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BEWOP

**WOP CASE
ANALYSIS**

Framework for Analyzing Water Operators' Partnerships

Background

Date

New version, updated version in April 2019

Version

Analytical Framework for WOPs, related to BEWOP Activity 1

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Water Operators' Partnerships

Water operators are critical players in efforts to achieve sustainable, equitable and universal water and sanitation services. But many operators today face a myriad of challenges including rapid urbanization, rising inequity, pressures on water resources, severe resource constraints and ineffective governance frameworks. There is a growing understanding that strong local capacity can provide the foundations to respond to emerging challenges with meaningful and lasting solutions. Supporting water operators in their organizational development efforts to manage effectively over the long-term is the purpose of Water Operators' Partnerships (WOPs). WOPs are peer-support arrangements between water service providers, carried out on a not-for-profit basis with the objective of strengthening operator capacity. They draw on the fact that much of the innovation and expertise to address water operators' challenges resides within utilities, and that a growing number of these successful operators are highly motivated to share their expertise and innovation with others on a not-for-profit basis. WOPs were identified as a high-potential solution by the UN Secretary General's Advisory Board for Water and Sanitation in their 2006 Hashimoto Action Plan.

Boosting Effectiveness in Water Operators' Partnerships (BEWOP)

BEWOP is a 5-year research and outreach initiative aimed at boosting the effectiveness of WOPs around the world. BEWOP, launched in September 2013, is a collaboration between IHE Delft Institute for Water Education (formerly known as UNESCO-IHE) and UN-Habitat's Global Water Operators' Partnership Alliance (GWOPA), the organization leading the global WOPs movement. This project was made possible with the support obtained from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (via the Directorate-General for International Cooperation) and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID).

Objectives

BEWOP aims to address a potential obstacle of the WOPs approach: operators are uniquely placed to share their experience and technical expertise with their peers, yet they sometimes lack the didactical capacity to effectively transfer their knowledge and the expertise to manage the partnership process. The goal of BEWOP is to strengthen knowledge transfer and change processes of WOPs to maximize the potential for operational improvements of water operators. Over the long run, the BEWOP project should contribute to the enhancement of operators' capacity to cope with emerging technical, financial and institutional issues,

leading to better performance of water utilities and improved water and sanitation services for an estimated 50 million end-users.

Activity Areas

The BEWOP initiative is articulated into two major streams: research and operational guidance. Research on WOPs has focused on two main questions: how WOPs function, and the institutional conditions for their wider adoption. Research has involved documenting and analysing WOPs practice and conducting focussed thematic studies in collaboration with water and sanitation operators around the world. The operational component, building upon the knowledge acquired during the research phase, aims at developing supportive tools to overcome bottlenecks to WOPs take-up and specific guidance to address needs at various stages of a WOP: identification of partners, designing agreements, funding, and monitoring and evaluating. Ensuring that BEWOP products are accepted and applied widely in WOPs practice is of primary importance. Throughout the project, communication and outreach work to maximize uptake and is a significant component of all activities.

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Motivation

Among GWOPA’s knowledge management main objectives are to understand what makes a Water Operator Partnership more efficient and effective in contributing to SDGs achievement and communicate and disseminate the lessons learned broadly. One way of understanding and communicating is to re-think how we capture and disseminate partnership stories. This can be done through dynamic, tailored and user-friendly case studies that inspire, challenge and support the many practitioners struggling to build and maintain good WOP projects that contribute to a significant impact.

Introduction

As part of the BEWOP program, a series of case analyses have been undertaken to obtain a better understanding of the formation, design, and functioning of Water Operators’ Partnerships. To ensure a degree of comparability between the different cases, it was decided to undertake these case studies following a shared analytical framework. Assessing partnerships is a challenging endeavor for many reasons. Each partnership is unique, and the related partnership activities are often complex, shifting and slow in achieving the expected impacts. Therefore, the challenge is “to create a framework which is sufficiently comprehensive to accommodate the complexity of issues that arise around partnerships and at the same time, the framework needs to be rigorous enough to allow for comparative analysis”¹.

This document explains and defines the different building blocks that form this analytical framework. The building blocks essentially follow the chronological flow of a standard partnership. The first block, the water sector context, describes the institutional, organizational, socio-economic and environmental context, in which a particular partnership is undertaken. The second block focuses on the formation and design of the partnership. The third block essentially concerns the core of the partnership, namely the implementation of improvement tracks to enhance utility capacity and performance. The fourth block focuses on monitoring and evaluation and assessment of the WOP.

