

**Final Report**  
**FOR**  
**Malawi National WASH Building Blocks Assessment**

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I take responsibility for any omissions, misrepresentation of facts or any other errors in the report.

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## **ACRONYMS**

A4C	Agenda For Change
BB	Building Block
BCC	Behavior Change Communication
CLTS	Community-Led Total Sanitation
EHA	Essential Hygiene Actions
DP	Development Partners
DSIPs	District Sector Investment Plans
JFA	Joint Financing Agreement
GoM	Government of Malawi
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
TA	Traditional Authority
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
VDC	Village Development Committee
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WRM	Water Resource Management

## Executive Summary

The national assessment of the WASH building blocks that is being supported by Agenda For Change Through Water For People was carried out by using structured interviews which was administered amongst stakeholders at the national and district levels. The assessment was carried out in the months of September and October 2020 and this draft report is being shared with the client focusing on the findings.

The figure below summarises the National BB assessment Scores using the frequency mode as the score for each Building Block that was assessed during the assignment.

	Institutions	Finance	SDM Infrastructure	Regulation & Accountability	Monitoring	WRM	Planning	Learning / Adaptation	Total Score	Max Score
Score	5	5	6	4	6	6	7	2	41	106
Max Expected Score	16	14	14	14	14	12	14	8	106	

The table below shows the high level findings and recommendations against each building block of the eight that are being used by the partners implementing system strengthening in Malawi: -

Identified Area	Summary of Findings	Summary Recommendations
<b>Building Block</b>	<b>High Level Findings on the Questions</b>	
<b>Institutional Arrangement and Coordination</b>	The national water policy of 2005 and the national sanitation policy of 2008 are both out dated and are under review. WASH Strategies are not widely shared. The high vacancy rate of 67% in the Water Department and at the district level is a source of high concern to the sector.	WASH policies and strategies should widely be shared especially at the district level. The very high vacancy rate at both the national 67% and district levels that has made the delivery of WASH services to be ineffective should be addressed by all key sector stakeholders led by government. The Agenda For Change partners to work collaboratively to support coordination between government and CSOs through WESNET
<b>Finance</b>	Sector strategic plans are not effectively linked to the Ministry of Finance allocation. The sector receives very low funding in the current budget the water department budget is 4.5% representing 1.35% of GDP, while the Ethekwin declaration required 1.5% of GDP to be allocated towards WASH budget. According to the SDG costing analysis Malawi will not achieve WASH SGDs by 2030 at the level of current investments. Malawi will require USD 97m (MK 68,840m) to build and maintain BASIC universal	The finance strategies that are in place should be linked to monitoring framework that is available in order to attract the required resources for meeting SDG 6. DSIP should be linked to national sector plan. The Agenda for Change partners should support government with District Wide WASH Investment plans tools and National WASH sector planning for achieving SDG 6.

	<p>coverage and an additional USD 258m (MK 183,228m) to build and maintain safely managed services each year, up to 2030.</p> <p>Current Financing strategy through the current WASH budget 2020/2021 allocation is 90 Billion MK and mostly focused on Urban water supply.</p>	
<b>SMD Infrastructure</b>	<p>There are no adequate mechanisms and capacity in place to ensure due diligence and control in procurement for infrastructure work. This have resulted in corruption in the procurement of infrastructure works. Little resources at district level to monitor and supervise construction works or maintenance of WASH assents.</p>	<p>Adequate supervision and inspection should be provided during the construction of WASH infrastructure especially at the district level through the provision of the required capacity and resources.</p>
<b>Regulation and Accountability</b>	<p>There is no effective regulatory and accountability mechanism in place at national level to safeguard consumer rights, regulates tariffs and regulates service levels.</p>	<p>Enforcement of standards should be done through the monitoring/supervision of all the WASH activities at the national and district levels that should ensure the delivery of quality WASH services. Agenda for Change partners should join their voices for the institutionalization of the National Water Regulatory Authority</p>
<b>Monitoring</b>	<p>There is no sector monitoring framework established, with clear indicators that is aligned to SDGs. that covers WASH, and is operational in most/all parts of the country.</p>	<p>The mWater App that has been used for the collection of data for water point mapping with funding from Scottish Government through the University of Strathclyde should be upgraded for the establishment of the sector MIS. Agenda for Change/ DWA partners should work together to support government in setting up a proper sector MIS and also support districts WASH offices on use of data for decision making.</p>
<b>Water Resources Management</b>	<p>NWRA is only at national level and is not fully functional. NWRA Sub regional catchment are there but are not capacitated. The Water Resources Act of 2013 has not been fully disseminated at all levels especially the district due to lack of coordination amongst stakeholders.</p>	<p>Water Resources Management in Malawi should be high on the agenda considering the environmental degradation that is taking place in our water catchments. Forums/platforms that exist at the national and decentralized level be strengthened and increased for addressing the issues on Water Resources Management.</p>

<b>Planning</b>	ADB, WB and UNICEF coordinate their planning with Government but others do not. Donors have more powers and others do not coordinate with government because they drive their own agendas.	. Agenda For Change and The District Wide Approach partners should collaborate with AFDB/World Bank and UNICEF in harmonizing the District Investment Sector Plans tools and support district to have plans and Scale to all districts
<b>Learning and adaptation</b>	Platform(s) exist at the national level where stakeholders feel they have the 'space' to openly share positive and negative experiences and these SWG, TWG and JSR but functionality is the issue.	There should be deliberate efforts for Agenda for Change and DWA partners to document and share lessons. Validation of learning documents before sharing with the wider sector players. Support the revamping of SWG meetings and other technical meetings for the sector. Platforms/forums that exist and are institutionalized for periodic sharing of learning, and experiences should be improved in the way they conduct their business both at district national levels to enhance their effectiveness.

- The findings of the national assessment for the building blocks that has been done both at the district and national level through interviews held with key sector stakeholders at national and district levels reflects the current sector dynamics and situations.
- There is a high vacancy rate of 67% in the ministry which was highlighted by all the people that were interviewed with gaps in the middle and lower levels of staff, the capacity at the high level such as directors and deputy directors is there.
- Sector budgets in parliament are not justified using sector performance data. The budgets having being presented in parliament they are discussed in various parliamentary committees but not based on sector performance data. Funding for the sector is low especially for sanitation is very low for the achievement of SDG6.
- Project delivery models and procurement procedures for capital investment projects are clearly defined in government sanctioned manuals. There is the ODPP that is in place with all the required mandate and guidelines. There are cases of miss-procurement/corrupt practices that have been observed for the procurement of WASH capital projects, goods and services.
- There is no effective regulatory mechanism in place at national level or legally decentralised to service authorities that 1. ensures protection of consumer rights, 2. regulates tariffs and 3. regulates service levels.
- There is no sector monitoring framework established, with clear indicators that is aligned to SDGs and processes/mandates, covers water/sanitation/hygiene, and is operational in most/all parts of the country.
- Water Quality has been an issue in the sector, with the increased awareness of the consumers of their right to portable water, it was observed that there is no systematic monitoring of rural water supply facilities apart from water quality tests that are done before commissioning.
- The sector plan is not operational, and it is not being used for sector planning and budgeting, its progress to achievement is not monitored, all stakeholders are not required to report against achievement to the plan, and it is not periodically reviewed and updated.



- Platform(s) exist at the national level where stakeholders feel they have the 'space' to openly share positive and negative experiences and these SWG, TWG and JSR but functionality is the issue.
- As a sector we have got a long way to address gaps that have been identified through the national assessment of the building blocks in Malawi. There is need to work together as a team to address the challenges.

## **1.0. Introduction**

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### **1.1 The Challenge**

In the last 20 years, Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) work in Malawi has focused on addressing individual elements of service delivery, such as infrastructure or behavior change but has not focused on understanding the WASH system and everything contained within it, which enables people to access services on a permanent basis. For instance, there has often been significant investment in new infrastructure, or large-scale communication under CLTS programs, but often limited attention to the underlying conditions necessary for underpinning universal and sustainable service delivery. There has been too little commitment to post-implementation support for example, with a lack of adequate attention or financing for maintenance. So, while there has been investment, and there are now over 100,000 improved water points in Malawi, technically enough to provide a reasonable service to most of the population, if 30% of all water points end up not functioning at any given time, this is a huge waste of much of that investment. Why has this happened? Primarily because a comprehensive analysis of the WASH system has not underpinned the vast majority of investments made in the sector.

With the shift from MDGs to the SDGs, we are also challenged to recognize that basic access to WASH is not sufficient, as the focus shifts to safely managed, sustainable service delivery. This includes more attention and action for financing, maintenance, planning and evidence-based decision making (through monitoring).

