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# IMPROVING INTEGRITY FOR BETTER PERFORMANCE

Evidence from integrity management processes in utilities, water institutions, and small system management committees

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# Higher customer satisfaction, faster service, and improved financial outlook and creditworthiness

The impact of Integrity Management in the water and sanitation sectors

Poor integrity is not an intractable problem; there are practical tools for financial controls, customer service or human resource management, that support integrity in water service delivery and proactively minimise corruption risks. **An integrity approach for utilities or water sector organisations can also enhance performance and directly support service delivery to those who need it most, while improving financial sustainability and creditworthiness.**

The Water Integrity Network (WIN) has a suite of integrity assessment and management tools to support service providers in strengthening integrity within their work processes. These adaptable tools have been developed, implemented and continuously improved with our network of WASH, finance, anti-corruption/integrity and development experts, including Caritas Switzerland, cewas, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ gmbH), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), KfW, the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), the Kenyan Water Services Regulatory Board (WASREB) and leading water utilities and organisations from Argentina to Zambia, with the support of WIN's donors.

Globally, these **integrity tools have been applied with over 130 organisations and/or community groups across Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America** in both rural and urban areas. The tools have been used to address, amongst other things, misuse of financial resources, poor human resources management and nepotism, low public trust, poor customer service, and compliance issues.

Water sector stakeholders that commit to strengthening integrity are better placed to become more effective organisations. **We have examples to demonstrate that measurable, positive change can be traced back to action for transparency, accountability, participation and anti-corruption** across a range of different contexts worldwide.



The **Integrity Management Toolbox for Small Water Supply Systems (IMT-SWSS)** is a set of resources

to guide long-term step-wise improvements in the performance of small or community-managed water supply systems in predominantly rural settings.

3 countries

+100 communities

1 adaptation in Cambodia for small irrigation systems

Since 2014



The **Integrity Management Toolbox (IMT) for utilities and water institutions** offers

a step-by-step process, guided by a trained coach, to identify and mitigate integrity risks in work processes.

18 countries

+25 utilities

serving

+5 million users

Adaptations for utilities, river basin organisations, SMEs, regulators, policy-makers

Since 2012



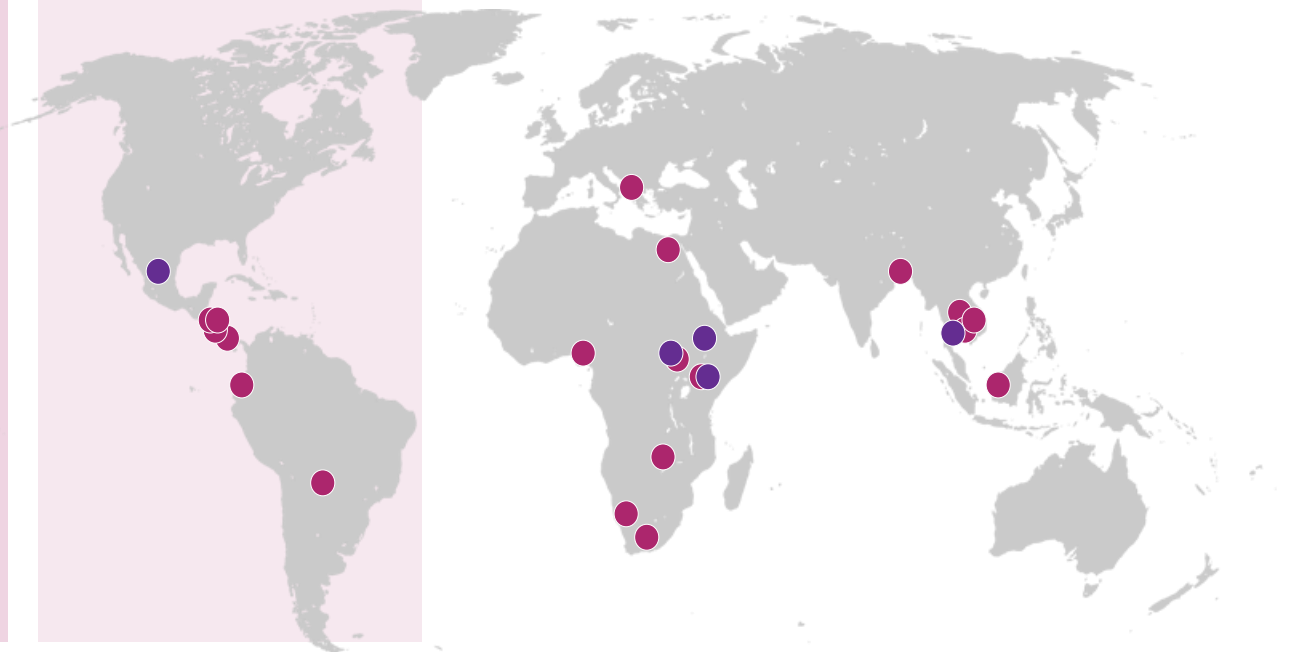
The **Integrity Assessment for Water Utilities** is a set

