



**UNECE Scorecard- Expert meeting
May 2024**

Why accountability matters to WASH service delivery

- Accountable actors of the service delivery framework provide and demand better water governance — for better services.



Three levels of intervention and examples

Responsibility

Clear roles and coordination

- Key normative aspects of the service provision
- Coordination mechanisms
- Establishment of model contracts; formalization of suppliers; standards

Answerability

Access to information and participation

- Access to Information: Budget expenditure tracking; audits; public access to utilities information
- Spaces of dialogue between stakeholders (public hearings, etc.)
- Citizens involvement in M&E (citizen report cards, consumer feedback mechanisms)

Enforceability

Monitoring and taking action

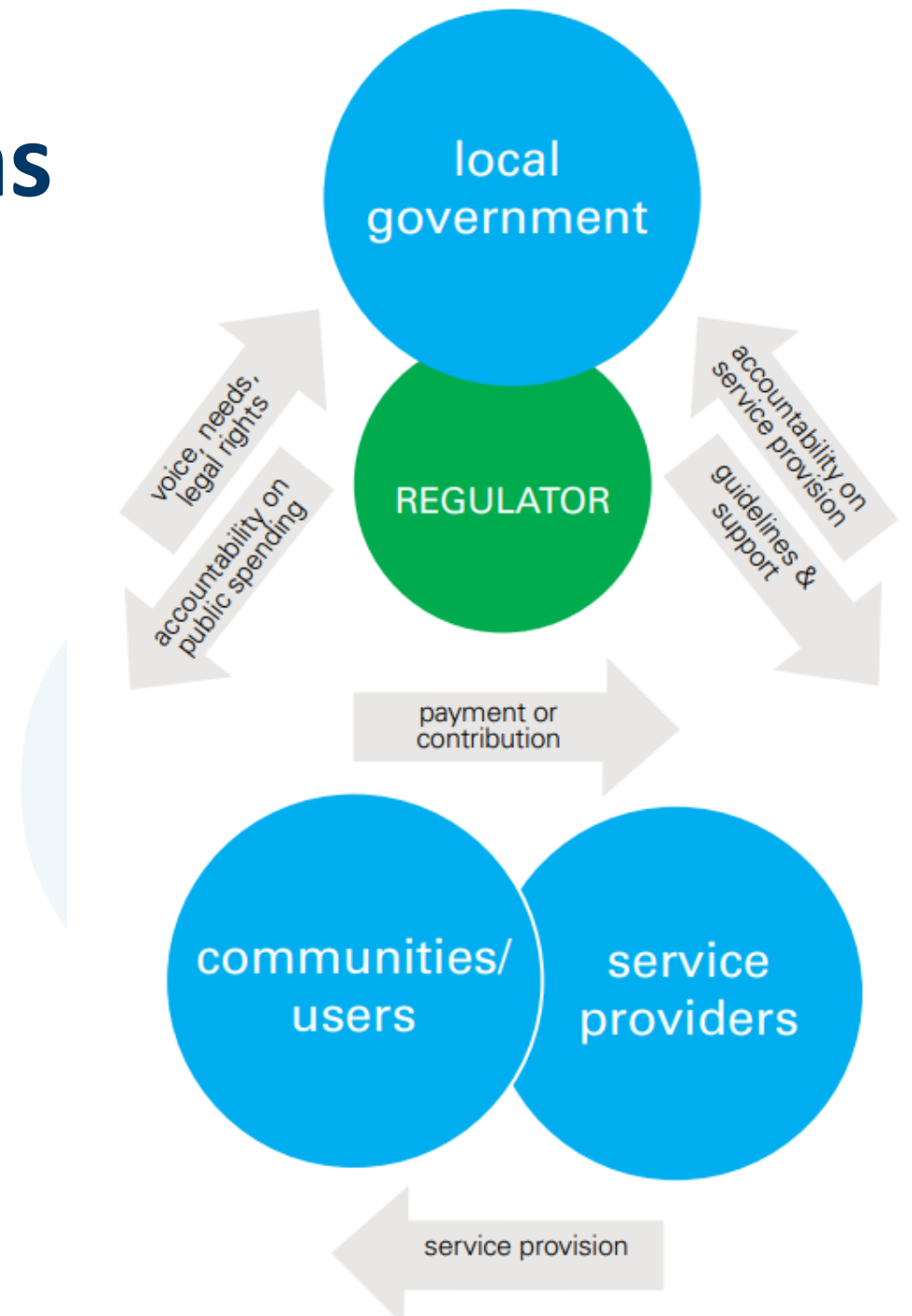
- Audit, control and penalties/rewards
- Support consumers' access to law and complaint mechanisms
- Surveillance/vigilance involving population

