

## The Sustainable Services Checklist for Behavior Change in Service Providers

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### Introduction

It is recognized that the sustainability of water and sanitation services depends on the post-project support that the water and sanitation committees receive. We refer to the service provider as the entity in charge of the daily functions of managing the system, including operation, maintenance and administration activities. But the service provision is supported by the service authority who is responsible for coordinating, planning, controlling, and providing technical assistance, and follow-up on sustainability issues so that they last indefinitely. Building alliances between local and departmental governments allows for the monitoring of service providers in rural areas in order to inventory existing and old infrastructure. It also allows assessment of the post-project infrastructure and social component so that service providers do not face future sustainability challenges.

The Sustainable Services Checklist (SSC) is a tool developed by Water For People that shows the sustainability of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services in the district<sup>1</sup>. It also checks the annual monitoring metrics that are affected by the level of behavior change in two instances:

- The district service authority called the Municipal Sanitation Department (DMSBs)
- Service providers, or Drinking Water and Sanitation Committees (CAPyS)

To draw attention to and measure progress towards a level of sustainability in WASH services, the importance of behavior change must be considered and promoted. Service provider metrics in annual monitoring reflect both quantitative and qualitative data, which measure the process of behavioral change needed to obtain sustainability. In this way, the CAPyS were evaluated on their practice and adaptation to the SSC to help and drive behavior change.

This technical note reflects the action of Water For People in Bolivia in the application of the SSC in the districts where we work as a monitoring of learning and behavior change of service providers (CAPyS).

### Behavior Change and the SSC

The SSC assessment that takes place annually does not normally include a field visit to learn about the work of the service providers. The approach to service providers through the evaluations led by Water For People in Bolivia and the DMSBs allow the CAPyS to be evaluated on their practice and knowledge. Knowledge that determines progress made on the eight indicators and 20 metrics proposed in the SSC and how the metrics are adapted with sources

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<sup>1</sup> Translation note: Water For People works in a geographically defined region with the lowest level of formal government that is mandated to provide WASH services. In English, for simplicity, we refer to this geographic region as a “district” regardless of what it is called within a country (such as a municipality or block). In Bolivia, this unit is the municipality. In most cases, this has been changed to “district” in this technical note.

for verification, to understand and assume that they last over time, precisely because of the change in behavior of the members of the CAPyS board of directors.

The theory of behavior change is an observable, specific action, and measurable in time and place. To achieve behavioral changes and assume responsibility for maintaining sustainability over time, it is necessary first to work on:

- **Sociocultural beliefs.** Each member or person presupposes that the experience gained is true and that they have the reason and logic of work that is "right/good", and they lead and regulate the behavior of their partners.
- **Motivation.** It is important to first raise the awareness of leaders to generate changes in behavior and then encourage them to write rules, statutes and regulations and stipulate the rights and obligations of the board of directors and partners of the water system.
- **Perceived power.** Some members of the board of directors show perceived power, that they are listened to and respected by the partners of the water system to achieve efficiency in their actions.

Under this concept of behavior change, it was proposed to analyze the determinants of behavior change for the sustainability of the CAPyS of the Everyone Forever districts. Water For People in Bolivia decided to apply the SSC to service providers to draw attention to the changes already made and the need to continue promoting changes in behavior. In this way, they are working within the existing scheme in the Water For People work and which is focused on systems change.

Some indicators and metrics of the SSC were identified to further explore the perspective of behavior change.

**Indicator 5: Service Provider - Structure.** All communities have set-up a CAPyS that is legally recognized by the district government and has legal status to receive resources from the General Treasurer of the Nation. The CAPyS display in their offices the legal status document or the Registry to the Authority for the Supervision and Social Control of Drinking Water and Sanitation (AAPS).

**Indicator 6: Service Provider - Finance.**

*Metric 6.1:* The CAPyS show the calculation of the tariff based on life cycle costs using the AtWhatCost tool developed by Water For People or another similar tool. They confirm in the minutes the essential tariff to cover 100% of operations and maintenance (O&M) expenses and 20% replacement (replacement capital costs) of the water systems.

*Metric 6.2:* [For] the tariff to cover 100% of the O&M of water systems, meter reading is essential. The difference with 6.4 is precisely that the partners, as part of the fulfillment of their obligations and rights, must acquire knowledge about the meter reading for the timely payment for the water service.

*Metric 6.3:* The categorization of the CAPyS has made it possible to abide by a tariff that covers between 0 and 20% or more of the replacement capital costs, considering other income from fines, new partners, etc.

*Metric 6.4:* To collect the tariffs, micro metering is installed in all water systems precisely to collect the amount consumed according to the meter reading.

*Metric 6.5:* Delinquency in most CAPyS is less than 10%. Because they have established in the Statute and Regulation to charge for late payments equivalent to the consumption of water per month or other penalties.

