

Background

Deficient water and sanitation sector monitoring and reporting across Africa

Water in the context of African development agenda encompasses the full range of water management for social, economic and environmental purposes. It is the capacity to ensure water security through the provisions of infrastructure and institutional mechanisms to meet the needs of household water supply and sanitation, food and agricultural production, energy, transport, industry, mining, flood and drought mitigation, etc. as well as sustaining essential environmental functions. Tackling the climate change challenges and building resilient adaptation systems are part of this effort.

Lack of credible national and regional water and sanitation sector monitoring and reporting systems in Africa was widely recognised as a critical constraint for making informed decisions on the development and effective use of water resources in the continent. Water and sanitation sector monitoring and reporting systems in many African countries were considered deficient and this failure brought enormous opportunity costs in terms of loss of development opportunity and poor management of scarce water resources. In some countries monitoring systems were not set for reporting on progress towards politically agreed goals, and could not serve as basis for effective sector planning and development.

Further, with the global commitments related to Millennium Development Goals and now Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), African countries continued to receive demands from various agencies for monitoring and reporting. These demands led to duplication of efforts at various levels and stretched further the limited resources for monitoring and reporting at country and sub-regional levels.

A high-level commitment to improve monitoring and reporting

The issues of water and sanitation sector monitoring and reporting gained momentum at the African Union (AU) level, with the landmark Sharm El-Sheikh Commitments adopted at the July 2008 AU Summit. The AU Heads of State and Government, while affirming the Africa Water Vision 2025, specifically called on African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) to report annually to the Summit on the state of the continent's water resources. In December 2008, the Sirte Conference on Water for Agriculture and Energy reiterated the need for AU to design mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of the ministerial commitments.

To implement this mandate, it became clear to AMCOW that the development of monitoring and reporting capacity in Africa was a gradual process and it required a longer timeframe with active participation of Member States and all key stakeholders. From 2011 to 2015, AMCOW worked with the AUC, supported by BMZ-GIZ, to establish and implement a monitoring system based on an interim framework in response to the request from Sharm El-Sheikh and issued three annual reports using that system.

The current monitoring and reporting framework

In response to the need for a more comprehensive and harmonised approach, the AMCOW Secretariat, with support from the African Water Facility (AWF) hosted at the African Development Bank (AfDB), commenced an initiative for a web-based monitoring and reporting system under the project 'Establishment of a Monitoring and Reporting System for the Water Sector in Africa' implemented from late 2015 through 2016 with technical assistance from the UNEP-DHI Partnership (a full description of the monitoring framework can be found under the menu item '[Documents](#)' in the Framework and Guidelines document). The project conducted comprehensive consultations at several stages of the framework development and formulation involving Member States and all key stakeholders especially under the Monitoring and Reporting Task Force.

Approach for the current framework: Building on political commitments

The monitoring and reporting framework is designed based on a notion that it should provide a response to and follow-up on the political commitments made concerning water and sanitation at the continental level.

The framework, however, does not address all political commitments related to water, but rather distills and applies those with the most direct relevance for monitoring and reporting purposes. Generally, the framework incorporates tangible commitments and aspects hereof relevant to the post-2015 period. An important element covered is the commitments pertaining to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agreed by the UN assembly in 2015 especially as relating to SDG 6. All reasonable efforts have been made to liaise with the institutions leading the development of indicators and monitoring under the SDG development process. At the recommendation of political leaders in Africa, efforts have been made to align the Africa Water Sector and Sanitation Monitoring and Reporting System with the water and sanitation-related SDG targets and indicators. It is thus envisaged that while meeting the monitoring and reporting needs for the Heads of State and Government at the African Union level, countries will also have done the necessary data collection for reporting on the water and sanitation-related SDG's at the global level.

Organisation of the framework: Themes and sub-themes

The consultations with Member States and other stakeholders resulted in a thematic framework that covers all relevant aspects of the water and sanitation sector. Targets and indicators are organised according to this thematic framework, so that each sub-theme has one or more targets.

The targets are organised under seven themes and 28 sub-themes as follows:

| Theme | Sub-theme |
|---|--|
| 1. Water infrastructure for growth | 1.1 Water for energy 1.2 Water for agriculture 1.3 Water for industry 1.4 Water for municipal use 1.5 Transboundary water infrastructure |
| 2. Managing and protecting water resources | 2.1 Sustainable withdrawals 2.2 Sustainable supply 2.3 Water quality 2.4 Groundwater 2.5 Ecosystems |
| 3. Water supply, sanitation, hygiene and wastewater | 3.1 Water supply 3.2 Sanitation 3.3 Hygiene 3.4 Wastewater treatment |
| 4. Climate change and disaster risk reduction | 4.1 Climate change 4.2 Disaster risk reduction |
| 5. Governance and institutions | 5.1 Enabling environment 5.2 Institutions and participation 5.3 Management instruments 5.4 Transboundary cooperation 5.5 Ethics 5.6 Gender |
| 6. Financing | 6.1 Financing water supply and sanitation 6.2 Equitable tariff strategies 6.3 Financing for water resources development and management 6.4 Non-government financing |
| 7. Information management and capacity development | 7.1 Information management 7.2 Capacity development |

From commitments to targets and indicators

Following an analysis of relevant political commitments, a number of targets have been formulated so that they, to the highest degree possible, respond directly to one or more political commitments in a quantitative manner. In other words, the targets translate the political commitments and language into a measurable format. For details on the targets and associated indicators, see the menu item 'Indicator targets' in the [main menu](#).