### **1.2 Efforts to Date**

An informal collaboration for strengthening WASH systems at district level has been active since late 2018. It started with a workshop at Lilongwe Hotel that brought together the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development (MOAIWD) and Ministry of Health officials, representatives of local government in three districts, as well as the national level, and participants from implementing agencies, notably international NGOs (Care, WaterAid, Water For People, World Vision, ONSE (the USAID funded project) Base Flow, University of Strathclyde-Climate Justice Fund Project, Welt Hungerhilfe (WHH), WES NETWORK, Interaide and UNICEF. Concepts of systems strengthening, including the background to developing a district roadmap, for universal WASH services were introduced, and a quick and dirty sector strength assessment (using building blocks analysis) was carried out, looking both at specific districts and from the national perspective.

This scoring highlights gaps in the system across a number of areas, with the total score of the system reaching only 29 of a possible score of 86. This shows the range of challenges in the WASH system at district level, which will continue to undermine sustainability and progress to the SDGs, unless they are adequately addressed. Based on those deliberations, an Agreement was reached for three agencies (WaterAid, World Vision and Water For People), to provide support to four districts of Machinga, Zomba, Ntcheu and Chiradzulu in developing a district roadmap, and work on sharing lessons and approaches. During the year Welt Hungerhilfe (WHH) joined the collaboration meetings and is supporting an additional district-Dedza. The experiences over this last year have resulted in a consolidated approach for district-level systems strengthening through a roadmap commonly understood as District WASH Investment plans.

### **1.3 Agenda For Change**

The collaboration between WaterAid, World Vision, WHH, Water For People and Care has already gained some momentum in the last eighteen months and is well placed to build consensus among the civil society and support government to provide leadership in these efforts to strengthen the sector, and to provide greater coherence, to the many efforts, by many partners,

that are currently being practiced in Malawi. It is from this background that the partners hired a consultant to assess the strength and weaknesses in the WASH systems strengthening in Malawi WASH Sector. **For detailed Terms of reference for the assignment see Annex 6.1**

### 1.3.1 Brief History of Agenda for Change









Agenda for Change was founded in May 2015 and has continued to grow since then.

#### A GROWING COLLABORATION

- 2015: AguaConsult, IRC, Water For People, WaterAid, and Osprey Foundation launched Agenda for Change.
- 2017 – 2018: CARE, Splash, Water for Good, and Welthungerhilfe joined.
- 2019: Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Center for Water Security and Cooperation (CWSC), Concern Worldwide, Helvetas, and WaterSHED joined.
- 2020: We are focusing on synthesizing evidence of stronger systems and supporting country collaboration on systems strengthening. Membership recruitment is on hold.

### 1.3.2 Building Blocks

The National Assessment of the Building Blocks looked at the eight building blocks as indicated below: -

Building Blocks		Highlights of the Assessment
 Institutional Arrangements and Coordination	 Finance	A series of tools are required to support particular steps in this process. Some are generic, whilst others were developed in specific countries where Agenda for Change partners have been working. A wide range of tools are available in the sector as well as those used by partners in Malawi. Effective tools are already in use in the country and the tools should be used in the WASH sector whenever appropriate, especially to ensure that monitoring data collected at district level feeds into national monitoring systems. It is more important to follow the principles and steps in the roadmap than to be driven by the use of a particular set of tools.
 Service Delivery Infrastructure	 Regulation and Accountability	
 Monitoring	 Water Resource Management	
 Planning	 Learning and Adaptation	

## 2.0. Methodology

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### 2.1 Approach

The approach to this assignment looked at key sector issues that are affecting sector performance in terms of services delivery. The issues were being categorized based on the eight building blocks that are being implemented by partners in Malawi. These were looked at the two levels of national and district with much focus on the national level as the assessment is being carried out at the national level. Further, the methodology was participatory and inclusive to ensure that the views of all key and relevant stakeholders, including those of the districts on the national assessment of the Building Blocks, are well captured. The quantitative methods were used for comparing or ranking, classifying, and generalizing the results.

### 2.2 Desk Review

The consultant review documents that are available in the sector with regards to Agenda For Change and Building Blocks. The documents included those being used at the international level for the same and those by partners in Malawi for the implementation of the same. Most critical documents were requested from the client for review. Literature review examined the various documents, reports, records and workshop report that have been produced by partners in the implementation of the same. These types of descriptive data provide insights into the concept that cannot be obtained in any other way. Considering the fact that this a new approach in Malawi there are not as many documents that are available for review hence difficult to make a comprehensive review.

### 2.3 Interviews with Key Stakeholders

#### 2.3.1 Key Informant Interviews

Key informant interviews (KII) were held with partners at national and district levels and the partners included the ministries officials at national and district levels, donor and NGOs partners that are involved in the WASH Sector and the Agenda For Change and Building Block implementation. KIIs and FGDs was conducted at National and District levels. KIIs were also conducted with district level stakeholders that include Government officials from the ministries responsible for WASH and Health. The main aim of the engagements was to understand the stakeholders' understanding of the Agenda For Change concept and the implementation of Building Blocks for system strengthening at the national and district levels in Malawi. This is aimed at helping the understanding of the key gaps that exist in the implementation of Building Blocks in Malawi. **For the detailed list of the stakeholders interviewed see Annex 6.2**

### 2.4 Building Blocks Checklist

The Participants were tasked with diagnosing the status of the WASH system, using a Building Block Checklist Tool. The checklist asks a number of questions for each of the eight 'Building Blocks', summary scores were calculated for each building block. The Summary scores are discussed in the findings section below.

This scoring highlights gaps in the system across a number of areas, with the scores of the system shown in the findings section below. This shows the range of challenges in the WASH system at national level, which will continue to undermine sustainability and progress to the SDGs, unless they are adequately addressed.

The eight building blocks were assessed and the findings have been categorized in the national and district levels in order the emphasize the key observations that were made by the districts where the implementation of the BBs is done and includes the gaps and challenges that exists at all levels: -

### 3.0. Findings of the Assessment

#### 3.1. Institution

Achieving universal access to WASH services that last is only possible with government leadership and political commitment, and when policy makers and service providers are held to account for responsive services that reach all communities. Strong institutions that are accountable, responsive and well-coordinated are necessary to deliver and sustain services. It is important that all members should work together to strengthen key sector building blocks, including institutional arrangement and coordination at all levels:

Institutions	Updating Sector policy	National level institutions	Sector coordination mechanisms	The responsibilities and roles	The staffing requirements	Training institutions	mechanisms for incentivize	Score
Question	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	5

The figure above shows that the staffing requirement at all levels is not adequate and mechanisms for incentives that motivates staff in government is not there. There is need for the Agenda For Change Partners support Govt. in the other areas as well as shown above. The following were the findings from the responses: -

##### 3.1.1 National Level

- There is the national water policy of 2005 and the national sanitation policy of 2008 both are under review with funding from ADB through projects that are being implemented by the Northern Region Water Board. The review of the water policy is at an advanced stage with all the comments from stakeholders received by the consultants. It has been observed that the Acts that we have in the sector are outdated an example of the Water Works Act of 1995 was given.
- The high vacancy rate of 67% in the ministry was highlighted by all the people that were interviewed. There are lots of gaps for the middle and lower levels of staff, the capacity at the high level such as directors and deputy directors is there. The ministry has undergone a long period of lack of leadership due to the absence of a Principle Secretary specifically for the Water Department and this has affected sector coordination mechanisms.
- It has been observed that the coordination mechanisms that are in place now are not adequate. People meet at the annual JSR but there have been no SWA and TWG meetings throughout the year of 2020. Issues discussed at the JSR and other sector meetings are not fully implemented. Both the Ministry and Development Part are responsible for poor sector coordination.
- Roles and responsibilities for the national and the decentralised bodies are there in a number of documents including the Local Government Act of 1998. The long argument between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry responsible for WASH as to where the Sanitation and Hygiene policy should be housed was given as an example for lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities. The implementation of the decentralisation policy has been a challenge for the Ministry responsible for WASH and this has led to lot of confusion as to how district level staff working for the Water Department should operate.
- The challenges and the delays in the recruitment of the WMAs was given as an example for the challenge of the same. Staffing requirements at the district level for the Water Department is very inadequate. The staffing requirements at the decentralised level are well defined but there is a shortage of staff especially WMAs and in a few districts there are no DWDOs. Example Machinga District has only 4 members of staff out of the requires 16.
- Training institutions for WASH in the country are barely adequate. There are gaps for water development professionals hence it is difficult to be responsive to emerging issues that need to be addressed by having the right materials being taught in the institutions. For the technical level training similar to the one that was provided at Zomba Training School which is no longer

operational is not there. There are gaps that have failed to be addressed by the sector for a long time and efforts to have Chigweje in Mangochi operational have not succeeded.

- Performance appraisals framework is available at all levels but not useful and not used for promotion. There are mechanisms in place to incentivise performance of national and decentralised institutions but are very inadequate though there are some trainings that are provided by CSOs. There is a lot of political interference when it comes to the provision of WASH services and there is need for political will to succeed.