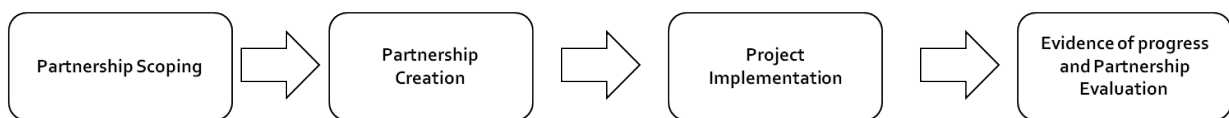


Figure 1: Building blocks of the analytical framework

1 Pfisterer, Stella. 2011:p.3. *Analytical Framework for Assessing Partnership Effectiveness*

The structure of this report follows the building blocks. After a short elaboration of each of the blocks, a series of questions is presented that highlights the *information* that needs to be collected to develop a case study.

Use of the framework

Without claiming to be exhaustive, the framework presented here tries to be comprehensive and generic, which allows it to be used to fit almost any Water Operators' Partnership. At the same time, the framework allows for flexibility and adaptability to suit different cases. As such, the way the framework is used depends strongly on the type of partnership, that is subject to research. For some partnerships only parts of the framework may hold relevant questions. For more comprehensive partnerships, more questions and dimensions may become applicable.

This analytical framework also has various limitations. Despite trying to be comprehensive, the set of questions might not cover some important aspects of the WOP. Then, some questions might need rephrasing to ensure a clear understanding of the water professional interviewed. Finally, the analytical framework is somewhat descriptive, leaving the analytical part as the primary task of the person applying the framework.

In this process of adapting the framework for analyzing a particular case, a crucial role is played by the person applying the framework. This person needs to assess which part(s) of the framework fits the specificities of the partnership and which parts are less relevant for the specific case that they are studying. What this means is that the framework guides the broad line of inquiry and provides support for undertaking the case study. As such, the framework does not provide a blueprint that should be strictly adhered to. The framework only provides a structured route to pursue in order to produce a meaningful basis for analysis. Thus, the responsibility of the person using the framework is to create valuable content out of supporting documents and interviews with the stakeholders of the partnership, based on guiding questions of the framework.

This person must be aware of complex mechanisms that drive partnerships to be able to draw unbiased and genuine conclusions. His/her primary goal is to obtain relevant, authentic and credible evidence. To do so, a basic understanding concerning the particularities and diversities of WOPs is required. Moreover, it is strongly recommended to make use of diverse sources of information to cross-check and triangulate the information and data gathered. The diverse sources may involve information from crucial informants outside the two operators involved in the WOP or may concern different sources of data, such as interviews, reports and various forms of media.

The resulting report should go beyond the mere description of the partnership and also contain an interpretation of processes or activities of the collaboration. Particular importance should be given to the questions why certain things happened the way they happened (rather than just describing these events). The presentation of findings should be adapted to the target audience. Opportunities for discussion are also necessary to highlight possible differences in interpretations. The findings should

provide a clear understanding of how the partnership can be revised and improved, supported for continuation or expansion and promoted more broadly. In particular best-practices and lessons learned identified in the case should be highlighted. The partnership assessment results in learning and action opportunities at different levels (individual, organizational, partnership and broader level).

Extracts from existing cases studies are presented in boxes along the present document to guide the user of the framework in the writing process that follows the collection of data. Basic methodological recommendations to apply this framework are referred to in Annex 1.

Partnership scoping

Provisioning of water supply and sanitation services does not happen in a vacuum. Instead service provision takes place within prevailing social, legal, economic, cultural and political conditions. These conditions influence and shape service provisioning in a given location. This block of the analytical framework is overarching in the sense that the other block (partnership design, formation, and evaluation) are embedded in this context. This building block can be divided into main components. The first component concerns general socio-economic, political, cultural conditions that are not specific to the water services sector, but which do influence developments within the sector. The second component relates to the sectoral characteristics and developments within the water services sector.

