FACILITATING LOCAL MONITORING OF RURAL WATER SERVICE DELIVERY

This experiment reviewed the current rural water service indicators for Uganda and developed a new monitoring framework designed to be implemented by rural water stakeholders so that they can make a more in-depth analysis of factors that underlie performance of rural water services and address problems as they arise at the district level. This experiment is positioned at Phase 2 – "Limited Piloting".

THE INNOVATION PROCESS

The Triple-S (Sustainable Services at Scale) initiative has led a process of learning and innovation to improve rural water service delivery in Uganda and Ghana. This document briefly describes one of the innovations with reference to the generic phases in an innovation process:

- Phase 0: Understanding and 'socialising' the problem, which leads to a clear articulation of a problem and generates awareness among stakeholders.
- Phase 1: Proof of concept, which leads to detailed articulation of an innovation and consideration of its feasibility.
- Phase 2: Limited piloting, provides evidence on outcomes, impacts and costs of the innovation and the requirements to make it work.
- Phase 3: Full scale roll-out, means application of the innovation (almost) nationwide and for multiple years.
- 'More research' ideas, which can be developed into further research into specific parts of the problem
- There are also actions that are deemed not to require an experiment, for example because the cost of an experiment would be higher than implementing the innovation.

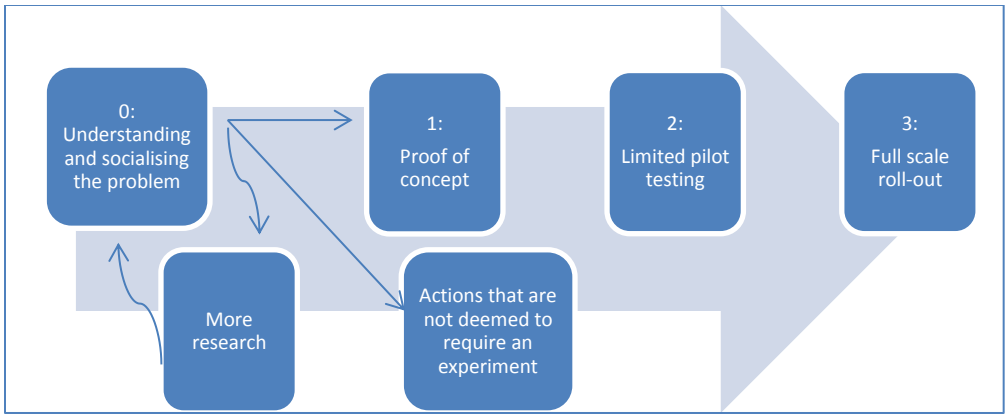

Figure 1 Innovation process: phases in experiments

PHASE 0: UNDERSTANDING AND 'SOCIALISING' THE PROBLEM

Initially, consensus was obtained on the need for better insight into the actual performance of rural water supplies in Uganda. It was felt that the sector's 11 'Golden Indicators', as used so far,

are useful for general planning and getting rapid insight into the problems around rural water supply at sector level. But they do not provide the level of disaggregation needed for District Water Officers to take corrective actions or do district-wide planning. This triggered consensus on the need to improve monitoring at decentralised level, particularly by employing a more comprehensive indicator set that facilitates local monitoring of rural water service delivery.

PHASE 1: PROOF OF CONCEPT

At the same time, the concept of Service Delivery Indicators (SDIs) emerged in Triple-S and other IRC projects as a way of monitoring rural water services. This enabled us to develop a conceptual proof relatively rapidly, by adjusting generic indicators to the Uganda context. A first proof of concept was the application of SDIs for the study on the Service Delivery Model for point water sources in eight districts. This initial application showed that such a set of SDIs can be applied and that they generate relevant data about services delivered. It also generated the insight that the content of some of the indicators and the methodology for data collection and analysis had to be changed. The second set of SDIs was developed in close collaboration with the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) and other key national sector stakeholders.

The revised set of indicators was then applied in two districts, indicating again that this revised set provides relevant information and it can be used. SDIs have passed proof of concept.

PHASE 2: LIMITED PILOTING

The SDIs have entered phase 2. The team are trying to obtain insight in the balance between costs and benefits. At decentralised level, documenting the costs, outputs (automated reports) and outcomes (District Water Officers use reports for analysis and decision making; NGOs start using the SDIs). At national level, documenting the outputs (automated reports), to some extent the outcomes (national stakeholders acknowledge the added-value of the SDIs and use them).

Given the time frame and resources available within Triple-S, the impacts (changes in service delivery / quality of service delivered) of this experiment at decentralised and national level will not be documented. Instead, the team will focus on an assessment of whether the outcomes of the SDIs justify the costs. A Policy Brief provides the Ministry of Water and Environment with information and recommendations regarding the desirability and feasibility of further roll-out of the SDIs.

FIND OUT MORE

Facilitating local monitoring of rural water service delivery
Service delivery indicators: a tool for improving rural water services (Policy Brief)
Triple-S Uganda experiments