### 3.1.2 District

- The districts have noted that the Sanitation and Hygiene Strategy that is there has not been widely shared at the district level. Implementation of the sector policies and strategies has been sighted as a challenge. Known factor to the district level is that the national water and sanitation policies that are being reviewed, the district are not been fully involved in the review processes. NWRA existence and its roles and responsibilities are not known by the district level stakeholders.
- The National Sanitation Policy has well defined roles and responsibilities. Funding for sanitation and hygiene activities is very as compared to water. The Water Department at the district level do dual reporting to district council and to the ministry responsible water that is said to be confusing, Devolution of Functions is the issue that has seen projects at the district level are being implemented by the central level.
- For the Ministry of Health job descriptions are there but the Department of Water has a very high vacancy rate at the district level. The Ministry of Local Government have establishments in LCAP Report but grading has been an issue. In Thyolo out of 21 positions only seven are filled.
- Incentives and rewards are not there at all levels and there is need for improvements. There is very little motivation that are given by the Ministry. There are a number of DWDOs that have overstayed in the districts for more that ten years without promotion, no training in spite of training plans being developed year in year out.

### 3.1.3 Gaps/Challenges

The gaps/challenges are as follows: -

- a) Key WASH policies that's the National Water Policy 2005 and the National Sanitation Policy and the Water Works 1995 are outdated hence not addressing emerging issues and the review processes are taking a long time.
- b) WASH policies and strategies are not widely known especially at the district level. This is due to the fact that the sharing of the same is limited especially to the district level.
- c) There is very high vacancy rate at both the national 67% and district levels that has made the delivery of WASH services to be ineffective.
- d) The gains that were made in the coordination mechanisms are being lost because a number of established meeting have not been held for over a year and this has left a lot of WASH issues not being addressed.
- e) Roles and responsibilities for various stakeholders including ministries on sanitation and hygiene are not clearly defined. This has resulted on the long outstanding misunderstanding between the Ministry responsible for WASH and the Ministry of Health as to where the Sanitation Policy should be housed.
- f) Training institutions for WASH at all levels are not adequate and this has made an impact on the lack of capacity amongst WASH practitioners. The technical skills for lower level staff at both the ministry and water boards have been the most affected.

## 3.2. Finance

Transparency and predictability of all resources is critical in allowing governments to exercise a leadership role in directing and monitoring sector investment. Sector financing strategies are

critical components of effective sector planning in the medium and longer term. They are critical both to domestic accountability, and to the governments' capacity to hold external support agencies accountable and vice versa.

Finance	strategic plans linked	Updated sector financing	Adequate ringfenced budget	mandates on who covers	There are subsidies / cross subsidy	Sector budgets are justified	Score
Question	1	1	0	1	1	1	5

The figure above shows that financing is a big challenge for the sector especially funding for the support for sustaining the WASH infrastructure that is being made by both partners and Government. The following were the findings from the responses: -

### 3.2.1 National

- Sector strategic plans are not effectively linked to the Ministry of Finance allocation as it was observed that in the current budget the water department budget is 4.5% and skewed to water. There is no comprehensive Sector Strategy in place hence difficult to make an assessment on the same. The issue has been that in spite of allocations being made, the funds are not made available as stipulated in the budget. There has been attempts in 2019/2020 to conduct SDG 6 costing analysis in Malawi using the UNICEF SDG costing analysis tool which indicates that Malawi will require USD 97m (MK 68,840m) to build and maintain BASIC universal coverage and an additional USD 258m (MK 183,228m) to build and maintain safely managed services each year, up to 2030, in order to achieve SDG 6.1 and SDG 6.2 by 2030.
- Current WASH budget 2020/2021 allocation is 90 Billion MK and mostly focused on Urban water supply. Moving forward there is need to develop a detailed financing strategy that will be able to see annual budget that deliberately allocates enough resources for rural water supply which will reflect more on moving towards achieving universal basic access to WASH and also achieve some safely managed.
- There is no updated sector financing strategy in place, which aims to meet nationally adopted SDG targets. The investment plans and DSIPs that are there are not linked to the SDGs.
- There is no adequate ringfenced budget allocation from government on sustaining WASH services. In the water boards their approach is different and in most cases government has backed them whenever they get loans from the international funding agencies. At the district level there is the borehole fund but it being politicised in the way allocations are made and highly mismanaged in some districts.
- At the moment the mandates on who covers the different life cycle cost components is clearly defined in that community covers the O&M and government and NGOs make the initial investment and intervene when there is big maintenance to be carried out. The challenge has been that the guideline that are there are not enforced and this has resulted in sustainability gaps.
- There are no subsidies for rural water supply even though it has been observed that some NGOs have provided the same for sanitation for rural poor households. The water boards have in place mechanisms where there are cross subsidies amongst different categories of consumers.
- Sector budgets in parliament are not justified using sector performance data. The budgets having being presented in parliament they are discussed in various parliamentary committees but not based on sector performance data. Funding for sanitation is very low for the achievement of SDG6. In spite of the fact that the budgets are drafted by the department and sent to the Ministry of Finance and debated in Parliament, no where has the use of the sector performance has been stipulated.

### 3.2.2 District

- There is no updated sector financing strategy in place, which aims to meet nationally adopted SDG targets. The DSIP which are meant to attract resources have not been updated in most of the districts. The WASWAp that has failed to be implemented was the only hope that the districts had for increasing sector funding.
- Members of Parliament and Councils are expected to provide funds for maintenance of boreholes. The life cycle costs are not adequately analysed hence difficult to be implemented and monitored. There are no subsidies/cross subsidies arrangements in place to ensure equity in service delivery.
- There is little in terms of the sector funding, the committees at Parliament do not have the understanding of WASH issues and their focus is on deliberations and approval and approvals are not made according to the situation on the ground.

### 3.2.3 Gaps/Challenges

The gaps/challenges are as follows: -

- a) The finance strategies that are in place are not linked to monitoring framework that is available hence difficult to attract the required resources for meeting SDG 6.
- b) Lack of adequate financing for the WASH has led to insufficient investments made to meet SDG 6 targets and the level of WASH services to communities and consumers has been low.
- c) Full Life Cycle cost analysis for WASH infrastructure is not done in most of the investments that are made especially boreholes. This has resulted in a lot of boreholes not being functional and has resulted in a losses by communities to water services.
- d) Sector financing has been low for a long time especially for sanitation and hygiene. The economic benefits of investing in WASH are not known by most of the stakeholders especially members of parliament.

### 3.3. SDM Infrastructure:

WASH infrastructure design should look at the hidden cost for the investment that is mostly funded by government. Using an asset register that includes the design life of system components, makes it possible to project future capital maintenance costs as well as calculating initial capital and capital maintenance expenditure costs. This makes for greater accuracy in long-term expenditure projections in the financial plan. In some contexts, it may be relevant to include cost calculations for increasing levels of service, such as water supply on-premises and to meet the needs of growing populations.

SDM infrastructure	Technical standards	Project delivery	mechanisms and capacity	Asset ownership	segregation in roles	infrastructure inventory	Score
Question	1	1	1	1	1	1	6

The figure above shows we are not doing well in planning, implementation and monitoring of WASH infrastructure and there is need for the enforcement of regulations and guideline on the same. The following were the findings from the responses: -

#### 3.3.1 National

- Technical standards and guidelines are there but in a number of cases not widely shared and available. There are a number of manuals that provide for the same including the CBM manuals. It was noted that there are gaps such as we do not have guidelines for school sanitation on toilets.



- Project delivery models and procurement procedures for capital investment projects are clearly defined in government sanctioned manuals. We have the Office of the Director of Public Procurement (ODPP) that is in place with all the required mandate and guidelines. It has been observed that for donor funded projects the guidelines are well enforced.
- There are no adequate mechanisms and capacity in place to ensure due diligence and control in procurement for infrastructure work. This have been case because of corruption is being experienced in the procurement of infrastructure works. There are miss-procurement cases that takes place in the water boards and other organisations as well including government.
- The asset ownership of water supply infrastructure is not clearly defined in the legal and policy framework. What has been observed is that a lot of responsibility is pushed to the communities in terms of funding O&M, this has compromised sustainability of the WASH facilities.
- There is clear segregation in roles between service providers and service authorities for minor and major maintenance. There are challenges in the implementation of the same in that there is no clear understanding of the same in spite of CBM training given to the communities during the construction of the WASH facilities.
- There is an updated infrastructure inventory is in place for water points in the name of mWater at the national level and is aimed at being used to plan, budget, and analyse to derive learning. There are conditions for periodic updating of the inventory in place but the challenges are the districts are not yet empowered to collect and analyse data due to lack of resources and training.

