EHP Brief
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PROJECT

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the West Africa Water Initiative

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The West Africa Water Initiative (WAWI) was launched in late 2001. WAWI is a global partnership of fourteen institutions working together to provide potable water supply, sanitation, hygiene and integrated water resource management activities in Ghana, Mali and Niger.

The current 14 WAWI Partners include: the Conrad Hilton Foundation, World Vision, USAID, UNICEF, WaterAid, the World Chlorine Council, Winrock International, Lions Club International, the Cornell International Institute for Food, Agriculture and Development, the Desert Research Institute, the International Trachoma Initiative, the United Nations Foundation, Helen Keller International and the Carter Center.

Following a WAWI Partners' meeting in December 2002, USAID was requested to play a lead/coordinating role to develop a WAWI monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan. EHP was asked to develop the M&E plan and in particular to select a core set of indicators to measure progress toward WAWI's four objectives.

WAWI Objectives

The West Africa Water Initiative's four objectives are to:

- Increase the level of access for the poor and vulnerable populations to sustainable, safe water and environmental sanitation services.
- Reduce the prevalence of water-borne diseases, including trachoma, guinea worm, and diarrheal diseases.
- Ensure ecologically and financially sustainable management of water quantity and quality.
- Foster a new model of partnership and institutional synergy.

Process for Developing the M&E Plan

The process included the following steps:

- Gather existing M&E questionnaires, impact evaluation and other relevant information from WAWI partners at central and/or local levels.
- Obtain consensus from WAWI partners on their information requirements regarding indicators for the Initiative goals.
- Assess potential indicators. Analyze existing set of indicators to identify those that are most relevant to WAWI goals and objectives.
- Discuss with partners roles and responsibilities of specific organizations in collecting and reporting the required data.
- Identify, in collaboration with WAWI partners, data sources and collection methods including a schedule for data collection. Methodologies for data analysis and formulation of baseline targets were also identified.
- Select recommended indicators for discussion with partners. Present the set of indicators to a group of partner representatives and finalize the list of indicators with partners.

Core Indicators

The WAWI partners wanted a small, strategic set of indicators that could be commonly tracked and reported without additional burden to the programs. The following six core indicators were chosen:

- Percentage of target population with access to safe water
- Percentage of households in target communities with access to sanitation

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- Percentage of caretakers and food preparers who wash their hands properly with soap and at appropriate times
- Number of cases of water-borne and water-related diseases (guinea worm, trachoma)
- Percentage of sites where the pump did not operate for a maximum of ten days
- Work plans that were created and adopted by the respective country teams and annually updated.

Criteria for Core Indicators

The core indicators were selected based on the following criteria[1]:

- Direct—closely tracks the result it is measuring (validity is included here)
- Objective—unambiguous with clear definitions to be used consistently
- Practical—data can be collected in a timely manner and for a reasonable cost
- Adequate—the minimum number of indicators necessary to ensure that progress toward a result is sufficiently captured.

Other considerations in the selection process were:

- The cost in the collection of data and the availability of information in the WAWI program's interval
- The issue of comparability—that the indicator data could be compared over time and across programs.

Use and Interpretation of the M&E Plan

- The M&E plan is not meant to replace any existing M&E for the various program grants.
- The M&E plan is designed to be used by the WAWI Secretariat, to capture the sum or the results of the most significant activities being carried out by the WAWI partners in a cumulative manner.
- The set of identified indicators is simply a selection of essential results of the WAWI activities and is therefore not a comprehensive set of measurements.
- The M&E plan is designed to complement the information that is gathered in the individual WAWI grants and should be used in combination with the information in the WAWI partners' progress reports.
- Baselines for each indicator will need to be collected, analyzed, controlled for data quality and analysis, and documented. This process will be repeated for midterm and final evaluations.

Conclusion

The M&E plan is intended to be used as a starting point and not as a definitive plan—i.e., a "living" document for the WAWI partners and for the WAWI Secretariat. Indicators, operational definitions, and basic assumptions will most likely go through revisions and modifications by the users as tools are being applied and activities progress.

A full presentation of each indicator with an accompanying discussion, together with the M&E program framework, is presented in EHP Activity Report 124, along with recommended next steps for the implementation of the WAWI M&E plan.

The report *West Africa Water Initiative (WAWI), Monitoring and Evaluation Plan* can be downloaded from the EHP website: http://www.ehproject.org.

To request a hard copy of the report, please email info@ehproject.org.

For more information on WAWI, go to http://www.waterforthepoor.org/initiatives/wawi/wawi.htm.

[1] These criteria are standard criteria used throughout social science when judging the quality of a measurement. These particular criteria and their description are found in USAID guidance, TIPS #12 *http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/200/tips12.pdf*