangladesh

Dipok Chandra Roy, WASH consultant at UNICEF Bangladesh and facilitator and coordinator for the WASH BATs in Bangladesh

Dr. Farzana Begum, Research & Policy Lead at WSUP and facilitator at five WASH BATs in Bangladesh

Dr. Israt Jahan Epidemiologist at the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and rapporteur for the WASH BATs in Bangladesh

Dr. Soumen Sarker, Medical Officer at DGHS and rapporteur for the WASH BATs in Bangladesh

Eheteshamul Russel Khan, Project Director for the Government of Bangladesh and UNICEF WASH Project at the Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) and advisor for four WASH BATs in Bangladesh

Mahfuj-ur Rahman, Equity and Rights Specialist at WaterAid Bangladesh and facilitator for one WASH BAT in Bangladesh

Md. Rahmatullah Faruque, National Coordinator for WASH and DRR at Terre des hommes and facilitator for four WASH BATs in Bangladesh

Md. Wali Ullah, UNICEF-Consultant (former Chief Engineer at DPHE) and facilitator for the WASH BATs in Bangladesh

Mir Mahadi Hossain, Senior Community Officer and Head of Community Program and Consumer Relation Division at the Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (WASA) and rapporteur for the WASH BATs in Bangladesh

Mohammad Monirul Alam, WASH Specialist at UNICEF Bangladesh and overall strategic managed for the WASH BATs in Bangladesh

Mohammed Golam Muktadir, Executive Engineer at DPHE and facilitator for two WASH BATs in Bangladesh

Sanjoy Mukherjee, Independent Consultant and facilitator for six WASH BATs in Bangladesh

Sayed A.H Sunny, Program Officer, Asia Arsenic Network Bangladesh and coordinator and facilitator for the WASH BATs in Bangladesh

Sk Jafar Shamsuddin, Development Planner and WASH Sector Specialist and lead facilitator for the WASH BATs in Bangladesh

Sohel Ahmed, Assistant Coordinator for M&E at the Environment and Population Research Centre (EPRC) and rapporteur for four WASH BATs in Bangladesh

Eritrea (1 WASH BAT workshop at national level, covering rural and urban water and sanitation, and WASH in institutions)

David Tsetse, WASH Manager at UNICEF Eritrea

Yohannes Debretsion, WASH Consultant at UNICEF Eritrea and coordinator for the WASH BAT in Eritrea

Ethiopia (1 WASH BAT workshop covering rural and urban water and sanitation at national level, and rural water at subnational level)

Jorge Alvarez-Sala, WASH Specialist at UNICEF Ethiopia

Kaleab Getaneh, Consultant at National WASH Coordination Office in Ethiopia

Richard Wilson, Water and Environmental Consultant for the OWNIP

Pakistan (1 national WASH BAT, 1 district WASH BAT and seven WASH BATs at provincial level covering rural and urban water and sanitation, and WASH in schools)

Kamran Naeem, WASH Specialist at UNICEF Pakistan

Niaz Ullah Khan, Consultant and lead facilitator for the WASH Bats in Pakistan

Bolivia (3 WASH BATs at subnational (municipal) level, including one follow-up workshop, covering urban water and sanitation)

Edgar Paniagua, Consultant from the NUR University

Guido Meruvia, Swedish Embassy

Irma Peredo, WASH Specialist at UNICEF Bolivia

Luis Pereira, Consultant from the NUR University

DRC (1 WASH BAT at national level covering rural water and sanitation)

Stanislas Ifolo, Expert in charge of technical commissions and support for provinces in DRC

Vicky Miakala, Head of the hydrogeological studies unit in DRC

Ghandi Bukamba, Head of coordination in DRC

Jean Marie Sangira, UNICEF focal point for EE in DRC

Josselin Leon, UNICEF previous focal point for EE in DRC



unicef 

for every child