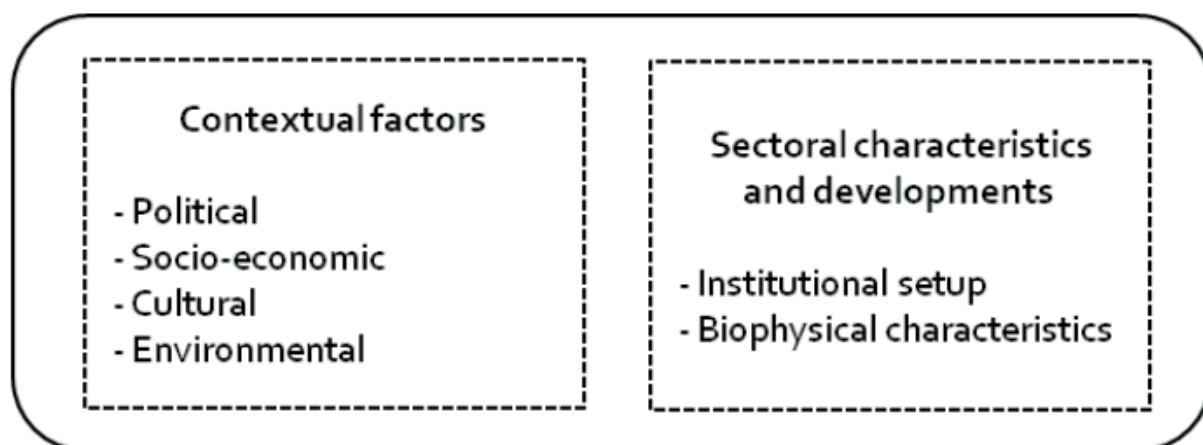


Figure 2: *The Context Building Block*

In applying the questions related to this block, the user needs to realize that the social, legal, political, cultural and economic conditions under which partnerships operate are not stable but undergo changes over time. Similarly, the water services sector is subject to institutional reforms and the introduction of new operational and management practices. As such, ideally, the user would not only describe the current situation but also present this more dynamic perspective in the context and the water services sector. In providing this more historical perspective, we recommend that it at least

would touch upon the latest reforms in the water services sector (highlighting what changes occurred in the sector as a result of these reforms).

Contextual Factors

The context sets the broad setting in which the partnership operates. It includes variables on which the partners have no or very little influence through the direct implementation of the partnership. Conversely, these underlying dimensions can greatly influence the inter-organizational relationship and the functioning of the partnership. In this framework, the contextual factors related to political, socio-economic, cultural and environmental aspects in which the partnership is embedded. Although these factors are clustered in the context category, the geographical and temporal scales along which these factors manifest themselves may be quite diverse.

Political factors

1. What is the nature of the political system the national and sub-national level?
2. What are the relationship and interactions between the local and national political realm and the utility?
3. To what extent do the differences or similarities with the political context in the mentor country influence the relationship between the partners?

Socio-economic

4. What is the socio-economic status in the country and area of implementation (HDI/GDP)? To what extent is the service coverage area characterized by major socio-economic differences?
5. What are the characteristics in terms of access to essential services (health, water services, and education)?
6. What are the major economic activities in the vicinity of the partnership location?
7. To what extent do these factors affect the operational performances of the mentee?

Cultural

8. What are the important cultural factors that affect decision-making/governance?
9. How do these cultural factors relate to water management and water services provision?
10. How does the corporate culture of the mentee affect the relationship with the mentor?

Environmental

11. What are the overall climate and geographical characteristics in the coverage area?
12. What are the main environmental characteristics relating to water, such as water rainfall, droughts, flooding and water availability?

Example extracted from the WOP case study: Aguas del Norte (Argentina) and Caesb (Brazil)

Argentina is a Federal Republic with 23 provinces and a central government located in the capital of Buenos Aires. Argentina is one of the largest economies in South America. According to the World Bank, the country's gross domestic product of US\$609.9 billion in 2013 compares with US\$2,246 trillion for Brazil. Argentina ranked 45th on the United Nations' Human Development Index in 2013 while Brazil was in 85th position.

The provinces of Argentina are bound by federal laws and the national Constitution but are otherwise autonomous, organising their local governments and managing their natural resources. The Province of Salta is located in north-western Argentina (borders with Bolivia, Chile, and Paraguay) and is composed of 23 departments. Northern departments are relatively poor with mostly indigenous populations, and water and sanitation coverage remains low, at less than 80%. The mountainous western departments are the poorest of Salta and social unrest linked to demands for better services is frequent. Within the capital city of Salta, social inequalities are stark between high - and low-income neighbourhoods. The economy of the province relies mostly on agriculture (tobacco, soy, beans, sugarcane, vineyards and cotton), the oil and gas industry, mining (e.g. gold, copper), tourism and small-scale factories. It accounts for roughly 1% of the national gross domestic product.