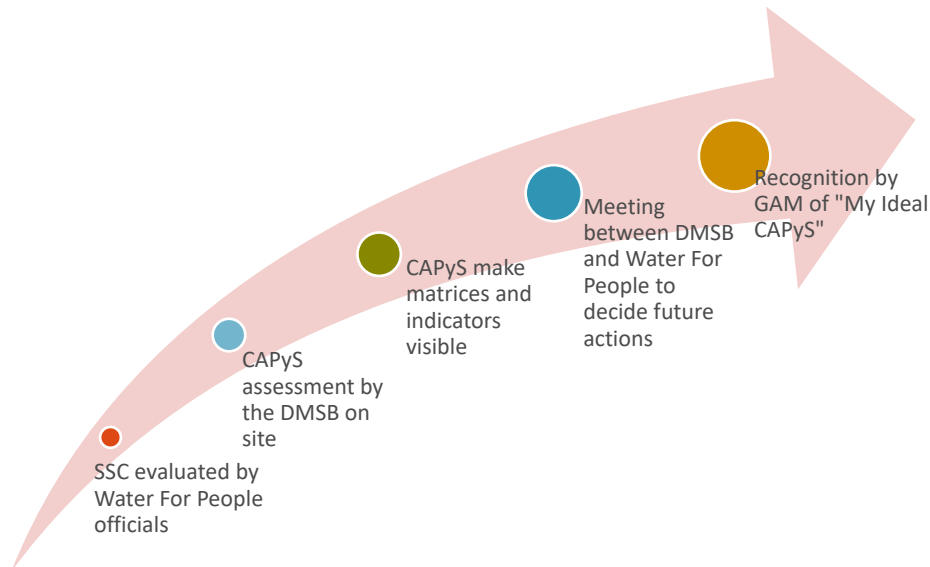
**Indicator 7: Service Provider - O&M.**

*Metric 7.1:* Accessibility to spare parts and supplies for O&M takes generally between 30 to 45 minutes of travel and the acquisition of chlorine for continuous disinfection for system treatment is between 45 to 75 minutes of travel.

*Metric 7.2:* Each CAPyS has personnel trained in plumbing to carry out O&M of the water systems. In some cases, there is a list of certified plumbers accredited by the Ministry of Education, who grants a certificate of competence for skills. Thus, for example, the District of Arani carried out the training of 30 people certified in plumbing.

The evaluation process of the SSC for service providers is being planned in coordination with each DMSB and with the General Water Department (DGA) of the Dept. Government of Cochabamba at the beginning of each year in order to see the successes and mistakes that they have in the metrics and indicators. Generally, the application process corresponds to five stages that are detailed below:

**SSC Application Process in Service Providers**



Knowledge transfer, the first link in the management of the SSC, is undertaken by Water For People officers to demonstrate to the DMSBs the results to be obtained for each indicator and the implementation of sustainability. The final results are analyzed with the DMSBs to make decisions to improve or replicate ideal CAPyS models that show behavioral changes in the sustainability of water services.

The CAPyS in districts where we work objectively demonstrate the management of matrices and indicators with documents and practice. In other words, the CAPyS board explains the handling of the tools, demonstrating their mastery. For example, they explain the use of the AtWhatCost tool, which is institutionalized in the intervened districts, and the cost of O&M and

replacement, as well as charging for water consumption on a monthly basis recorded according to measurements.

At the conclusion of the evaluation, the evaluators announce the result, reaching a minimum weighting of 51 and a maximum of 100. The challenged CAPyS can request a new visit to improve the weighting with the opportunity to improve the indicators that are aimed at the sustainability of water services. Finally, the CAPyS that got a weight of 96 and green color is recognized at a public act with the awarding of a certificate such as "My Ideal CAPyS" by the District Government. Thus, the CAPyS is an example of behavior change to be followed by other CAPyS to aim for the sustainability of basic services.

The application of the qualitative method in the SSC to the CAPyS allows not only to collect the information but also to make visible and observe the change in behavior through a mastery of the indicators. The natural use of the sustainability discourse, solutions to problems detected at the time of the evaluation, empowerment and behavior change are results of the training sessions carried out.

### **Behavior Change Experience with the SSC**

The application of the SSC is presented to measure and push for the behavior change of CAPyS and illustrate with the theory of change in the following three scenarios. They state that the SSC, when monitoring the CAPyS, reveals the path of behavior change, with the breakdown of paradigms and beliefs, motivation to continue with the change and adaptation to change by the leadership of the members of the board of a CAPyS.

#### **Scenario 1: Water Systems Management Beliefs**

CAPyS often believe that they are handling their documents correctly. They think they have their minute book well recorded and that the financial reports are up to date. They believe that everything has a logic of excellent work. It is likely, but when reviewed and analyzed during the SSC process, they lack a commendable and consistent accountability.

