

Anchoring the learning alliances within relevant sector institutions: a sense of ownership will be developed for both sustainability and, where necessary, policy change.



Pro-poor

WASHCost has a particular focus on identifying information and developing approaches that will allow the poor to access acceptable levels of service. Improving our understanding of real demand (willingness to pay) and ability to pay for different levels of services will allow better and more realistic setting of goals and targeting of subsidy.

'...It will be great for us to know the cost of sanitation and hygiene promotion....for project design and budgeting purposes'- Mrs. Theodora Adomako-Adjei (Extension Services Coordinator, CWSA)

WASHCost in Ghana

WASHCost in Ghana is being implemented by a partnership led by the Department of Civil Engineering (DCE) at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST). The partnership includes key sector actors such as the Water and Sanitation Directorates (WSDs), Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA), and civil society and private sector actors. Membership of the WASHCost Ghana Learning Alliance is open to all who are interested to take part.



For more information please contact

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WASHCost

GHANA

Quantifying the Cost of Delivering Safe Water, Sanitation and Hygiene(WASH) Services



"The WASHCost Project researches the life-cycle costs of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services in rural and peri-urban areas in Ghana. The rationale is that WASH governance will improve at all levels, as decision makers and stakeholders analyse the costs of sustainable, equitable and efficient services and put their knowledge to use."

THE WASHCOST PROJECT

Sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services are a crucial tool in the global fight against poverty and ill-health. Access to water and sanitation services are not just critical Millennium Development Goal (MDG) targets, but prerequisites for economic development, health, livelihoods and dignity.



Lack of accurate data, especially in rural and peri-urban areas, makes it impossible to estimate the true cost of extending sustainable and good quality water and sanitation services to the poor. Transparency about costs is needed to compare efficiency and value for money and to improve decision making.

The five year WASHCost project will collect and collate information relating to the **real disaggregated** costs of providing water, sanitation and hygiene services to poor people in rural and peri-urban areas, over the entire **service life-cycle**.

'Disaggregated' means that all the elements of providing and sustaining a service is detailed. Looking at the 'service life-cycle' implies focusing on the service people actually get rather than just on buying and installing pipes and equipment.

Building on partnerships in Ghana, Burkina Faso, Mozambique and India, WASHCost will involve decision makers and stakeholders in collecting and analyzing this data and will support them in using it to improve governance, planning and delivery of WASH services.

WASHCost will identify the most important factors that influence the costs of **developing** and **sustaining** services. Benchmark criteria will be developed for rural and peri-urban areas, so they can be analysed and compared inside and outside the country.

WASHCost is adopting a strategy based on the concept of **Learning Alliances**. This brings together key sector stakeholders (organisations and institutions with a stake in getting this right) to increase our understanding, to learn from each other and to influence policy and practice. The Learning Alliance will help to ensure that unit cost information is owned and used nationally. Decision support tools for using, sharing and upgrading WASH cost information will be developed and tested, in Ghana and worldwide. Unit cost information will become readily available for planning, budgeting and monitoring.

From system to service

The unit-cost information that currently exists relates almost exclusively to the costs of providing new water supply and sanitation systems. But what happens when systems need to be maintained, upgraded or rehabilitated? What does that cost, and who pays? Who pays for the planning and governance frameworks within which projects are implemented? WASHCost will identify costs for all elements of the service delivery cycle for different service levels, from point source (hand dug well or borehole) with hand pump to piped networks; from Community Led Total Sanitations (CLTS) to water closet. To do this it will look at the costs related to:

- Capital investment
- Operation and minor maintenance
- Major upgrading and rehabilitation
- Supporting institutions (providing an enabling environment)

The focus throughout will be on what it costs to provide and sustain a given **level of service** to a population.

The challenge:

After decades of work, most stakeholders in the WASH sector still do not know how much effective interventions actually cost, and how much they will cost to sustain in the future. Very broad cost ranges need to be better understood and narrowed down.

In the context of decentralization, local governments, utilities, NGOs and other service providers need strategies for improving coverage, particularly for the poorest, and for cost recovery that people can afford. WASHCost will provide the necessary data for proper planning, budgeting and decision making by local governments, donors and other agencies, for various levels of service.

'...Understanding the cost of providing sustainable WASH services is important for us' – Mr. Minta Aboagye (Director of Water, Water Directorate, MWRWH)

Impact and sustainability

The WASHCost project aims to make a real contribution to the effectiveness of the sector, both through its research and through its learning approach. It will achieve this through:

- Making **recurrent expenditure** more explicit: the adequacy of finance will be improved and service providers will be made more aware of the necessity of maintaining adequate levels of expenditure on operation and capital maintenance, at least until the benefits reach a level where people can fully support the service themselves.
- Building the capacity of local researchers, local governments and other stakeholders within the Learning Alliance: knowledge and ownership will be developed to maintain the process of data collection and use.
- Working at district level with existing projects and programmes to thoroughly test and prove tools and approaches in a 'real world' setting.