Salta's climate is typical of subtropical highland. The wet season lasts four months (December to March) and brings an average precipitation of 550 mm. The dry season extends through the rest of the year, with an average 150 mm of rain over eight months. The most critical time in terms of water supply is toward the end of this dry period when the resource becomes scarce and leads to supply disruptions. The first rains of the wet season cause important turbidity problems, which directly impact the quality of the service. In 2013, the province recorded the driest year in three decades.

[...]

Water sector characteristics and development

The sectoral characteristics and developments provide the specific setting in which the partnership is placed. As such, it focuses specifically on the water sector in the mentee country and with respect to the mentee utility. This setting consists of an institutional dimension and bio-physical characteristics of service provision. The institutional dimensions relate to the legal setup of the sector, policies related to the water services sector, organizations involved in the regulation and operations of water services provision, and financing of investment and operations. In examining the sectoral characteristics and developments, it is crucial to distinguish between different responsibilities within the water services sector: policy formulation and implementation, regulation of service providers, and actual service provision.

Institutional: Legislation and policies

13. Please describe briefly the sectoral setup of the provision of water services: What are the different responsibilities (policy formulation, regulation, service provision) in the water services sector and which organizations are attributed these responsibilities? What is the relationship between these organizations?
14. What are important principles² underlying the water services sector as defined in government laws, regulations and policies?
15. What reforms have taken place in recent years? How have they influenced the evolution of the water services sector?

Example extracted from the WOP case study: COPASA MG and EMSAPUNO S.A.

Water utilities in Peru are known as EPS (Empresas Prestadoras de Servicios). The Empresa Municipal de Saneamiento Básico de Puno - EMSAPUNO S.A. operates as a municipal utility within the framework of the National Legislation of Peru for the provision of urban water and sanitation services. It is a publically-owned company limited by shares, with the municipalities of Puno as the majority shareholder, and Desaguadero as the minority shareholder. For about 31 years, EMSAPUNO used to provide urban water and sewerage services to 4 municipalities in the region of Puno, i.e. Puno, Llave, Juli y Desaguadero, but, due to political decisions in the recent years, it now provides water services to the cities of Puno and Desaguadero exclusively.

In the national context, EMSAPUNO depends most directly on the federal Ministry of Housing, Construction and Sanitation (Vivienda), whose water and sanitation branch emits policies for the water utilities. EMSAPUNO also has a direct relationship with the National Superintendence of Water and Sanitation Services (SUNASS), which regulates the performance, development, and auditing of the utilities, regulates and approves the tariff structures, and defines improvement programs for the utilities. The Ministry of Health (MINSA) oversees drinking water quality aspects, and the National Water Authority (ANA), which is associated with the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAG), regulates and controls water permits. The Ministry of Environment (MINAM) controls water intakes, treatment and distribution and the protection of water resources from contamination.

[...]

-
2. With principle we refer to things like having the utility operate on the basis of cost recovery, viewing water as a public good, having the utility operate as an autonomous entity, etc.

Bio-physical characteristics

16. What water sources are available for water services provision (surface water, groundwater, etc.)?
17. What are the prevailing qualitative and quantitative issues/challenges with respect to these water sources?
18. What are the main characteristics of the topography in the covered area and how do these impact on the water conveyance and distribution system and the wastewater collection and sanitation networks?

Partnership creation

Having described the context in which the partnership operates in the previous chapter, the next block highlights the development towards a partnership and the resulting design of the envisaged partnership. Two strongly related components are differentiated in the formation and design of the partnership block. The first concerns the history of collaboration and essentially concerns how and under what conditions the partners first started working towards a partnership. The second component concerns partnership formation and describes how the partners engaged in the partnership. This dimension not only looks at the partnership itself, but also at the specific interests and motivations of the partnering utilities and other organizations involved in forming the partnership. It also describes the financing of the WOP, the diagnosis of needs and the agreement characteristics.

