

# Strengthening the enabling environment for citywide inclusive water and sanitation: an evaluative framework

## Problem

There is broad consensus within the WASH sector that universal access can only be achieved by fostering well-functioning enabling environments, positioning local institutions to provide sustainable services at scale.

The components of the enabling environment are wide-ranging: UNICEF defines the enabling environment for sanitation as the policy, capacity and institutional and financial framework necessary for sustaining and replicating large-scale sanitation programmes. A well-functioning enabling environment builds the attitudes, capacity and practices for effective and efficient functioning of organizations and individuals.

[<http://www.sanitationmonitoringtoolkit.com/sanitation-monitoring-toolkit/monitoring-the-enabling-environment>]

Supporting the enabling environment has always been core to WSUP's approach and is central to WSUP's theory of change. WSUP needed a lens through which to visualise the target "end state" in the locations where we work, which could also be used for programming, planning and communicating about urban WASH system-strengthening and sector change.

But how do we visualise something so wide ranging and complex?

## Solution

Over the past two years WSUP has developed a bespoke tool that captures the necessary components of a functional urban WASH sector, in collaboration with Oxford Policy Management (OPM). The urban WASH sector functionality framework (SFF) comprises of 21 qualitative indicators, which are spread across seven groupings. There is one SFF for urban water and another for urban sanitation.

The SFF is an expression of WSUP's vision for the urban WASH sectors in its six focus countries (Bangladesh, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique and Zambia). The broader objective of the assessments is to gain a shared understanding of urban WASH sector functionality. In doing so, stakeholders can collaboratively identify areas of the sector which are particularly weak and require support or reform.

## Development of the Sector Functionality Framework: Concept to final form

Several significant sector-wide initiatives were already examining system-strengthening; WSUP's activity built upon these initiatives where possible. We wanted to use an existing sector framework to track progress in WSUP locations, promoting consistency of data collection and transferability of findings. UNICEF's WASH-BAT analysis tool was a key initial reference point. However, it emerged that no existing framework covered all of the areas WSUP considered relevant. WSUP therefore decided to develop a new framework that reflected the realities of urban service provision – but with a firm grounding in existing frameworks.

The early versions of the framework combined water and sanitation. As the framework concept continued to take shape, we concluded that the water and sanitation sub-sectors should be assessed separately, reflecting differences in sub-sector maturity within WSUP locations.

## Assessing six countries' urban water and sanitation sector using the SFF

Each indicator included in the sector functionality frameworks has four possible scores: high, medium, low and zero. Each indicator has their own scoring criteria, with examples for what would be required for that indicator to receive a 'high' score, a 'medium' score, and so on. The baseline scoring for the water and sanitation sector in each of the six countries was established over three stages:



1. An **online questionnaire** (using typeform.com) for key stakeholders to score the indicators in the water and sanitation frameworks. Anonymous responses produced draft scores.



2. A **two day-long workshop** was held in each country, attended by representatives from government, service providers, finance institutions, and non-governmental organisations. Disputed draft scores were discussed until a consensus was reached. Voting took place when required.