To break this barrier in thinking and show the way to change, they intervene until they gain confidence and accept that they need to improve their actions. Once achieved, tools are used to help improve their work, such as a coverage map of the community with water and sanitation service, bathrooms with hygiene, collection of tariffs for water service as well as O&M costs and replacement of the water system. This map explains to board members the rationale for improving their work and asking for support. This requested support is the triggering stage for the first attitude of change that is used by the DMSBs to start with the change.

#### **Scenario 2: Motivate the CAPyS of the Districts**

To motivate the members of the CAPyS, we start from their reality by showing the failures of sustainability such as the lack of O&M of the water systems, pipe ruptures, lack of payment for the water service, lack of installation of meters in the family connections, low quality, quantity and coverage of water. While reviewing the work, the time is also used to explain the regulations of the sector that are directly responsible for the administration of the water system of their community and of complying with the regulations.

The result is the intention or will to improve the mistakes found. The DMSB emphasizes that administration begins with providing a good service through meter reading, calculation of the tariff with the AtWhatCost tool and filling out the O&M plan that is planned at the time the

training is carried out. The second moment of change of attitude is of the directive, motivation and doing it.

### Scenario 3: Perceived Power in CAPyS

The organization is essential for this scenario, considering that leadership is the ability of the person to influence the behavior of other people or organizations, exercising authority for the correct leadership/direction of the organization. The board of directors of the CAPyS organization, composed almost in its entirety by President, Vice-president, Minutes Secretary, Treasurer, and Spokesman, is led by one person and the rest of the board assumes functions according to the statutes and regulations approved by consensus at the assembly of partners. Generally, to get positioned and, above all, to do a good job in management, they use the "My Ideal CAPyS" tool. The tool consists of indicators for: organization (statute and regulation), service (tariff and meter reading), administration, coverage maintenance, asset inventory, O&M plan and water quality. Leadership is very important to direct the organization with participation, consensus and agreements. Experience shows that great transformations can be achieved.

### Lessons Learned

What we are looking for is a change in the attitudes and behaviors of people who assume systemic leadership, those who seek solutions to their problems through open dialogues and, above all, the recognition of the mistakes that we have been making have not always worked out well. The Water For People social team in Bolivia has been unlearning to relearn that it is possible to show sustainability over time with patience and valuing the participation process.

Since the implementation of this methodology, we have learned some very important lessons:

- The knowledge and practice of the members of the CAPyS is measured from the information received, the transmission processing of the technical, social and economic, verifying the formation of the CAPyS board of directors' social capital.
- Guarantee human resources of the CAPyS trained and with knowledge of the sustainability of the services to facilitate behavior change.
- CAPyS who know about a sectoral body may request technical assistance in water and sanitation.
- The presence of external people in internal CAPyS evaluations strengthens their leadership, management and replication of their success, makes the board proud to be recognized and contributes to their empowerment of board members with "My Ideal CAPyS," thus achieving the behavior change.
- CAPyS know how to maintain the sustainability of services over time, understanding the sense of ownership and part of the environment as their own.
- The involvement of the DMSB allows each technician to reflect on the work they carry out in two ways:
  - The appropriation of new ways of intervening and do better at what they have been doing.
  - Monitoring will also make it possible to reflect activities that do not have results, stop doing it because it does not work and seek other strategies.
- Strengthen their knowledge and skills, not only that of the DMSBs, but also those of the DGA technicians, members of the CAPyS about sanitation, water resources and others.

Evaluations such as learning and behavior change for the maintenance of sustainability over time through the SSC are important because they show the scope of the work developed by the social leaders of the districts on the one hand and on the other reflect on the work of Water For People. Above all, it makes us analyze: Where are we going wrong? What do we need to adjust? How successful are we?

## Conclusions

The strengthening of knowledge and skills of the DMSBs has made it possible to come up with a new proposal for the exchange of experience between the DMSBs of the districts to evaluate the fulfillment of the service provider indicators. It also empowers the social and technical officers of each DMSB, together with the board of directors of the CAPyS and technicians of the DGA of Cochabamba, who have gathered lessons learned and get themselves some fresh air with new ways of intervening in community development.

The involvement of the DMSB allows each technician to reflect on the work they develop and on the CAPyS by seeing the presence of external people in internal evaluations. In this way, it strengthens their leadership and management.

The GAMs, through the service authorities, if they assumed their responsibility, would surely have the responsibility to sanction distortions, non-compliance, poor performance, infraction of positions, economic sanctions and interventions in the CAPyS. The lack of clarity on the part of some government authorities is a problem for the sustainability of basic services.

Finally, the application of the SSC in the entities of water and sanitation service providers makes it possible to show the change in behavior of the CAPyS board. It is a change that translates into mastering the factors of sustainability of services, practice and applied knowledge in their environment. If teaching and learning are well grasped, the change in attitudes and behaviors of people is achieved. Drawing attention to their actions with visits to service providers, during the evaluation of the SSC, could empower the behavior change of the board members.