### 3.3.2 District

- There are entities such as IPC for most of the entities that meets and procurement officers are in place both at the national and district levels. Procurement capacities at the district level need to be enhanced. Procurement manuals and other manuals that are available are not widely shared that result in miss-procurement of services at the district level.
- In spite of having AMs and Care Takers, communities still use AMs to do minor maintenance instead of doing that by themselves. Communities not trusting AMs and MPs carry out illegal maintenance for political gains. It may be necessary to try more of private engagement where contracts are signed between committees and AM for both O & M so that communities are relieved of the technical part.
- The inventory at the moment it is there mostly for water points through the mWater App but for infrastructures such as toiles there is none. Not sure if it is being used at the national and district levels for planning, budgeting and monitoring. The challenge is that the district councils have no resources to update the inventory regularly as is required.

### 3.3.3 Gaps/Challenges

The gaps/challenges are as follows: -

- a) The sector has no nationally agreed drawings/guidelines for the construction of school toilets. UNICEF has led a number of initiatives in addressing the same but the sector not come to a conclusion in addressing the issue.
- b) There is no adequate supervision and inspection during the construction of WASH infrastructure especially at the district level in most cases due lack of a budget line for doing the same.
- c) Procurement of WASH infrastructure has faced a lot corruption in spite of having the necessary procurement procedures/guidelines in place. Additional capacity in procurement is required at all levels
- d) Enforcement of guidelines is required at all levels to ensure adherence to the same as there a number of manuals in the sector that are aimed guiding the sector operation in order to bring efficiency in service delivery.

### 3.4. Regulation & Accountability

In order to decide where to invest, how to sustain and improve water and sanitation services and to understand which policies and strategies work, it is crucial that sectors have reliable data and engage in critical joint reflection and adaptive management. Effective development cooperation requires appropriate, inclusive processes that encourage all partners to demonstrate and demand mutual accountability for sector progress.

Regulation & Accountability	There is a legal framework	effective regulatory mechanism	Service level standards and performance	Tariff regulations & calculation	The entity responsible for regulating	Score
Question	1	0	1	1	1	4

The figure above shows the sector does not have an effective regulatory mechanism in place and the institutions that are there are not effective in ensuring the implementation of the same. The following were the findings from the responses: -

#### 3.4.1 National

- There is a legal framework whereby service providers are legally registered and therefore legally accountable in the name of NCIC. The challenge has been the implementation of the same in that there are some that are registered but are not held legally accountable. They take advantage of the ignorance of the beneficially communities. There is no Water supply regulator and efforts have been made to have one available but with no success.
- There is no effective regulatory mechanism in place at national level or legally decentralised to service authorities that 1. ensures protection of consumer rights, 2. regulates tariffs and 3. regulates service levels. NCIC is for technical registration, NWRA has mandates to look at water resources management including water quality but currently it has no capacity and WASAMA looks at performance indicators for the water board but has no mandate to regulate tariffs.
- There are service level standards and performance targets in place in the sector covering urban water supply under WASAM but not rural areas. There is a tariff calculation that water boards use for urban water supply in rural water supply there are WUWA manuals that give guidance but for boreholes communities agree on the tariff that should be used.
- There is no entity responsible for regulating uses monitoring data on service levels, tariffs and customer protection to guide performance management and apply effective enforcement that includes incentives and penalties which are not applied. NWRA is not fully functional is not able to carry out mandate in terms of enforcement of standards.

#### 3.4.2 District

- There is no effective regulatory mechanism in place, water tariffs for boreholes are just agreed amongst the communities. WUWAs have guidelines that are in their training manuals for the setting up of tariff. The water board have a mechanism in place that they use. The Water Resources Management Act 2013 that created the NWRA which is supposed to address some of the challenges in the sector has not yet being operationalised in spite of the Board being in place. CAM, CONGOMA, NWRA are ineffectiveness in dealing with WASH issues.
- There are performance targets at the national level but these are not reflected at district level. The challenge is that district councils are not well informed of the same. Policies and strategies are not shared and no meetings for orientation at the district level. There are those provided by WHO and Malawi Bureau of Standards but the application of the same has been a challenge and lack of monitoring of the same at the district level.
- There are tariff regulations and tariff calculation guidelines in place in the sector but the use has been difficult for rural water supply. GFS are there in terms of guideline in the manuals and but they are sidelined. At the district level there is no regulatory body may be at National

level the NWRA, there is very little that is being done by the centre level in terms of following-up, verification and regulation

### 3.4.3 Gaps/Challenges

- a) In spite of having the appropriate registration procedures in place, there are still a number of service providers that are not accountable to the communities when providing services related to WASH.
- b) There is lack of enforcement of standards due to lack of monitoring/supervision from both the national and district levels. This has resulted in poor delivery of WASH services.
- e) There is no mandated body for the WASH Sector that is responsible for ensuring protection of consumer rights, regulating tariffs and regulates service levels especially for the five water boards in Malawi.
- f) NWRA has taken a long time to be fully functional since the enactment of the Water Resources Management Act of 2013 and the board of directors instituted in 2019. The other associated sub-catchment agencies that are supposed to be created and functional cannot move in the absence of the NWRA.
- g) WASH performance targets are not harmonised between the national and the district levels. The sector needs to adapt the SDGs indicators and targets and the localisation process of the same that is led by the Planning Section in Ministry responsible for WASH should be finalised.

### 3.5. Monitoring

The monitoring systems used by all WASH agencies should aim to strengthen local and national monitoring systems, and, where these systems are available and sufficiently robust, to use them for their own monitoring.

Monitoring	Data collected from monitoring	Monitoring framework and indicators	Sector monitoring frameworks speak to	CSOs and donors in sector are required to	monitoring include service delivery	monitoring system is regularly updated	Score
Question	1	1	1	1	1	1	6

The figure above shows there is need for the sector concerted efforts to ensure that monitoring is embedded in the planning processes for all WASH programming. The following were the findings from the responses: -

#### 3.5.1 National

- Data is collected for monitoring is not effectively analyzed, that is intended to be learned from and feeds into planning, budgeting, and policy development at sector level. The challenge is access to mWater data by other stakeholders has not yet been sorted out by government. For the water boards a lot of data is collected.
- There is no sector monitoring framework established, with clear indicators that is aligned to SDGs and processes/mandates, covers water/sanitation/hygiene, and is operational in most/all parts of the country. Efforts have been made to localise the SDGs Indicators and the sector started on the same but the targets have not yet been finalised.
- The sector monitoring frameworks do not speak to each other for example between sector monitoring frameworks and are not used across the associated ministries. CSOs and donors in sector are required to align and to feed into the sector monitoring systems, WESNet championing the same facing a lot challenges.
- Sector monitoring does not include service delivery indicators for example service levels, service provider performance, service authority performance, and covers all service provider

types. The water boards have comprehensive service delivery indicators. The monitoring system is not regularly updated, with clear plans and budgets and capacities in place for its updating.

- It was stated that the monitoring system is not even there to start with hence we cannot talk of updating and mWater that is being developed is not fully functional. It has been very difficult to have a comprehensive monitoring system or one monitoring framework for the sector.

### 3.5.2 District

- At the district level there is an M&E Framework developed by the Ministry of Local Government. It has been observed that SDGs WASH indicators have not yet been localised. Most of the district councils are not aware of the SDGs WASH indicators. The district would have preferred to share reports with the national level on a monthly basis but the national only ask the district to submit reports only when it is time for the JSR.
- The sector monitoring frameworks do not speak to each other because the data collection and analysis systems are different and trying to have them harmonised is a challenge.
- CSOs and donors in sector are required to align to and feed into the sector monitoring systems but this is not done because CSOs and donors come to the districts with already developed plans and designed projects and indicators are not aligned.

### 3.5.3 Gaps/Challenges

- The WASH sector has no comprehensive Management Information system hence an M&E Framework that is agreed by all stakeholders. This make all efforts for data collection and analysis difficult.
- The mWater App that been used for the collection of data for water point mapping with funding from Scottish Government through the University of Strathclyde has been seen as a way forward in the establishment of the sector MIS. The challenges are access by other stakeholders has not been given and trainings for the use of the data for planning and monitoring has not been given.
- Harmonisation of the M&E frameworks that are there from different ministries and agencies that are working in the WASH Sector at all levels has been a challenge. This has made the monitoring of WASH indicators and targets difficult.
- There is no allocation for M&E at the district level this makes it difficult for data collection for updating of the WASH facilities that are in the district. The NGOs working in the districts should be proactive in ensuring the support to the districts for doing the same.

## 3.6. Water Resources Management

To establish a clear understanding of water resources available at national and district levels (available resources, water quality, demand and multiple uses) to allow evidence based planning and implementation, and potentially to establish a baseline for subsequent monitoring. Planning and decision making for water supply services needs to take account of the amount and quality of water available, current demand, likely future demand, threats to water availability and quality and trends.