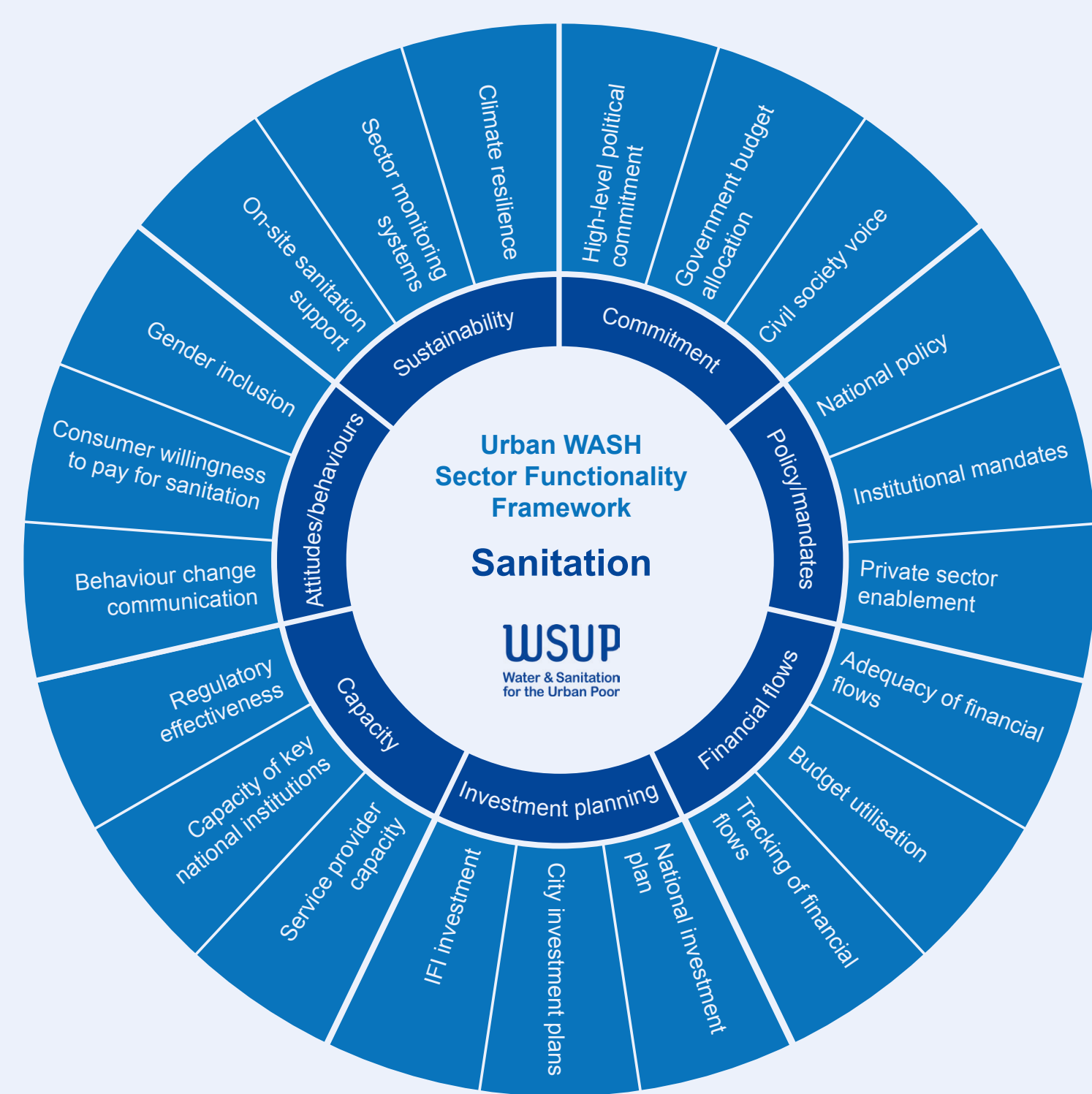


3. Findings were collated in country-specific **baseline reports** and shared with workshop participants.

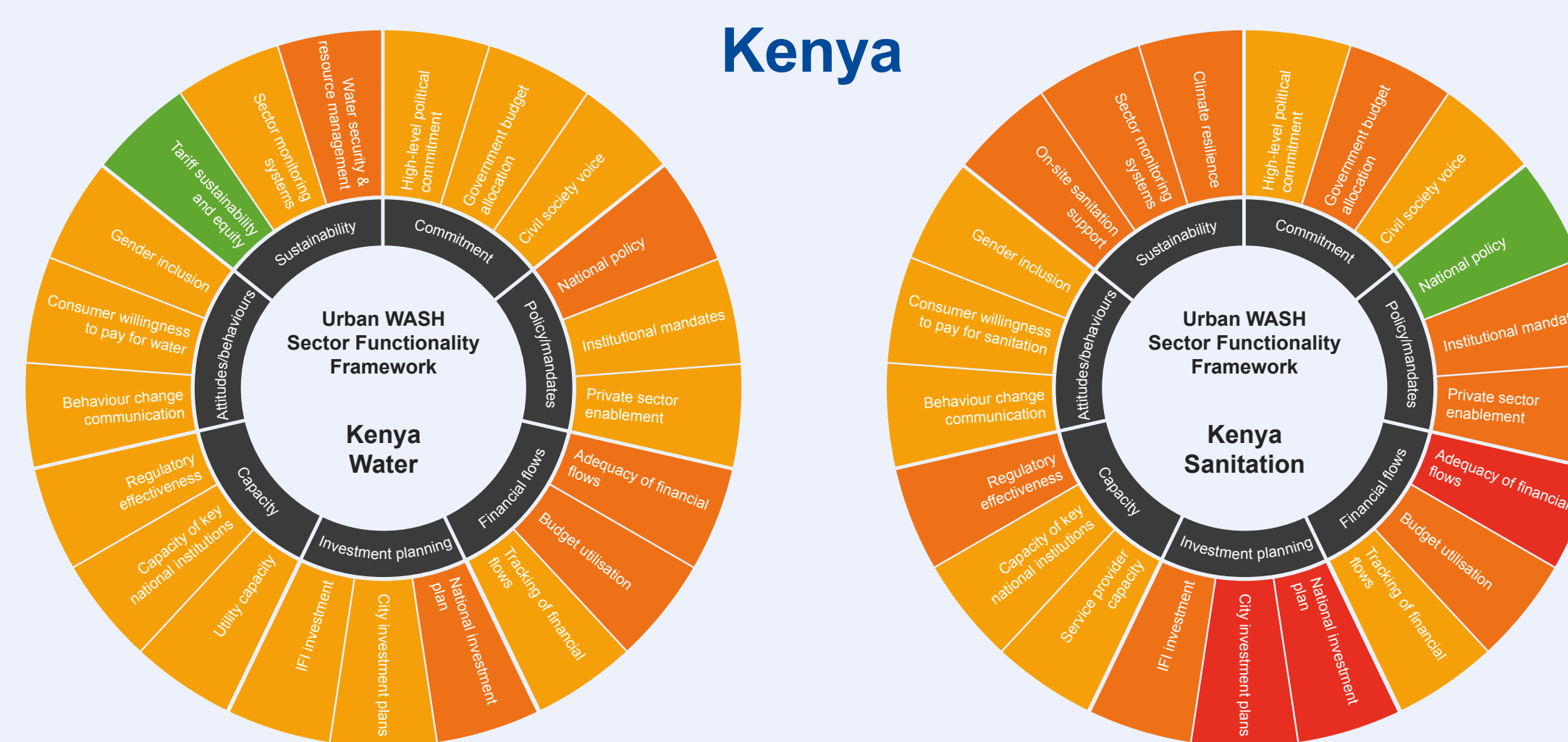
## Findings

The results of the baseline scoring process are qualitative rather than based on the collection of hard data. They are, however, based on the considered judgements of urban WASH experts in each country, and negotiated through discussion and compromise.

The scores for the six country's water and sanitation sectors will be updated in an endline round of assessments which will take place in late 2019/early 2020. The SFF wheels below are the baseline scores from **Kenya** and **Zambia**.