Accountability in rural areas

- Low presence of formal regulator
- Often roles are conflicted: local governments might have the responsibility for service provision AND overview
- In very isolated rural areas, service providers are the same users, making accountability difficult.
- Often inexistent regulation of water quality

Good practice

- Develop specific accountability channels for rural areas as existing ones are mostly designed for urban population: both online and onsite procedures
- Build trust with rural service providers: Low responsiveness of duty bearers makes communities have limited trust and engagement.
- Engage with local actors for risk management approaches and basic monitoring

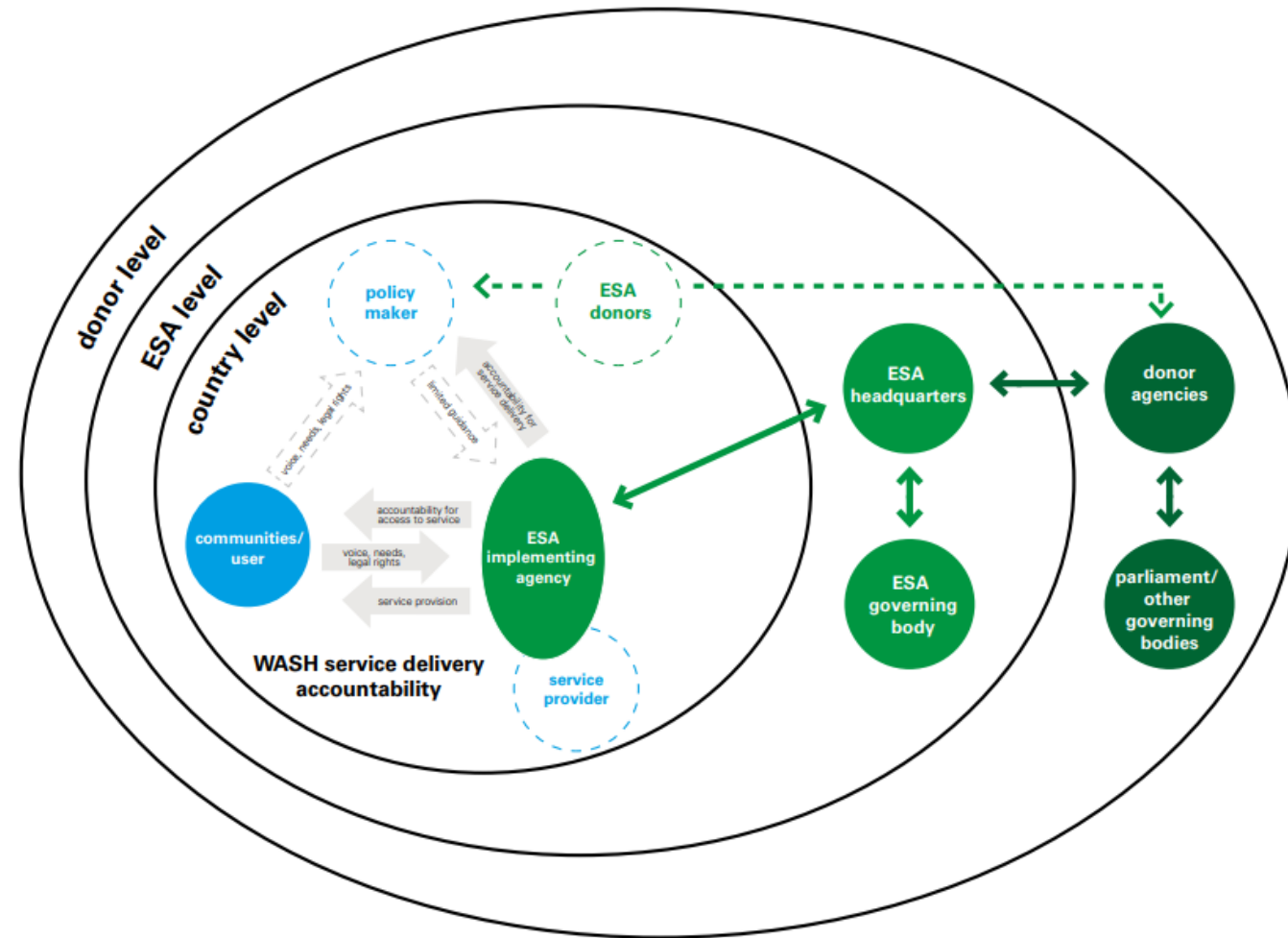


Accountability in fragile settings

- Low presence of the state
- Service provision is often conducted through a combination of local NGOs, External Support Agencies (ESA), informal private sector and pre-existing utility (which might be in very bad situation)
- ESA often more accountable to external donors than to affected population
- Policy maker's role is often inexistent or substituted by ESA.

Good practice

- Acknowledge the political nature of service delivery in fragile contexts
- Rebuild trust while improving services
- Work towards restoring the national service provision delivery framework
- Long-term, risk- and conflict-informed approach
- Capacity development and systems strengthening
- Processes should be participatory, inclusive, evidence-based and transparent



Responsibility: Specific regulation for rural areas

- “Esquemas Diferenciales” is a specific regulation for rural areas and informal settlements that allow for taking special administrative, technical and financial solutions that are outside the standard regulation.
- Examples of application include:
 - Simplified monitoring mechanism for rural providers
 - Special technical solutions for service delivery
 - Specific tariff setting mechanisms



Answerability: Community scorecards for water services in Timor-Leste

- The CSC process initiated by WaterAid in Timor-Leste includes an effective local-level feedback loop and action plan that engage the community, local leadership and local government. It strengthens communities' participation in improving government services and participatory democracy.
- User-friendly CSCs are used as indicators that can play a crucial role in strengthening rural service provision. They should be a continuous process
- Reviewing the Technical Indicator Scorecard with the community helped raise awareness of national service standards and the quality of service that they should expect from their system and service provider.