Water Resources Management	development plans and target	Protocols, mandates & capacities in place	SPs being knowledgeable on preserving water	Forums / platforms exist	national and sub-national WRIs	There is a legal framework in place	Score
Question	1	1	1	1	1	1	6

The figure above shows that there is need for taking water resources management in all the planning for the investments in the sector. The following were the findings from the responses by all stakeholders: -

### 3.6.1 National

- In general sector development plans and targets that take into account water resources availability and multiple uses of water but there is lack of capacity at the district level to do the same. For construction of piped water system river flow data is analysed. The Blantyre Water Board Mulanje Water Supply Project experienced conflict between Government and communities on adequacy of the quantity of water from Ruo River as communities were expecting to benefit from the same.
- Water Quality has been an issue in the sector, with the increased awareness of the consumers of their right to portable water, it was observed that there is no systematic water quality monitoring apart from tests that are done before commissioning. NWRA/Water Resources Section in the ministry were supposed to be responsible for doing the same but there is no capacity at all levels in the ministry. Water Boards have a comprehensive systematic water quality testing procedures that are implemented.
- Service Providers are knowledgeable on how to preserve water quantities and qualities, and are implementing measures to action the same such as catchment protection, water safety planning. Water Boards have knowledge on the same and measures are being taken to address the same. Others are not knowledgeable and the NWRA is supposed to lead but currently it has no capacity and not fully operational.
- Forums/platforms do exist at the national and decentralised level which effectively provide space for dialogue on water resources between different types of water users, and water supply users are adequately represented. At the district level the DCT meetings and for the national level the annual JSR meetings and WASAMA annual conferences even though these are not adequate.
- NWRA is only at national level and is not fully functional. NWRA, Sub regional catchment are there but are not capacitated. Water Resources Act of 2013 but the act has not been fully disseminated at all levels due to lack of coordination amongst stakeholders. The NWRA secretariat carries out some of the functions of the NWRA.

### 3.6.2 District

- At the national protocols, mandates and capacities are in place but not at the district level. The water quality monitoring at regional and national levels are done but not at the district level due to lack of capacity and funds. The districts would like to be capacitated to be able to perform the function.
- JSR at national level do as well even though the reports are not shared with the district level stakeholders. At the district level there is no focus on Water Resources Management as issues are handled at the national level and information do not trickle to the districts. There are committees that look after our rivers and Gravity Fed systems that are in place and the issue is the institutions that are mandated to address the challenges for water resources management are not fully functional at all levels. These are the NWRA, Shire River Basin and Songwe River Basin.
- There is a legal framework in place that clearly defines priority and processes relating to water resources rights, allocation and regulation, we have the registration Water Resources Act of 2013 though not widely shared at the district level. At the centre level the water resources but not at the district not much influence.

### 3.6.3 Gaps/Challenges

- a) There should be close collaboration between the Ministry responsible for WASH with the Water Boards in assessing the viability of the boards to take over some of the gravity fed systems that supply rural communities for improved service delivery.
- b) Water Resources Management in Malawi should be high on the agenda considering environmental degradation that is taking place in our water catchments. Forums/platforms do exist at the national and decentralised level are not adequate for addressing the issues.

- c) NWRA should exercise its mandate in the management of water resources to ensure that the water resource is available for water supply and economic development. Unless water is treated as an economic good not a free give gift it is going to be difficult for the sector to meet SDG 6.
- d) Water quality testing for rural water supply is a challenge and a systematic framework for water quality testing should be put in place for the protection of the consumers at the community level. The districts are better located to implement and manage the framework.

### 3.7. Planning

Planning helps stakeholders to think beyond the day to-day problem solving and define a shared and desired future state of the district with respect to WASH. In some instances, a planning exercise starts with building district-level awareness of national WASH targets and commitments, and how they need to be translated down to the community level. This is important, as district stakeholders are not always aware of global or national commitments.

Planning	guidelines for development of WASH	planning processes is coordinated	targets in place and aligned	The sector plan outlines	The sector plan is operational	There is connectedness and coherence	Planning & budgeting effectively linked	Score
Question	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7

The figure above shows that there need for improved approach to planning for the effective delivery of WASH programmes. The following were the findings from the responses by all stakeholders: -

#### 3.7.1 National

- The District Wide Approach / Agenda For Change partners are working in few districts supporting districts to develop District Wide WASH sector Investment plans, it would be helpful if tools and lessons learnt from these pioneer districts can be shared and help inform what Government is working on together with AFDB in 5 other districts.
- There are no sector guidelines for development of WASH infrastructure/services in place which clearly states procedures for accountability and user consultations in the planning process, including planning to factor in willingness and ability to pay for services. It was observed that the guidelines are not enforced and not operationalised.
- ADB, WB and UNICEF coordinate their planning with Government but others do not. Donors have more powers and others do not coordinate with government because they drive their own agendas. There is room for improvements in the way this is being conducted.
- There are no sector targets in place and aligned with the nationally set SDG targets, and the national sector plan is not in place on how to achieve these targets. As the sector level there is still focus in increasing the access not on sustainability. Maintenances of water facilities is left to communities to struggle with as in most cases, communities do not have funds for O&M.
- The sector plan is not operational, and it is not being used for sector planning and budgeting, its progress to achievement is not monitored, all stakeholders are not required to report against achievement to the plan, and it is not periodically reviewed and updated. It is known that annual JSR meetings have not been helping the sector as discussions on the issues at the JSR have not been conclusive.
- There is some level of connectedness and coherence between sector level and district level planning and target setting. Planning and budgeting at the sector level is to some extent effectively linked with, and based on, monitoring data and learning. There are challenges that need to be addressed such as resource allocation and political interferences.

### 3.7.2 District

- The sector planning processes are coordinated with donors at the national level and for the health sector at the district level UNICEF has been doing it and more donors NGOs should be doing the same. It has been observed that NGOs and donors come up with their own plans that have already been made to the districts.
- The sector plan does not outline how services will be sustained, not only how to increase access to services because as we are our targets have not yet been aligned with the SDG targets. The sector plans do not include the sustainability components such as AMs and WPC trainings. AMs, WUAs and WPC have not been fully supported. Budgets are made to the ceilings and implementation of the budgets is the challenge.
- Sector plan is not operational as it can be see that at the district level funding of the ORT for the WASH Sector is very minimal and is done just to fulfill an obligation. DSIP that prepared at the district level are funded by donors and NGOs and are not marketed.
- Planning and budgeting at the sector level is not effectively linked with, and based on, monitoring data and learning as this depends on the area and sector. Government/Treasury only pays initial investment and O&M is paid by the district and communities.

### 3.7.3 Gaps/Challenges

- a) There are gaps in terms of not having accountability procedures in the implementation of sector guidelines for the development WASH infrastructure. This leads to lack of enforcement of the guidelines and user consultation in the planning process is not done.
- b) The lack of consultations during the planning of programmes from central government, NGOs and donors with the district councils has resulted in challenges in the implementation of activities at the district and community levels.
- c) The CBM model that is being used for rural water supply has left a lot burden to the communities for the O&M of the water points. In spite of the training that is given to the communities during the construction of the water point sustainability is far from being achieved.
- d) Planning and budgeting at the sector level is not effectively linked with, and based on, monitoring data and learning. The gatherings that are in the sector do not allow for such cross learning to happen.

## 3.8. Learning & Adaptation

Learning and adaptation are key for the sharing of experiences and knowledge for improved sector outcomes, and may be used to pilot new approaches, with the aim of scaling-up those which are proven to be effective. Through periodic reviews and evaluations, efforts should be made to document lessons learned throughout the implementation of programmes. Periodic reflection and learning, through coordination or learning groups, helps to strengthen the sector, and enables best practice to be scaled-up, stimulating upscaling to other areas and even internationally. The process of change must be documented.

Learning & Adaptation	Platform(s) exist at the level where stakeholders feel	Platforms/forums exist and institutionalised	A repository is in place and updated in the sector	Learning activities linked to monitoring, planning,	Score
Question	1	0	0	1	2

The figure above shows as sector we are not doing well in this area and this just demonstrates how ineffective our platforms are. The following were the findings from the responses by all stakeholders: -



### 3.8.1 National

- Platform(s) exist at the national level where stakeholders feel they have the 'space' to openly share positive and negative experiences and these SWG, TWG and JSR but functionality is the issue. WASAMA taken a leading role in the organisation annual conferences. it would have been better if there were quarterly and biannual sector review events.
- Platforms/forums exist and institutionalised for periodic sharing of learning WESNet planned to fund local NGOs to participate in national conferences this was aimed at learning and exchange of knowledge and experiences.
- Repository is no in place and not updated in the sector and is widely done. WESNet is supposed to be implementing the same but there is need for government leadership.
- Learning activities are not linked to monitoring, planning, and policy/guideline development, and do not leads to adaptation of approaches or activities. There is room for improvements as at national level initiatives that are done by different organisations have not been adequately supported.