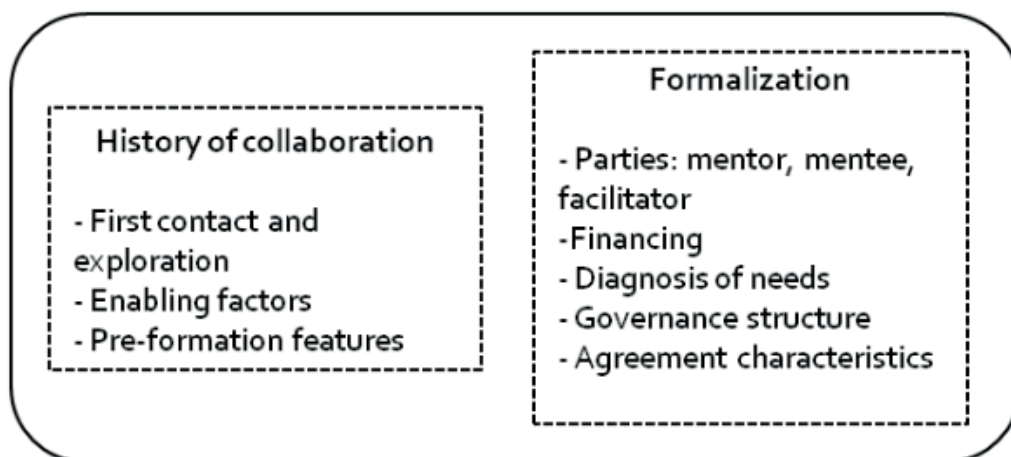


Figure 3: Partnership Creation Building Blocks

History of Collaboration

The history of collaboration focuses on the origins of the creation of the partnership. Every single water partnership is unique, depending on the external context, the diverse background conditions of implementation and the specific characteristics of the partners stemming from different surrounding environment. This uniqueness is brought to the partnership by the different partners and greatly influences the functioning of the partnership. Brinkerhoff³, in fact, argues that the pre-history of collaboration can be considered “as a ‘facilitative factor’ of the partnership formation processes”. In this block important questions focus on first contact of the partners, enabling factors which support initial collaboration and other significant pre-formation features.

First contact

19. What was the reason for the first meeting(s) of the partners? Were all partners willing to enter the partnership?
20. What was the nature of this initial contact (type of contact, level at which contact took place, frequency, etc.)?
21. What was the timing since the first idea till the final formalization? Is it possible to develop a time-line of different steps in the initial creation of the partnership?

Enabling factors

22. Were any facilitating third parties involved in enabling collaboration between the partners (donors, network organizations, etc.)? What was the nature of the role played by these organizations?
23. How important was this introduction phase in setting the foundations for building confidence and trust between partners? How is the initial ‘culture’ of cooperation and what was the initial level of trust among partners?
24. What is the role of pre-formation features such as willingness to adapt and share knowledge, receptivity to new solutions, flexibility in taking corrective action, responsiveness to unexpected situation or existence of champions? What were the most important factors in making the partnership successful?

3. Brinkerhoff, J. 2002, p.220. *Assessing and improving partnership relationships and outcomes: a proposed framework*. Evaluation and Program Planning 25.

Example extracted from the WOP case study: SIAAP and ONEE

The genesis of the WOP goes back to the 1990s when a Director of the Moroccan utility, who was then employed in France as a Senior Engineer, first met with SIAAP's General Manager. He later joined ONEE and when the Moroccan utility took on sanitation service provision in 2001, he sought collaboration with his previous professional contacts in France to assist his utility in this transition.

The WOP developed in two distinct phases with joint financing from the partners. Contrary to many other WOPs, no external funding was necessary. From 2002 to 2008, the WOP had broad objectives and consisted for the most part of 15-day visits by Moroccan delegations to the Paris facilities of SIAAP, four or five times a year. In this first phase, SIAAP covered the expenses of visiting professionals from ONEE. In 2009, a second agreement to achieve more concrete results based on ONEE's expressed needs incorporated seven thematic "improvement tracks" developed via peer-to-peer exchanges, beginning with water quality. In this current phase, expenses are more equally shared and experts from SIAAP have spent more time in Morocco, which has improved knowledge sharing.

[...]

Partnership Formalization

The formalization process concerns the actors and partnering mechanisms that emerged through the collaboration between partners. This step describes the efforts of partners in designing an effective partner relationship. In looking at partnership formation, this framework examines the parties involved and their motivations to engage, the partnership characteristics and the different steps at the start of the WOP (financing, diagnosis of needs, agreement).