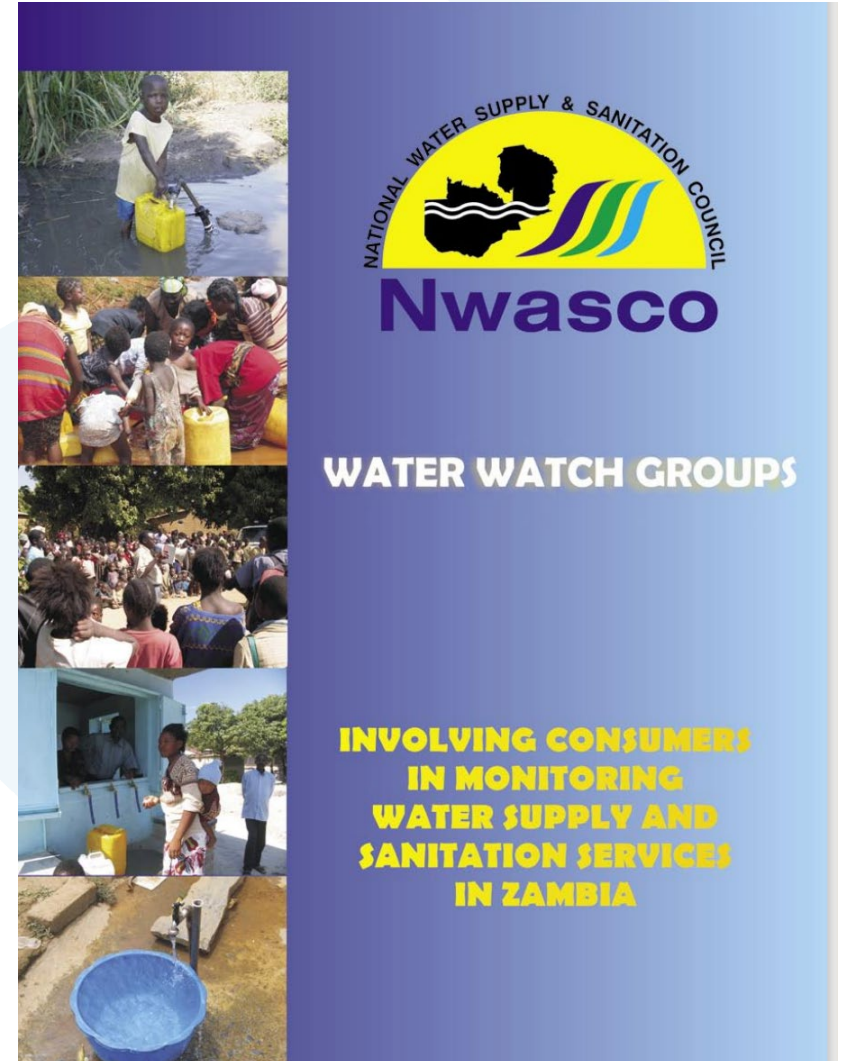


Source: [WaterAid](#) 2016

Enforceability: Community oversight of WASH services in Zambia

- Voluntary community-based groups known as Water Watch Groups assist in monitoring service delivery in Zambia.
- Their role is to inform their communities about their rights and obligations regarding water services and sanitation to allow users to demand the level of service they are entitled to. Water Watch Groups also assist in resolving pending complaints.
- The groups comprise 6 to 8 customers from a particular service area. They operate within the delegated powers of the regulator, the National Water Supply and Sanitation Council.

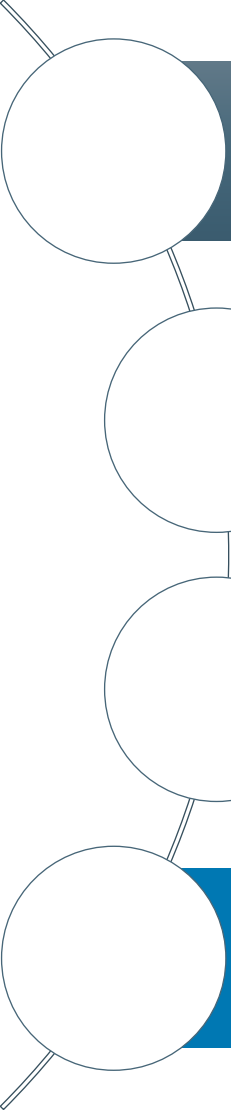
Source: NWASCO.org.zm



Suggestions

- Consider the needs of specific groups and the channels they might be able to use and understand
- Include the informal service providers into the accountability framework; including them might need some degree of registration- and registering might require some incentives and capacity to enforce the procedures if not registered
- Within rural communities, there are also different population groups, different needs and power struggles- accountability mechanisms should consider this
- As rural providers are dispersed, there is a need of innovation in terms of control, surveillance and accountability mechanisms.
- Capacity development might be part of the regulation in rural areas

Some learnings



Strong WASH systems that deliver require accountable relations, in which governments and service providers fulfill their duties, and communities hold them to account.

The voice of citizens is an essential driver to make service delivery equitable, sustainable, and resilient.

It is essential to build the capability and willingness of duty-bearers to respond to communities.

Context is critical: every intervention to increase accountability in WASH service delivery requires a good understanding of the governance environment and incentives

Thank you

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