### 3.8.2 District

- The sharing of information is a challenge for example the previous JSR report has not been shared up to now. In some districts the DCT meetings are held quarterly but they do not discuss sector documents and the document should be shared. DEC partners come to report and share experience.
- Repository is not in place in the sector that is updated and the sector meet periodically. The universities and national level research institutions should have been leading on this but this does not take place in the sector. Education academic institutions do not share their research findings even through emails.
- The sector learning activities are not linked to monitoring, planning, and policy/guideline development. In our country at national there are consultant that conduct a lot evaluation but the reports are not widely shared and the same research findings and papers.

### 3.8.3 Gaps/Challenges

- a) Platforms/forums that exist and are institutionalised for periodic sharing of learning, at the district and national levels are not effective as most of the agreed action points are not implemented.
- b) Sharing of information is a challenge for example the previous JSR report has not been shared up to now to both national and district level stakeholders.
- c) Repository is not in place in the sector that is updated and the sector to meet periodically to share the same. WESNet efforts for doing the same should be led by government.
- d) Sector learning activities are not linked to monitoring, planning, and policy/guideline development. Deliberate efforts should be made by all stakeholders led by government to enhance sector learning.

## 3.9. Overall Assessment

The overall assessment in the graph on the next page shows that the sector is doing well in infrastructure in that regulations are there but we have a challenge with enforcement of the guidelines. We have not fared well on finance and this confirms the long outstanding challenge of lack of financing for the sector. Learning and Adaptation has been another challenging Building Block as it can be seen from the graph, we are not doing well as a sector and there need for all the sector players to get involved in the achievement of the same.

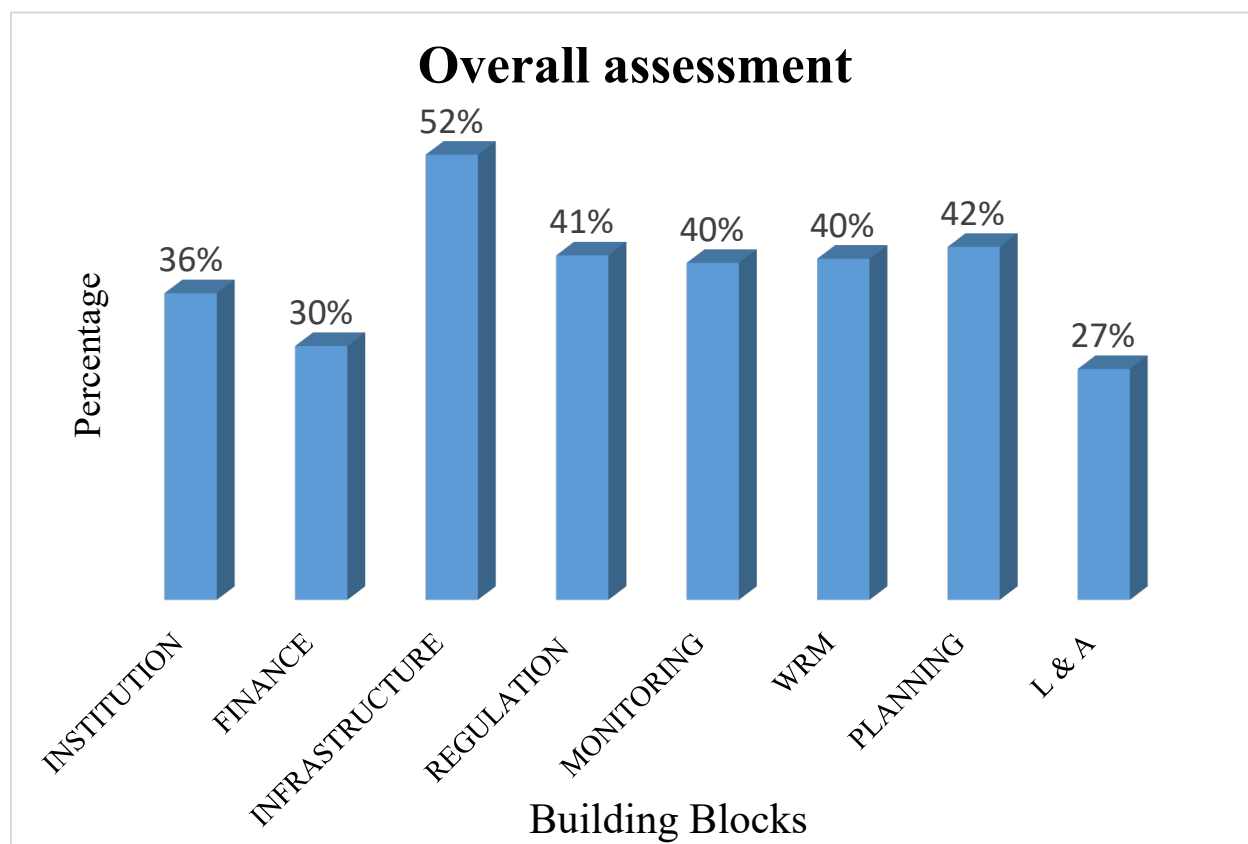
Overall it can be seen from the graph on the next page that as a sector we are not doing well in all the eight Building Blocks. The average percentage is 48% which is say 50% as this was observed during the interview that I conducted. It is important going forward we have to look at the gaps and come up with an action plan on how the gaps can be addressed



	Institutions	Finance	SDM Infrastructure	Regulation & Accountability	Monitoring	WRM	Planning	Learning / Adaptation	Total Score	Max Score
Score	5	5	6	4	6	6	7	2	41	106
Expected Maximum Score	16	14	14	14	14	12	14	8	106	

The figure above is the overall national assessment of the Building Blocks that was carried out using the frequency score mode. Even though it may be seen as if sector is doing well in planning as shown by green. The overall assessment shows that as a sector we need to do more to ensure that the achievement of the SDG6 target is made possible.

An Action Plan has been developed from the findings of the nation assessment of the Building Blocks that has focused on how the Agenda For Change Partners and other are going to support Government to provide the required leadership in planning. Implementation and monitoring of the sector programmes.



From the graph above, the overall assessment shows as though the sector is doing well in infrastructure as it was observed that regulations are but the sector has challenges in the enforcement of the regulations and guidelines. The sector has not scored well on finance and this confirms the long outstanding challenge of lack of financing for the sector. Learning and Adaptation has been another challenging Building Block as it can be seen from the graph, the sector is not doing well and there is need for all sector players to get involved in the achievement

of the same. The average score from the graph is 39% which is not a good score for the sector and more work needs to be done to improve the situation.

## 4.0 Recommendations

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Based on discussions in the report and consultations that the Consultants made with key stakeholders in the sector that included a total number of seventeen people comprised of nine from the national level and 8 from the district level, the Consultant is making eight key recommendations as follows: -

**Institution:** - WASH policies and strategies should widely be shared especially at the district level. The very high vacancy rate at both the national 67% and district levels that has made the delivery of WASH services to be ineffective should be addressed by government. The gains that were made in the coordination mechanisms should be addressed by government, NGOs and donors. In the achievement of the same government leadership is key and the ministry responsible for WASH should provide the required leadership. The Agenda for Change / DWA partners should support government to take up the leadership role by involving Government in planning and monitoring of sector activities at the national and district levels.

**Finance:** - The finance strategies that are in place should be linked to monitoring framework that is available in order to attract the required resources for meeting SDG 6. Adequate financing for the WASH should be made in order to attract investments for meeting SDG 6 targets to meet the required levels of WASH services to communities. Life cycle costing analysis for WASH infrastructure should be done when making the investments for both boreholes and piped water scheme. Boreholes functionality should seriously be looked at by the sector by conducting research in resolving the challenges. The agenda for change partners need to look for solutions to curb high non-functionality rate and recommend to Government. The Agenda for Change partners should collaborate with existing structures that are already pushing on increase sector financing like the SWA country collaboration group, UNICEF and use current initiatives to make sure that there is clear financing strategy to reach SDG 6. 1 and 6.2

**SDM Infrastructure:** - Adequate supervision and inspection should be provided during the construction of WASH infrastructure especially at the district level through the provision of the required capacity and resources. Corruption should be eliminated in the procurement of WASH infrastructure by abiding to the procurement procedures/guidelines that are in place. Additional capacity that is required in procurement at all levels should be provided. Enforcement of guidelines is required at all levels to ensure adherence to the standards as stipulated in a number of manuals in the sector that are aimed at guiding the sector operation in order to bring efficiency in service delivery.

**Regulation and Accountability:** - Enforcement of standards should be done through the monitoring/supervision of all the WASH activities at the national and district levels that should ensure the delivery of high quality WASH services. Government should complete the establishment of body for the WASH Sector that is mandate to have the responsible for ensuring protection of consumer rights, regulating tariffs and regulates service levels especially for the five water boards in Malawi. NWRA speedy functionality is critical for the implementation of the Water Resources Management Act of 2013 as well as the other associated sub-catchment agencies that are supposed to be created and functional as part of the NWRA.