The parties: mentor, mentee, facilitator(s)

Water partnerships draw together mentor and mentee parties. Both partners can be a single organization or a group/consortium of organizations. In addition, third parties often play a facilitating role by either providing (financial) resources or expertise, which facilitate the formation of the partnership. This section analyzes the parties involved in the partnership. In addition, special attention is given to the interests and motivations that partners and facilitators have to be involved in when facilitating such partnerships.

Mentor

Characteristics

- 25.** Where does the utility come from, what are the core activities of the utility and what are its main size and service characteristics? Please compile in a table the relevant and available Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of the mentor utility.

- 26.** What is the legal status of the utility and who owns the utility or its shares (in case of a shareholding company)?
- 27.** What is the general governance structure of the utility?
- 28.** How do financiers and donors perceive the mentor utility (according to mentor and donors)?
- 29.** Has the utility been involved in other WOPs? If other WOPs exist please list the nature of the WOP (objectives, budget, duration, motivations, etc.)? (How) have experiences and lessons learnt in these other WOPs been brought into this partnership?

Motivations, interests, opportunity⁴

- 30.** Why has the mentor utility engaged in this partnership? What are its motivations and interests in developing such partnership(s)? Please consider the following possible interests/motives:
 - Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): What is the CSR approach in the water utility and how did this partnership fit into this approach?
 - Instrumental Motives: These are motives which are to (eventually) support or strengthen the performance of the mentoring utility (learning new processes and technology, etc.). The partnership may be a way of developing human resources (reward for good employees, attracting young staff), or reducing costs, etc.?
 - Networking motives: The partnership may provide the utility a way to enter into specific networks which provide benefits for the organization.
 - Relational Motives: These motives concern the portrayal of the utility in a broader context. These motives are linked to CSR and the instrumental motives, but revolve around how the utility is viewed by the public, shareholders and other (important) actors a reason to engage in the WOP. Does the partnership provide a degree of legitimacy or enhance the corporate image of the utility?
 - Commercial motives: The WOP may also be a way of exploring new business opportunities in preparation of commercial activities. The WOP then acts as a preparation for such commercial activities.

Mentee

Characteristics

- 31.** Has the utility been involved in other WOPs? What were their experiences with other WOPs?
- 32.** What are the general size and service characteristics of the utility? Please compile in a table the relevant and available Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of the mentee utility.

4. Warning: the researcher should be aware that the mentor may commonly answer CSR as their main motive but maybe not so easily instrumental or commercial motives. The researcher should try to triangulate this data and adapt rationally the questions to the interviewee.

- 33.** What is the legal status of the utility and who owns the utility or its shares (in case of a shareholding company)?
- 34.** What is the general governance structure of the utility as specified by laws and utility statutes?

Financing (related to the mentee utility)

- 35.** What have been the financial investments in water infrastructure of the utility over the past decade? Moreover, in the near future? What types of funds were provided (debt, equity, grant...; specify the amounts with each type of funding)? To what extent are they related to the WOP activities?
- 36.** Who provided the funds and what were the conditions for the disbursement of funds?
- 37.** How do financiers and donors perceive the recipient utility (according to mentee and donors)?

Motivations, interests, opportunity

- 38.** Why did the mentee utility engage in this partnership WOPs? What are its motivations and interests in pursuing this partnership? Please consider the following possible interests/motives:
- Financial motives: The partnership may be a way for the utility to access investment funding linked to the partnership.
 - Instrumental motives: The partnership may allow for capacity development of the mentee utility. Allowing the utility to develop capacity for specific tasks and activities that fall within this partnership, performance of the utility may be enhanced.
 - Networking motives: The partnership may provide the utility a way to enter into certain networks which provide benefits for the organization. Does capacity building drive the mentee to engage?
 - Relational motives: These motives concern the portrayal of the utility in a broader context. Partnering with a well-known mentor utility may benefit the corporate image of the mentoring utility.

Facilitator(s)

Characteristics and nature of facilitation

- 39.** What type of organization(s) facilitated the partnership (multilateral, bilateral or private donor; civil organization: NGO, CBO, RBO⁵, foundation, local authorities, etc.)? Is the facilitator a global, regional, national or local actor?
- 40.** How have they facilitated the process?