Core indicators

There are 43 indicators labelled 'Core indicators' (having the prefix 'I' in the web site) that have a target associated with them. Quantitative targets are not necessary to perform monitoring and reporting but they ease the interpretation and assessment of progress made. In some cases political commitments have been made without clear reference to a quantitative target to be reached; in such cases the consultation process underpinning this framework agreed on quantitative targets to be applied for the monitoring and reporting.

Based on an analysis of the targets, one quantitative indicator has been defined and formulated for each target. Countries report on a number of parameters, which are used to compute the indicator values presented in this web-based monitoring system.

Water and Sanitation Facts

In addition to the core indicators which report on progress against a target, the framework also includes 35 background indicators without any associated targets (e.g. population density). These indicators are labelled 'Water and Sanitation facts' (having prefixes from 'A' to 'F' plus 'X') and provide a general overview of water-related issues in each country.

The facts which produce a background profile for each participating country are also presented as fact sheets, one per country, and these can be found under the menu item '[Documents](#)'.

Data collection process: the 2016 campaign

The framework includes the 43 core indicators and 35 water and sanitation facts, i.e. in total 78 indicators. The indicator values presented in this system are all calculated based on parameter values reported by countries themselves and owned by Member States through a dedicated and password-protected part of the website. Hence, no manual editing or transcription have taken place, thus minimising the risk of errors or misinterpretations.

In total, countries were requested to provide 155 parameter values that are necessary to calculate all 78 indicator values (for details on the parameters, indicators and calculation methods, see the Framework and Guidelines document under the menu item '[Documents](#)').

The data collection (the 2016 campaign) process began on 3rd October 2016 and lasted until 2nd December 2016. Following the data collection period, there was a month-long process of quality assurance and verification where a number of data entry mistakes and misunderstandings were corrected or clarified.

Despite the quality assurance conducted by AMCOW and the Technical Assistance team, the responsibility for all data remains that of the Member States' Monitoring and Reporting teams.

Terminology in referring to data sets: 2015 / 2016

The first round (campaign) of monitoring and reporting as described above was collected for the purpose of 'The 2016 Africa Water and Sanitation Sector Report'. Therefore, these data will be referred to as the 2016 campaign data. However, it should be noted that the data requested by AMCOW are data values as at the end of 2015 (or for the year 2015, as appropriate).

Regional calculations

In addition to national indicator values the system displays regional and continental indicator values. These values are calculated on the basis of the national values – for some indicators on the basis of weighted averages parameter values, for others on the basis of simple averages of national indicator values.

For example, regional indicator values for hydropower utilization (I-1.1a) are computed on the basis of weighted values of installed capacity and feasible potential (i.e. a country with high potential counts more than a country with low potential), whereas regional indicator values for gender aspects (I-5.6) are computed on the basis of simple averages across country indicator values (i.e. a small country counts as much as a big country).

The monitoring and reporting framework applies this regional grouping of countries:

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| North Africa | Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Saharawi Republic (Western Sahara), Tunisia |
| East Africa | Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda |
| Southern Africa | Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe |
| Central Africa | Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo Brazzaville, DR Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, São Tomé and Príncipe |
| West Africa | Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo |

Relative versus absolute indicator values

Many indicators are designed to show progress over time, e.g. I-1.2c agricultural water productivity. Here, the indicator value would be the relative change (in percent) in agricultural water productivity from a baseline value. However, because 2016 is the first year of application of the current monitoring and reporting framework, there is no baseline to compare with and no relative indicator value (change over time) can be calculated for 2016. Subsequent years will be able to monitor progress in terms of the relative change.

Therefore, these indicators have been displayed as absolute values (e.g. USD/m³ for agricultural water productivity) for 2016. This has the consequence that the indicator value for these indicators does not directly relate to the target (using here I-1.2c as an example):

Target: *Substantially increase agricultural water productivity*

The *relative progress* (change in percent since baseline) can be scored on a scale from 0 to 100%, with target set at 50%.

There is no target for the *absolute value* (USD/m³), so progress cannot be assessed and rated. For more details on relative versus absolute indicator values, see the Framework and Guidelines document under the menu item '[Documents](#)'.