of indicators for integrity preparedness. It can be used as a stand-alone tool or with the IMT in a structured integrity management process.

7 pilots across Latin

America, since 2020

# WIN Tools for Integrity Management






*“The integrity programme with WIN has resulted in a remarkable improvement of our operational efficiency, not only for us, but also for our customers. Making water connections for new customers used to take 30 days, and now we do it in 15 days. Our leak repairs are now done within 48 hours. This is all possible through better transparency and accountability, which creates improved relationships with our customers.”*

Md Abdullah, Managing Director, Khulna Water Supply and Sewerage Authority, Bangladesh

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# Benefits of Integrity Management

With Integrity Assessments and Integrity Management, water utilities and sector organisations have:

-  Increased revenue and financial stability
-  Identified critical business weaknesses and aligned with international best practice
-  Streamlined processes and built trust from users



### **Higher revenue and financial stability**

In Bangladesh's third largest city, the Khulna Water and Sewerage Authority's (KWASA) commitment to the IMT process resulted in the systematisation of its billing. New software and processes resulted in better tracking of customers and a reduction of undelivered bills by 75%. As a result, the utility's revenue increased and customers expressed overall approval for the new system. The case was recognised in 2021 as good practice by the Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance (GWOPA).

Through efforts to amend a weak tariff system, one utility in Ecuador found that revenues could be increased by targeting subsidies and maintaining an up-to-date client database. After inspecting 3000 monthly zero-consumption customers, updating and categorising account types, and clarifying targeted subsidies, the utility's revenue increased by USD 1.6 million from August 2017 to October 2018.

Utilities in Albania (Gjirokastra Water and Sewerage Utility) and Bangladesh (Chattogram Water and Sewerage Authority) worked to address staff motivation issues, implementing more effective monitoring and increasing field inspections. By strengthening staff commitment, both utilities were able to better control illegal connections and reduce non-revenue water (NRW), thereby increasing revenue.



### **Informed action plans, aligned with international best practice**

The pilot Integrity Assessments of utilities across Latin America made utility managers aware of the need for integrity safeguards to limit operational and reputational risks. By undergoing a diagnosis of their organisation's current conduct and existing policies against best practices in integrity management, utilities were able to identify clear opportunities for improvement and develop more informed action plans to address outstanding weaknesses - such as the absence of a code of ethics - in their own integrity management systems.



### Streamlined processes and more trust from users

In Honduras, where a large share of water services are managed by community groups, applying the IMT allowed ERSAPS, the regulator, to address integrity risks and legalise more than 500 water boards. As a result, funds are more likely to be in the name of organisations and not individuals, limiting opportunities for fraud. The process also allowed for the development of better management models for more than 20 urban service providers, giving them administrative, financial and operational autonomy, and ensuring citizen participation in governing structures .

In Bangladesh, in addition to streamlining processes for billing, metering, connections and leak repairs, KWASA increased media outreach and organised public hearings, with the manager present, to enable better interaction with users.

The Librazhd utility in Albania also focused on improving transparency to its customers, organising public hearings and providing clearer contact information. The public hearings were important means to engage and provide clearer information on planned tariff adjustments.

Following implementation of the IMT and the Utility Assessment tool, other partners in Latin America have focused on promoting transparency by improving data availability on open web platforms, streamlining and organising available data (in Ecuador), opening community portals (Mexico) or opening up more data and inviting citizen participation (Argentina).