**Monitoring:** - **Agenda for change partners should support Govt. to set clear SDG 6 local targets, indicators and a system for monitoring progress.** The mWater App that has been

used for the collection of data for water point mapping with funding from Scottish Government through the University of Strathclyde should be upgraded for the establishment of the sector MIS. Government should come up the modalities for ensuring that mWater data is easily accessed by all stakeholders and the Climate Justice Fund Programme through the University of Strathclyde should ensure that trainings for the use of the data for planning and monitoring have been given to government, NGOs and donors. Harmonization of the M&E frameworks that are there from different ministries and agencies that are working in the WASH Sector at all levels should be done with Government leadership that should make the monitoring of WASH indicators and targets possible.

**Water Resources Management:** - The Agenda for Change partners should support Govt. to ensure that NWRA is fully functional through engagements. Advocate for Water Resources Management in Malawi should be high on the agenda considering the environmental degradation that is taking place in our water catchments. Forums/platforms that exist at the national and decentralized level be strengthened and increased for addressing the issues on Water Resources Management. The full operationalization of the NWRA should be speeded/completed in order for it to exercise its full mandates in the management of water resources to ensure that the water resource is available for water supply and economic development. Water should be treated as an economic good not a free given gift for the sector to meet SDG 6 targets.

**Planning:** - DWA and Agenda for Change partners should finalize tools for District Wide Approach including District WASH Sector Investment Plans and share with Government and other Sector players for validation and Scaling up. There is need to support government to put in place sector targets and aligned with the nationally set SDG targets, and a national sector plan in place on how to achieve these targets. Additionally, the partners to support government to ensure that the sector plan outlines (and budgets for) how services (including water and ODF) will be sustained, not only how to increase access to services.

Previously National WASH sector investment plans have been developed but not operationalized. It will be helpful this time around that the sector plan is operational, it is used for sector planning and budgeting, progress to its achievement is monitored, all stakeholders required to report against achievement to the plan, and it is periodically reviewed and updated

Planning and budgeting at the sector level is effectively linked with, and based on, monitoring data and learning

**Learning & Adaptation:** - **DWA/Agenda for Change partners should embrace documentation of lessons learnt and share among themselves wherever necessary. The documents should further find a way through to other** Platforms/forums that exist and are institutionalized for periodic sharing of learning, and experiences should be improved in the way they conduct their business both at district and national levels to enhance their effectiveness. The terms of references governing their operations should be reviewed by having clear indicators for the achievement of their objectives. Systematic sharing of information should be enhanced by ensuring that JSR reports are circulated in a timely manner to all national and district level stakeholders.

## 5.0 Conclusion

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The findings of the national assessment for the Building Blocks that has been done both at the district and national levels through interviews held with key sector stakeholders at national and district levels reflects the current sector dynamics and situations.

There is a high vacancy rate of 67% in the ministry which has been highlighted by all the people that were interviewed. There are lots of the gaps for the middle and lower levels of staff, the capacity at the high level such as directors and deputy directors is there. The ministry has undergone a long period of lack of leadership due to the absence of a Principle Secretary specifically for the Water Department and this has affected sector coordination mechanisms.

Sector budgets in parliament are not justified using sector performance data. The budgets having being presented in parliament they are discussed in various parliamentary committees but not based on sector performance data. Funding for the sector is low especially for sanitation is very low for the achievement of SDG6. In spite of the fact that the budgets are drafted by the department and sent to the Ministry of Finance and debated in Parliament no where has the use of the sector performance has been stipulated.

Project delivery models and procurement procedures for capital investment projects are clearly defined in government sanctioned manuals. There is the ODPP that is in place with all the required mandate and guidelines. It has been observed that for donor funded projects the guidelines are well enforced. There are cases of miss-procurement/corrupt practices that have been observed for the procurement of WASH capital projects, goods and services.

There is no effective regulatory mechanism in place at national level or legally decentralised to service authorities that 1. ensures protection of consumer rights, 2. regulates tariffs and 3. regulates service levels. NCIC is for technical registration, NWRA has mandates to look at water resources management including water quality but currently it has no capacity and not fully functional and WASAMA looks at performance indicators for the water boards but has no mandate to regulate tariffs.

There is no sector monitoring framework established, with clear indicators that is aligned to SDGs and processes/mandates, that covers WASH, and is operational in most/all parts of the country. Efforts have been made to localise the SDGs Indicators and the sector started on the same but this has not yet been finalised.

Water Quality has been an issue in the sector, with the increased awareness of the consumers of their right to portable water, it was observed that there is no systematic monitoring water quality testing for rural water supply facilities apart from the water quality tests that are done before commissioning. NWRA/Water Resources Section in the ministry were supposed to be responsible for doing the same but there is no capacity at all levels in the ministry. Water Boards have a comprehensive systematic water quality testing procedures that are implemented.

The sector plan is not operational, and it is not being used for sector planning and budgeting, its progress for the achievement of SDG 6 targets is not monitored, all stakeholders are not required to report against achievement to the plan, and it is not periodically reviewed and updated. It is known that the annual JSR meetings have not been helping the sector as discussions on the issues at the JSR have not been conclusive.

Platform(s) exist at the national level where stakeholders feel they have the 'space' to openly share positive and negative experiences and these are SWG, TWG and JSR but functionality is the issue. WASAMA taken a leading role in the organisation of annual conferences. it would have been better if there were quarterly and biannual sector review events.

As a sector we have got a long way to address the gaps that have been identified through the national assessment of the Building Blocks in Malawi. There is need to work together as a team to address the challenges identified.

### 6.1 Terms of Reference

#### 1.1 Background

##### *The Challenge*

In the last 20 years, Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) work in Malawi has focused on addressing individual elements of service delivery, such as infrastructure or behavior change but has not focused on understanding the WASH system and everything contained within it, which enables people to access services on a permanent basis. For instance, there has often been significant investment in new infrastructure, or large-scale communication under CLTS programs, but often limited attention to the underlying conditions necessary for underpinning universal and sustainable service delivery. There has been too little commitment to post-implementation support for example, with a lack of adequate attention or financing for maintenance. So, while there has been investment, and there are now over 100,000 improved water points in Malawi, technically enough to provide a reasonable service to most of the population, if 30% of all water points end up not functioning at any given time, this is a huge waste of much of that investment. Why has this happened? Primarily because a comprehensive analysis of the WASH system has not underpinned the vast majority of investments made in the sector.

With the shift from MDGs to the SDGs, we are also challenged to recognize that basic access to WASH is not sufficient, as the focus shifts to safely managed, sustainable service delivery. This includes more attention and action for financing, maintenance, planning and evidence-based decision making (through monitoring).

##### *Efforts to date*

An informal collaboration for strengthening WASH systems at district level has been active since late 2018. It started with a workshop at Lilongwe Hotel that brought together the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development (MOAIWD) and Ministry of Health officials, representatives of local government in three districts, as well as the national level, and participants from implementing agencies, notably international NGOs (Care, WaterAid, Water For People, World Vision, Onse (the USAID funded project) Base Flow, University of Strathclyde-Climate Justice Fund Project, WeltHungerhilfe (WHH), WES NETWORK, Interaide and UNICEF. Concepts of systems strengthening, including the background to developing **a district roadmap**, for universal WASH services were introduced, **and a quick and dirty sector strength assessment** (using building blocks analysis) was carried out, looking both at specific districts and from the national perspective.

The Participants were tasked with diagnosing the status of the WASH system, using a building block checklist tool. The checklist asks a number of questions for each of the eight 'building blocks', and automatically generates a summary score. The Summary scores from the group work for one example district is shown in Figure 1

	Institutions	Finance	SDM Infrastructure	Regulation & Accountability	Monitoring	Water Resources Management	Planning	Learning & Adaptation	Total Score	Maximum Score
Score	4		4	4	4	5	3	4	29	86

Figure 1: Scores from group work on building block status in one example district

This scoring highlights gaps in the system across a number of areas, with the total score of the system reaching only 29 of a possible score of 86. This shows the range of challenges in the WASH system at district level, which will continue to undermine sustainability and progress to the SDGs, unless they are adequately addressed.

Based on those deliberations, an Agreement was reached for three agencies (WaterAid, World Vision and Water For People), to provide support to four districts of Machinga, Zomba, Ntcheu and Chiradzulu in developing a district roadmap, and work on sharing lessons and approaches. During the year WeltHungerhilfe (WHH) joined the collaboration meetings and is supporting an additional district-Dedza. The experiences over this last year have resulted in a consolidated approach for district-level systems strengthening through a roadmap commonly understood as District WASH Investment plans.

### The need for systems strengthening

There is no question that the world is at a point in history, which will be remembered for some time. We do not yet understand the full implications of the COVID virus on human health, or economic and political systems more broadly. What we do know is that it has heightened people’s awareness of the importance of “systems” in all countries, and how the strength of those systems plays an important role in determining the outcomes and impacts of the virus, for the people in those countries. With COVID the importance of access to water and sanitation services is also being highlighted, and we know that access to those services forever is dependent on a strong and effective system to ensure those services are always available.