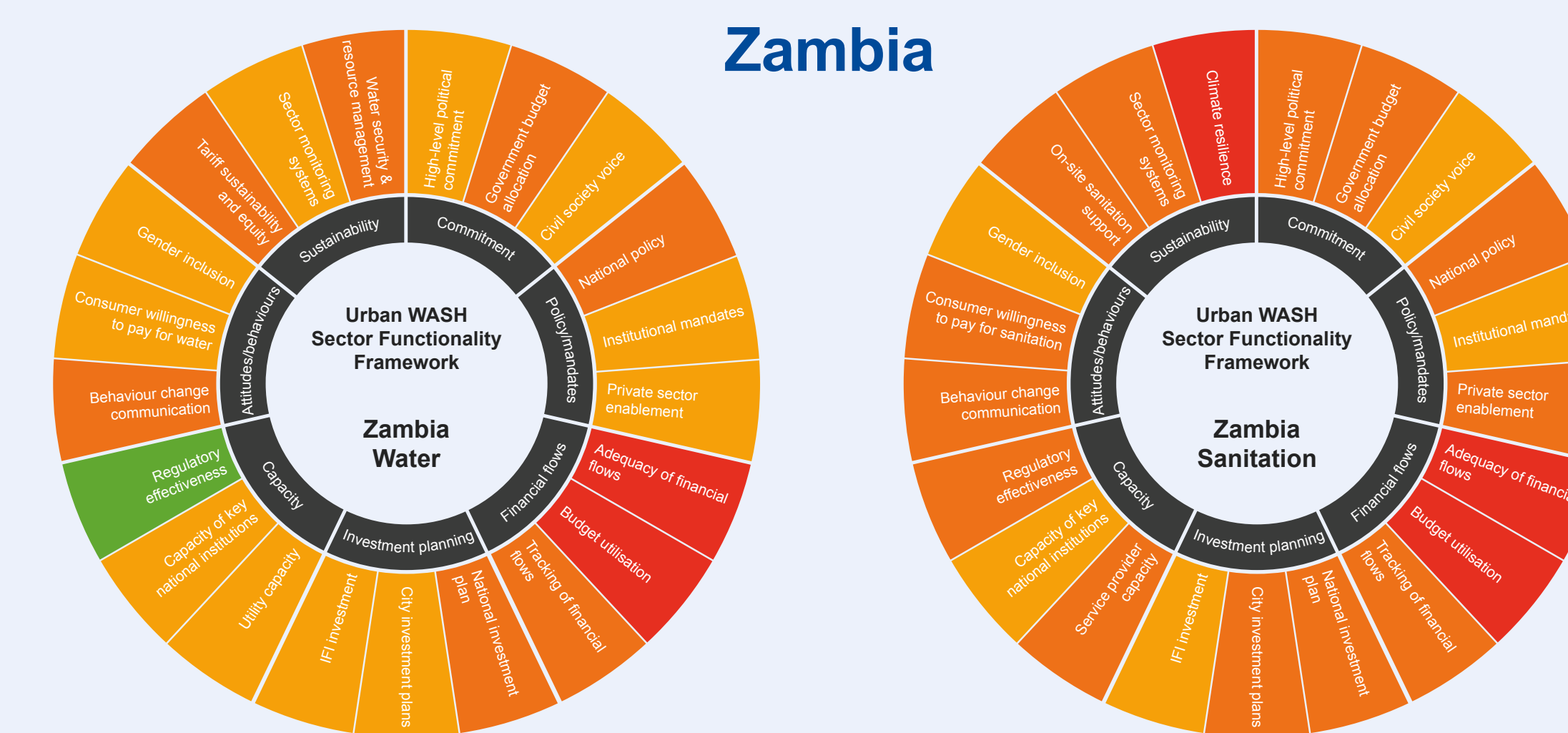


**Sanitation.** This is the finalised Urban WASH Sector Functionality Framework for sanitation. The water and sanitation SFFs differ in only three indicators: *Utility (service provider) capacity, Tariff sustainability and equity (on-site sanitation support) and Water scarcity and resource management (Climate resilience).*



**Urban water:** National policies demonstrate commitment, but their translation to counties is undefined. Water Act 2016 doesn't address county governments' role or financing arrangements. Budget allocations have not increased significantly, and WSPs face challenges in recouping costs through tariffs. Water resource management practices are poor, exacerbating the effects of regular droughts.

**Urban sanitation:** The institutional changes for sanitation under the Kenya Environmental Sanitation and Hygiene Policy have yet to be actualised. The new Ministry of Water and Sanitation's mandate is not defined, adding to confusion around the roles of WSPs, county governments, WASREB and the Ministry of Health. Existing financial flows do not meet sector targets. There are no national or county investment plans or masterplans (except in Mombasa). IFI sanitation funding prioritises sewerage, and WSPs do not prioritise on-site sanitation.



**Urban water:** Institutional mandates are muddled: municipalities (responsible for WASH services) sit within the Ministry for Local Government not the new Ministry of Water Development, Sanitation and Environmental Protection. Water tariffs are low and sub-optimal internal revenue contribute to operational failures that exacerbate issues like NRW. Water source pollution and contamination is common, particularly in mining areas. The existing policy and framework for water source management and security must be implemented.

**Urban sanitation:** The sanitation financing gap is severe. Assumed budget utilisation is low and spending is hard to track. Utility capacity to manage infrastructure varies, but all lack funding. On-site sanitation regulation exists but is not implemented. Utilities lack knowledge of on-site sanitation, and those outside Lusaka are less driven to engage with OSS. Only household connections to sewerage networks are monitored. Reliance on pit latrines is unlikely to change soon, but they are vulnerable to flooding and climate change.

## Next steps: Further uses of SFF assessment findings

Through 2019, we will be exploring additional applications of the SFF, including the potential to inform WSUP's capacity building and influence interventions and the overall effectiveness of WSUP's work. The baseline scores have already highlighted relative strengths and weaknesses in each country's urban WASH sector (for example, sanitation consistently scores lower than water in directly comparable indicators; while financial flows are not adequate in any country). The initial next step is to leverage country-specific findings to help drive progress in WSUP locations in the period to 2020 and beyond.