*“Utilities can for example prioritise transparency and accountability in corporate governance. This is what a service provider in Ecuador did with the IMT. They invested in accountability through public consultations, presentations and publications. They also used innovative ways to reach communities, promoting participation through community theatre, adding information on bills, and investing in technology.”*

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Marcello Basani, Lead Water and Sanitation Specialist, Inter-American Development Bank





Discussing the integrity risks water and sanitation SMEs face in Zambia and setting new objectives (2014)



Looking at the most relevant tools to address priority integrity risks in a utility in Albania (2016)



An integrity-oriented business model for regulators in Honduras (2018)

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*“Despite COVID and confinement, the projects have succeeded and the interest of the communities has not waned.*

*On the contrary, they are increasingly committed to the project because it is useful and functional for them.”*

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Maylí Sepulveda, Coordinadora, Controla Tu Gobierno, Mexico

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With integrity for  
small and  
community-  
managed systems:  
recognition and  
better service



Community-based water systems, particularly in rural settings, play a central role in the provision of water resources when state/service providers are not able to supply the area. Since its inception, the IMT-SWSS has been used by community groups and other managers of small systems in Kenya (with partners Caritas Kenya, Neighbors Initiative Alliance, Kenyan Water for Health Organisation (KWAHO) and the Kenyan Water and Sanitation Civil Society Network (KEWASNET) with support from WASREB and the Kenyan Water Sector Trust Fund, Mexico (with Controla Tu Gobierno), and Ethiopia (by Caritas).

As a result, system functionality has increased, as has community involvement—particularly among women—and user satisfaction. Community groups have also reported having strengthened institutional relationships and being better able to access funding and governmental assistance.

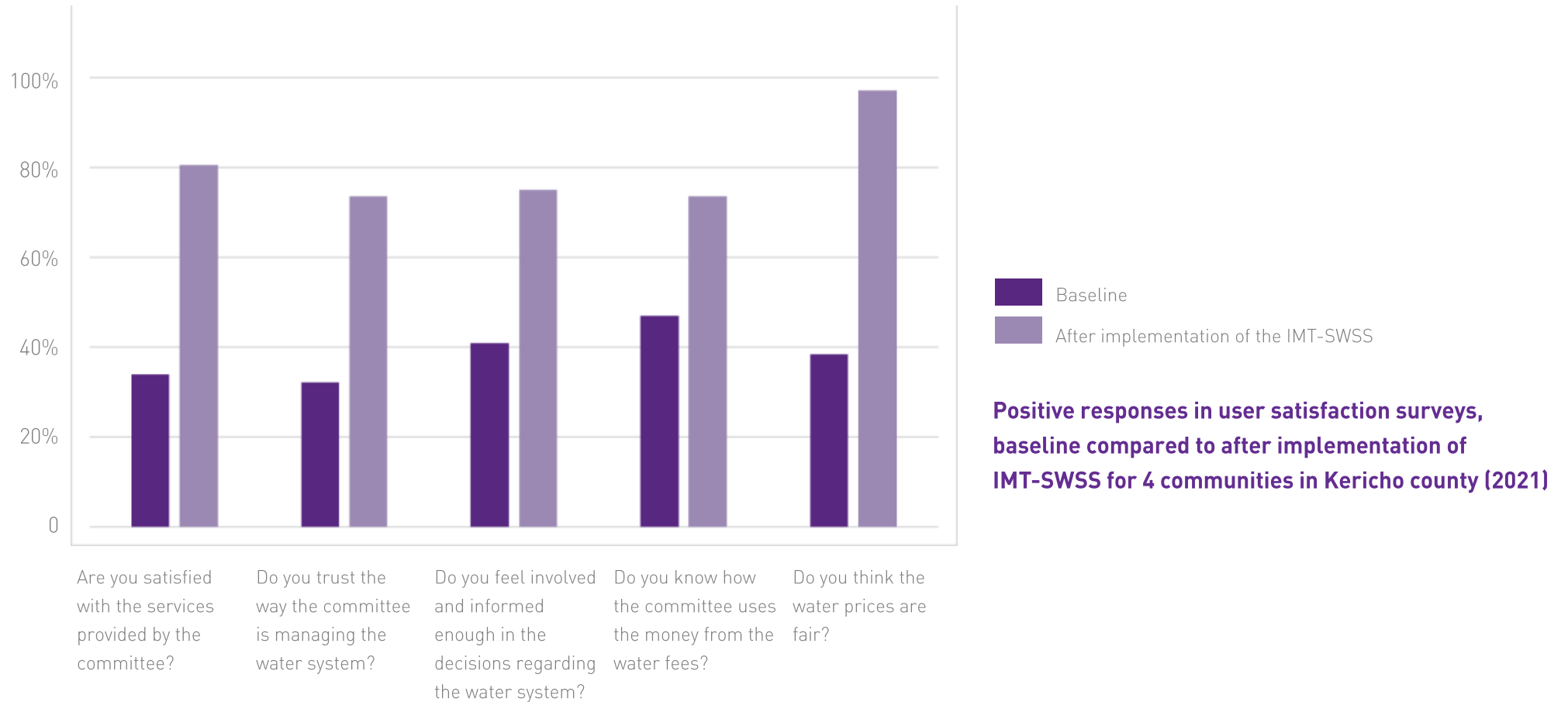
### **More accountability, higher user satisfaction**