The importance of WASH has never been better understood, and for the first time in a generation, we can see that WASH is part of the solution. As donors prioritize COVID responses, we are among the organizations in a position to benefit. And we need to make sure that we do this, and framing our responses in the context of systems strengthening, increasing the resilience of systems, to reduce the vulnerability of some of the most vulnerable, maybe only in time for the next pandemic, is a compelling message.

There are many ways in which the WASH system in Malawi could be strengthened including:

Supporting more districts in applying a roadmap process and in building comprehensive district WASH plans, for infrastructure as well as on-going costs. In order to get to that, the experiences that have been developed so far, need to be consolidated into a government-endorsed approach, which other actors, can follow. Moreover, direct support to additional districts is needed.

At a national level, the previous quick and dirty sector analysis provided some useful understanding. In monitoring we know the Scottish government funded program, has captured information across the whole country on current service status, sometimes over consecutive years. It would be extremely valuable if this data was actively used for tracking SDG progress as well as to inform sector investment decisions, and could be contributed to, and used by all stakeholders. In financing there are still major gaps in

financing requirements, especially for fecal sludge services and institutional WASH. In terms of the financial sustainability of services, there are various different service contract models being used for rural services, with handpumps and piped systems, and a concerted effort to promote and establish the most viable models would be valuable.

### ***Agenda for Change partners in Malawi***

The collaboration between WaterAid, World Vision, WHH, Water For People and Care has already gained some momentum in the last eighteen months and is well placed to build consensus among the civil society and support government to provide leadership in these efforts to strengthen the sector, and to provide greater coherence, to the many efforts, by many partners, that are currently being practiced in Malawi. It is from this background that the partners are looking for a consultant to:

- further support the development of a collaborative approach to system strengthening in Malawi.
- **Facilitate the development of a common understanding of the National Wash systems strengths and weaknesses, a system analysis**
- **Develop a collaborative plan to of action to strengthen specific areas in the system analysis**
- **A collaborative plan to engage other sector actors towards this common agenda**, to assess whether the current WASH Network, and collaborative processes has the capacity and willingness to move the agenda or how it is possible to develop a more effective mechanism for collaboration between A4C members, other INGOs and government.

## **1.2 Objectives of the Assignment**

The main objective of the assignment is to conduct a National WASH sector systems Strength and weaknesses analysis. Through Agenda for Change partner consultations and workshop facilitation to build consensus among the partners.

### **1.2.1 Consultations**

Using the agenda for change building blocks checklist discuss with the 5 Agenda for Change Malawi partners (WaterAid, WHH, Water For People, World Vision, Care and CRS) their understanding of the Building blocks and the strength and weaknesses of the same.

During consultations:

- a) Gather information on what Agenda for Change partners are doing in line with the 8 building blocks
- b) Challenges they face in engaging National government
- c) Consolidate issues and rank them
- d) Share with members before workshop

### **1.2.2 Workshop facilitation**



Using the finding prepare a 2-day workshop to share the findings and build a consensus among partners.

- a) Facilitate the agenda for Change partners workshop
- b) Share study results and builder consensus on the Malawi Wash sector systems strength and weaknesses
- c) Develop Key action plans that are

### 1.2.3 Report writing

Write the report with Key Action Plans

### 1.3 Assignment Time Frame and Deliverables

Deliverable	Time
1. Consultations	2 Man days
2. Consultations report	1 Man Day
3. Workshop Facilitation	2 Man Days
4. Final report	2 Man days

### 1.4 Consultant Requirements

Water For People intends to engage a well-qualified consultant or team of consultants to do this work. Minimum qualification for the Team Lead should be at least Master level education and at least 10 years of relevant field experience in the WASH sector at National level

### 1.5 Proposal Contents

Water For People intends to engage a well-qualified consultant or team of consultants to do this work. Qualified consultants are invited to submit a proposal for this assignment. The proposal, shall, as a minimum, include the following:

**Technical Approach.** The consultant should provide a description and timeline of the planned technical approach not to exceed ten pages.

**Experience.** The consultant should describe his/her experience, in a similar job with references.

**Individual Consultant Experience.** The consultant should include detailed CVs of the proposed team, highlighting the experience requested above.

**Financial Budget.** In a separate, clearly marked envelope. The consultant should present a financial proposal detailing gross costs for undertaking the assignment including operating expenses and taxes applicable.

**Due Date.** Electronic proposals shall be submitted to [Kharawa@waterforpeople.org](mailto:Kharawa@waterforpeople.org) no later than [redacted]

## 1.7 Basis of Selection and Evaluation Timeline

- TOR issued: June 30, 2020
- Proposals due (electronic version only – no hard copies needed): July 15, 2020
- Vendor/Consultant selected: July 30, 2020
- Contract executed & Notice to Proceed: August 10, 2020

## 6.2 Details of Stakeholders Interviewed

No	Name and position	Institution/ Organization	Date Interview	Role in office	coverage	Contact	Describe your interaction with the BBs
1.	Mercy Jalazi- Chief Economist	Water Development Department	16 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	Coordination of activities in the planning division. Responsible for preparations of budgets and programmes (PSIP)	National	Face to face	Attended one NGO meeting where these were mentioned.
2.	Thanacias Sitolo	Water Development Department	16 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	Capacity building for communities and districts. Ensures that districts have staff and technical experts and expertise to carry out their duties.	National	Face to face	He has had no interaction with BBs
3.	Willie Mwandira- National Coordinator	WESNet	16 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	Provide oversight in terms of the management of the secretariat. To coordinate the work of the Network. Advocacy, sharing of knowledge and learning.	National	Face to face	Yes, attended a SWA workshop held in 2019 where BBs were taught and shared. He was tasked to share presentation with other Sector Members.
4.	Lucy Mungoni- WASH Project Management Specialist	USID	17 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	Management Technical guidance to implementing partners	National	phone	We have for the achievement of SDGs for sustainability. System strengthening
5.	Jackson Mtungila- Infrastructure Development Manager	Northern Region Water Board	18 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	Managing of all the projects for the Board	National	Phone	First time
6.	Chimwemwe Nyimba-WASH Specialist	UNICEF	18 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	WASH Specialist from last year look at national issues and focal point for WASH Cluster	National	phone	For the first time

7.	Annie Msosa-Head of Programmes	WaterAid	22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2020	WAMA is leaving to what it is supposed to do in accordance to its Country Strategy.	National	phone	In WAMA they have their own Building Blocks that they are using as part of the Agenda For Change for SS.
8.	Eva Phiri- WASH Specialist	WHH	21 <sup>st</sup> September 2020	Responsible for the Dedza project. WASH in schools technical support	National	Phone	February 2019. DZ and WHH. Different organise that work together.
9.	Booker Way-Acting Distribution Director	Blantyre Water Board	21 <sup>st</sup> September 2020	Ensure water is not interrupted in Blantyre. Water, monitoring the distribution network for the Board	National	Phone	Yes in other context such as things that are being done at the Board
10.	James Mselera-DWDO	Department for Water Development	22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2020	To coordinated GW, WS, Hydrology	Thyolo district	Phone	For the first time
11.	Steve Meja-DWDO	Machinga District Council	22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2020	To ensure that communities have access to WASH Services, Coordination and monitoring	Machinga district	Phone	First Time
12.	Chripine Songola-DWDO	Chikwawa District Council	18 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	Management of WASH in the district. M&E is done	Lilongwe, Dedza and Ntcheu	phone	Yes he had been in contact with BBs and has participated and interfaced of sustainability
13.	Onances Nyirenda-DWDO	Nctheu District Council	22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2020	Coordination, planning, implementation and monitoring of WASH activities.	Nctheu District	Phone	Attended one training as preparatory activities to use BBs organised by the Partner implementing SS.
14.	Noel Zondola-Chief Preventive Health Officer	Ministry of Health Chiladzulu	22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2020	Planning, monitoring and coordination of preventative activities in the district.	Chiladzulu District	Phone	WHO training 2014/15 that was at the national level.

15.	Davie Bonga-DWDO	Water Department Machinga	22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2020	Oversee WASH services in the district. Represent the Ministry at the council. Supervising of works	Machinga District	Phone	One of the meetings a consultants UNDP in 2018
16.	Chikumbutso Mvula-DEHO	Ministry of Health Zomba	23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2020	Responsible for preventive health and food safety	Zomba District	Phone	Meetings like DEC and others. One thing can be used in other sectors as well such as the health sector as well.
17.	Rudolf Banda-DEHO	Ministry of Health-Dedza	20 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	Diseases control, promoting WASH, Food safety control	Dedza District.	Phone	Somebody made a presentation at Lilongwe Hotel in 2019 supported by WHH in passing.

