



EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF UN-HABITAT'S WATER AND SANITATION TRUST FUND

PART 1: SYNTHESIS REPORT

2011



UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

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Stein-Erik Kruse • Anton Rijdsijk • Zozan Kaya • Hugo Roche

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UN  **HABITAT**

External Evaluation of UN-HABITAT's Water and Sanitation Trust Fund

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United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)
P. O. Box 30030, 00100 Nairobi GPO KENYA
Tel: 254-020-7623120 (Central Office)
www.unhabitat.org

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Acronyms

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AfDB	African Development Bank
AMCOW	African Ministers Council of Water
APMCHUD	Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Human Settlement
CA	Cooperation Agreement
ENOF	Enhanced Normative & Operational Framework
LWV	Lake Victoria Water and Sanitation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
Microsan	Micro credit for Sanitation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSF	Multi Stakeholders Forum
MTSIP	The Medium Term Strategic and Institutional Plan
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
SEAMEO	South-East Asia Ministers of Education Office
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNON	United Nations Office in Nairobi
WAC	Water for African Cities Programme
WAC	The Water for Asian Cities Programme
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
W & S	Water and Sanitation
WSTF	Water and Sanitation Trust Fund
WATSAN	Water and Sanitation



Executive Summary

During the WSTF's Advisory Board meeting in 2010, the Government of Norway announced its intention to undertake an external evaluation of its support to the Trust Fund. Subsequently, the Governments of Norway, Spain and the Netherlands, in collaboration with UN-HABITAT, decided to undertake the evaluation jointly.

The purpose is to “to contribute to refinement, adjustments and improvements in the Trust Fund’s directions and practices”. The evaluation should be formative and forward looking, strategically-focused, build on existing information and evaluations and recognize the special situation for the Trust Fund – as funding from 2011 has been severely reduced and the Fund needs to reassess its role and make decisions about future direction.

The report consists of four chapters discussing to what extent WSTF has four characteristics which determine its performance:

- The ability to articulate and maintain an identity reflecting the purpose and strategies of WSTF and the comparative advantage of UN-HABITAT.
- The ability to organize and establish effective systems and procedures and ensure that human and financial resources are adequate.
- The ability to work effectively with and through partners.
- The ability to deliver and achieve results.

The final chapter presents the main conclusions and recommendations.

The evaluation used four different methods to collect data and information: (a) review of documents, (b) interviews with UN-HABITAT staff and key stakeholders, (c) visits to selected regions and countries (Mekong, Lake Victoria and India) and (d) a web-based survey obtaining feedback from staff and partners in all partner countries.

The team was requested to prepare a short synthesis. Such a report will not do justice to the broad and rich experience of the Trust Fund. The synthesis seeks to focus on issues of strategic importance. Hence, it is supplemented by regional and country studies providing more in-depth information and analysis. The studies can be found in Part 2 of the report and a summary in Annex 6 in this synthesis.



MAIN CONCLUSIONS

POLICY AND STRATEGY

The WSTF strategy and activities are highly relevant by focusing on water and sanitation - fundamental prerequisites in urban slum development, targeting the vulnerable and often neglected populations in small urban centers and poverty pockets in larger cities, forging a wide range of partnerships, focusing on innovation, learning and replicable models for dissemination and use and operating at global, regional and country level with combined operational and normative interventions.

WSTF was originally designed as a demonstration and pilot-testing programme but has spread its resources more widely, making it difficult to achieve impact in a few areas and in areas most relevant for learning and replication.

WSTF has prioritized the roles as model tester and service provider at community and municipal level in the Water for Cities programme and the two replicable model-setting initiatives.

The programme has played other roles to a varying extent:

- Gradually been involved at national level in sector reform processes, but sporadically and not as part of a strategic effort.
- Successfully supported regional and country network building – using its “convening power” as a UN agency.
- Been more involved in the application and testing of tools and methods than in applied research and generation of new knowledge.
- Maintained a strong operational focus in country and regional programmes, while the learning aspects have been weaker and not sufficiently integrated

in the operational work.

Given the limited financial resources, WSTF currently revolves around too many thematic areas and focus is somewhat blurred between normative and operational activities, learning/ documentation, software and hardware, global and regional/country programmes.

PROCESSES AND RESOURCES

The Trust Fund has helped establish a strategic programmatic approach with agreed and simplified planning and reporting procedures.

The Trust Fund has secured significant contributions from bilateral donors since 2004 (approximately USD 120m million) and 75 per cent of the funds have been provided as un-earmarked resources providing WSTF with important flexibility. The expected budget for 2011 was approx. USD 15million, but has been reduced with two thirds to USD 5million.

The withdrawal of support from the Government of Spain creates considerable reputational risks for the programme. WSTF has signed agreements which will either have to be cancelled or drastically reduced.

The multi-donor support to the Trust Fund has gradually been eroded as only the Norwegian Government provides currently core resources to the Fund.

WSTF is project- and activity-driven, partly as a result of how the programme is funded. Country strategies are missing and these would provide an overview of what WSTF does, why, with whom, how and where.

WSTF does not have a strong global monitoring and evaluation system which

would be learning tools to assess progress and performance on a regular basis in order to analyse what works and what doesn't.

PARTNERSHIPS

WSTF has successfully established a broad range of partnerships with governments, civil society, private sector, development banks and other donors.

However:

- There is scope for strengthening WSTF's participation in development partner coordination at country level.
- WSTF could have played a stronger role as "strategic influencer" at national and sector level.
- The partnerships between WSTF and the regional banks have been of mutual benefit and importance but more in programmatic than financial terms. The programme has helped fast track loans and given them more pro-poor qualities.
- WSTF should maintain its autonomy in all partnerships to analyse critically what works and what doesn't and support innovative learning.
- WSTF has, to a large extent, established its own presence in countries with Chief Technical

measured by means other than numerical indicators and long-term MDG impact.

Major stakeholders rate WSTF's performance as very high. A general response is that projects are making a substantial and direct impact from a relatively small investment. The projects are considered good value for money and a leverage effect on follow-up and complementary investments.

The programme has supported several global normative activities. Another type of evaluation would have been required to measure results of global and regional advocacy activities and documenting the results of capacity building.

WSTF has prioritized and achieved the best results as a model tester and service provider at community and municipal level. The programme has achieved significant results at community and municipal level.

However:

There is no information on long-term impact - mostly on outputs and outcomes at project level. It is not feasible to measure aggregate results at country, regional and country levels.

WSTF has supported a broad range of training events and prepared and introduced technical tools and guidelines

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