

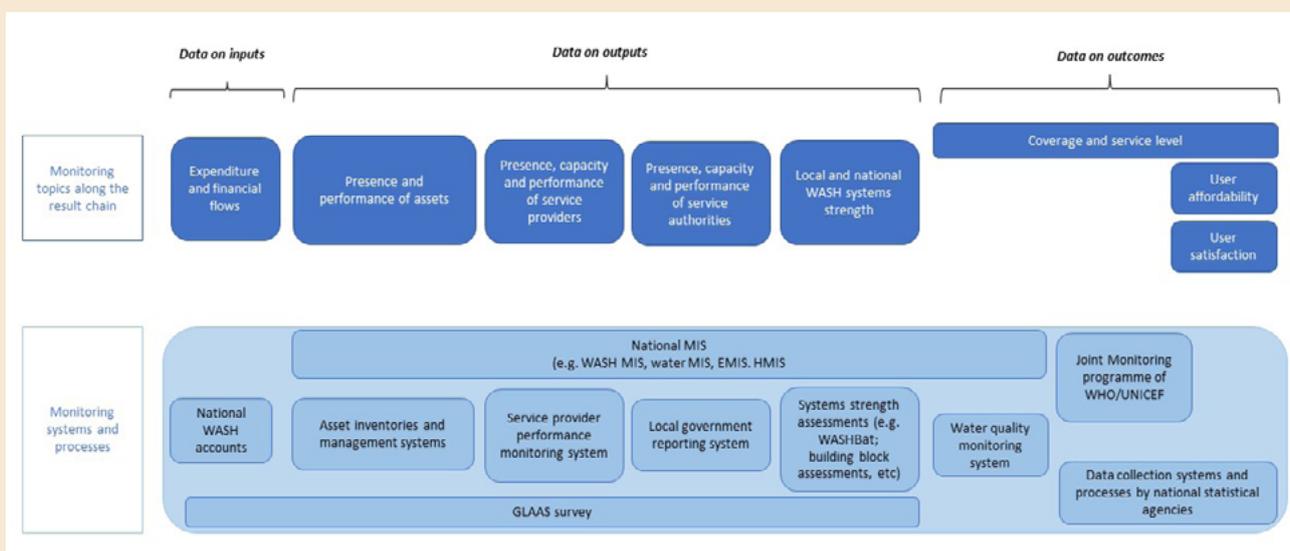
Thematic area 3: Improving evidence-based decision making and accountability

Up-to-date data and information are a prerequisite for improving decision making and accountability related to water, sanitation and hygiene services. Therefore, effective monitoring, covering the capture, management, dissemination and use of data required to effectively manage WASH services at all levels, is one of the key building blocks of strong water, sanitation, and hygiene systems.

Over the last decade, the amount of data that has become available in the water, sanitation and hygiene sector has increased considerably. This has been pushed by increased attention in the sector in setting standards and targets beyond coverage of improved water and sanitation facilities, and tracking progress on these. Notably with the adoption of Sustainable Development Goal 6, the paradigm of service delivery has shifted: from one that focuses only on the availability of infrastructure to one that also takes into account the quality of services. The increase of data production has furthermore been enabled by ICT innovations over the last two decades, which have supported collection, processing and storage of big data sets.

The produced data can cover different elements of the service provision results, including inputs (e.g., data on expenditure and financial flows), outputs (e.g., data on assets and coverage, service provider performance, service authority performance and local systems strength, strength of national systems and the enabling environment) and outcomes (data on service levels and user satisfaction). As illustrated in the figure below, different monitoring systems and processes can be involved in the production of these data, including national strategic agencies undertaking data collection exercises, national sectoral management information systems (MIS), service provider performance monitoring systems, national WASH accounts etc.

The produced data and information are intended to inform accountability and decision-making processes at different institutional levels. At service provision level, service providers take day-to-day decisions related to water and sanitation. At service authority level, local government makes decisions on planning, coordination, support to



service providers, regulation etc. And at national level, national actors engage in decision making related to policy making, setting norms and standards, regulation, and planning and resource allocation.

However, is the increasing amount of data available actually being used to inform these decision-making processes and to enhance accountability? And what can we as a sector do to improve evidence-based decision making and accountability? How can we ensure the production of better (aligned) and more usable data and information? What capacities and incentives need to be in place, not just to collect the data, but to also ensure its use?

Under the topic of “Improving evidence-based decision making and accountability” at the All Systems Go symposium Africa, we will discuss these questions.

We will explore and discuss this from three angles:

- (i) Monitoring progress on national targets towards SDG 6. Here we focus on tracking of progress towards the SDGs and national sector objectives, the data needed from various data sources to provide evidence on this, and the use of these data to inform planning and accountability at national level.
- (ii) Beyond Mapping - The use of data from National WASH Management Information Systems (MIS) for national-level informing of decisions and accountability. Here we focus on country-based WASH monitoring systems to capture and share water and sanitation data, their pre-requisites for success and their challenges.
- (iii) The use of performance monitoring data for regulating and improving water services in small towns. Here we discuss the production process and use of data on service provider performance to ensure efficient and sustainable water service provision in small towns.