In Mexico, rural communities located in the centre and south of the country which have implemented the IMT-SWSS, put in place a numbers of measures to engage with users, for example: complaint mechanisms for users, regular meetings with families and community audits, or agreements on a transparent fee or rate structure.



Community group Working on a practical action plan to address integrity problems identified in the community's water system mapping, San Lucas Amalinalco, Mexico (2020)

(Photo by Controla Tu Gobierno )



In Kenya, many of the more than 80 community groups that took part in an evaluation of the IMT-SWSS reported a positive improvement in how water committees engaged with communities and involved them in decision-making, especially in regard to finance and tariffs.

In Kericho county for example, levels of consumer satisfaction with the services provided by the Water Committees in several communities saw a dramatic increase. There was also a boost in confidence from community members that their fees were being used in the right manner, as well as a better understanding of fees and prices, resulting in an increase in willingness to pay.



*“The community now knows that the water is for all. It is a right. They now appreciate the water service provider and understand that they give a public service, so they do not gain money privately.”*

Dorcas Kanini, County water officer (pictured above in community meeting in Olchoro community (Kajajido County, Kenya), 2016)

(photo by Caritas Kenya)

### Improved access to funding and governmental assistance

In Kenya, the IMT-SWSS has been embraced and is hosted by WASREB, the national regulator for service delivery. It is seen as an effective tool to build capacity of community groups to comply with the new Water Act and the Rural Water Service Delivery Guidelines of 2019, which refer to the IMT-SWSS management models.

By implementing the tool, a several groups have been formalised as legal entities or have established other management models with the service provider in their areas. This has opened doors to access funding from new donors. In the case of Tabaita Community Group, the County Government of Kericho provided funding to extend water piping for an additional 1km and a water kiosk.

Engaging in the IMT-SWSS process has also allowed committees to build stronger alliances with municipal governments in Mexico. This is a key benefit in countries like Mexico, where small water supply systems are not regulated and often have contentious relationships with municipalities.

For example, after implementing the IMT-SWSS in Ixtapaluca, the Coatepec community group decided to establish written agreements with local authorities for technical and financial support. Agreeing on terms that did not compromise the committee's self-management, the municipality provided a new electrical panel, pumping equipment, and training to operate the new infrastructure. County officials indicated that they recognised the efforts and progress made by the group and would not hesitate to do more and recommend the group to other donors as well.

WIN provides a set of tested water integrity tools – designed and developed in collaboration with expert partners – to help water sector organisations around the world engage stakeholders, assess their needs, risks and integrity issues, and create action plans for better water and sanitation services and sustainable water management with an integrity lens.

WIN's integrity tools are flexible approaches that can be tailored to different management models and processes, and can easily be adapted to different countries and contexts.

WIN and partners support adaptations and work with organisations to facilitate workshops, providing facilitators and mentoring support.

<https://www.waterintegritynetwork.net/integrity-tools/>