5. NGO: Non-Governmental Organizations, CBO: Community-Based Organizations, and RBO: River Basin Organizations.

41. Would have the partnership been possible without their intervention (e.g. financial support, matchmaking, formalization, etc.)?

Interests, motivations, opportunity

42. What are the interests and motivations of the facilitating organizations in forming this partnership? What benefit does this partnership provide for the facilitating organization(s)?
43. What are their pre-requirements and conditions for facilitating this partnership? In other words, is the facilitation of the partnership dependent on specific conditions/features? What is the mandate of the financier? Does it limit the partnership to specific improvements?
44. How do the facilitating organizations view Water Operators' Partnerships? What is their perception of such partnerships and on what do they argue this perception?

Financing (of the WOP)

45. What are the available funds for the partnership? What are the sources of these funds? Which kind of expenses were the funds expected to cover? On what basis were funds to WOPs determined? What were the conditions linked to each of the funding sources?
46. What are the resources that each partner brings to the partnership and are they specified in the agreement?
47. To what extent is the partnership not-for-profit but also not-for-loss (e.g. payment for staff time)? How could the partners assess the cost-effectiveness of the WOP (optimize the use of available resources)?

In the following sections, the framework examines the actual setup of the partnership and how this is formalized through agreements or contracts. What these sections highlight are the more formal arrangements underlying the Water Operators' Partnership. As such, the section describes formalized agreements rather than the actual practice (which is the topic of the next section on partnership implementation).

Diagnosis of needs

48. Who conducted the diagnosis of needs (mentor, mentee, both partners, external consultant...)? How (leading party, sequencing)? Who decided the focus of work? How was this decision made and approved? Was the diagnosis of needs the basis for decision-making and agreement formulation? Was there any form of participatory consultation process?
49. According to the mentee, how was the choice of experts made on the mentor side? Was the match a good one in terms of expertise needed and provided?

Agreement characteristics

50. What type of agreement was established between the parties (Memorandum of Understanding, convention, contract, etc.)?

51. What is the duration and expected planning of the partnership?
52. What are the expected objectives, targets, activities, expected deliverables, outputs and outcomes from the project stipulated in the agreement? Is there any time schedule mentioned in the agreement? How is the monitoring, evaluation, and reporting implemented in the project?
53. How is the remuneration scheme to the partners designed? When is it paid and under which conditions? Are there monetary penalties/incentives, etc...?
54. Does the contract specifically define the roles and responsibilities of each partner within the partnership (decision maker, leader, coach, conflict resolution role, others)?
55. To what extent is there any degree of flexibility to change targets, financial arrangements, deadline, etc. explicitly indicated in the agreement?
56. Does the contract/written agreement specifically incorporate other stakeholders with a say in the partnership (local authorities, donors, civil society, regulator, external auditor, consultancy or engineering firm, others)?
57. Are there partnership governance mechanisms specified in the agreement for:
 - Communication and interaction
 - Work planning and budgeting
 - Accountability and reporting
 - Financial Flows
 - Decision-making processes
 - Roles to take by each partner
 - Conflict resolution process
 - Monitoring and reporting

Example extracted from the WOP case study: WAF and HWA

The WAF, HWA, and the Asian Development Bank signed a Memorandum of Understanding on March 21, 2013. It presents each partner and joint implementation actions succinctly; it does not address questions linked to the general administration of the WOP (objectives, governance structure, etc.). The 12-month work plan details the planned activities (mostly remote consultation, study visits, and on-the-job training) and designated experts for each improvement track, but overall the agreement leaves room for adaptation.

[...]

Project Implementation

The implementation of the partnership forms the core of the Water Operators' Partnership. In this framework, two dimensions have been distinguished in the implementation phase. The first dimension relates to partnership management. Partnership management concerns the inter-organizational dynamics that steer and support the development and implementation of the Water Operators' Partnership activities. Under this partnership management, the framework identifies improvement tracks which form the backbone of the Water Operator Partnership. The improvement tracks concern the different areas for work defined within the project, and for each, their objectives, inputs, activities/processes which lead to desired outputs and outcomes. These outputs and outcomes represent the capacity developed and performance improvements towards which Water Operators' Partnerships are geared. Depending on the scope, the number of improvement tracks may vary. A comprehensive Water Operators' Partnership may incorporate a large number of improvement tracks. A short and narrower partnership may only revolve around one or two tracks.

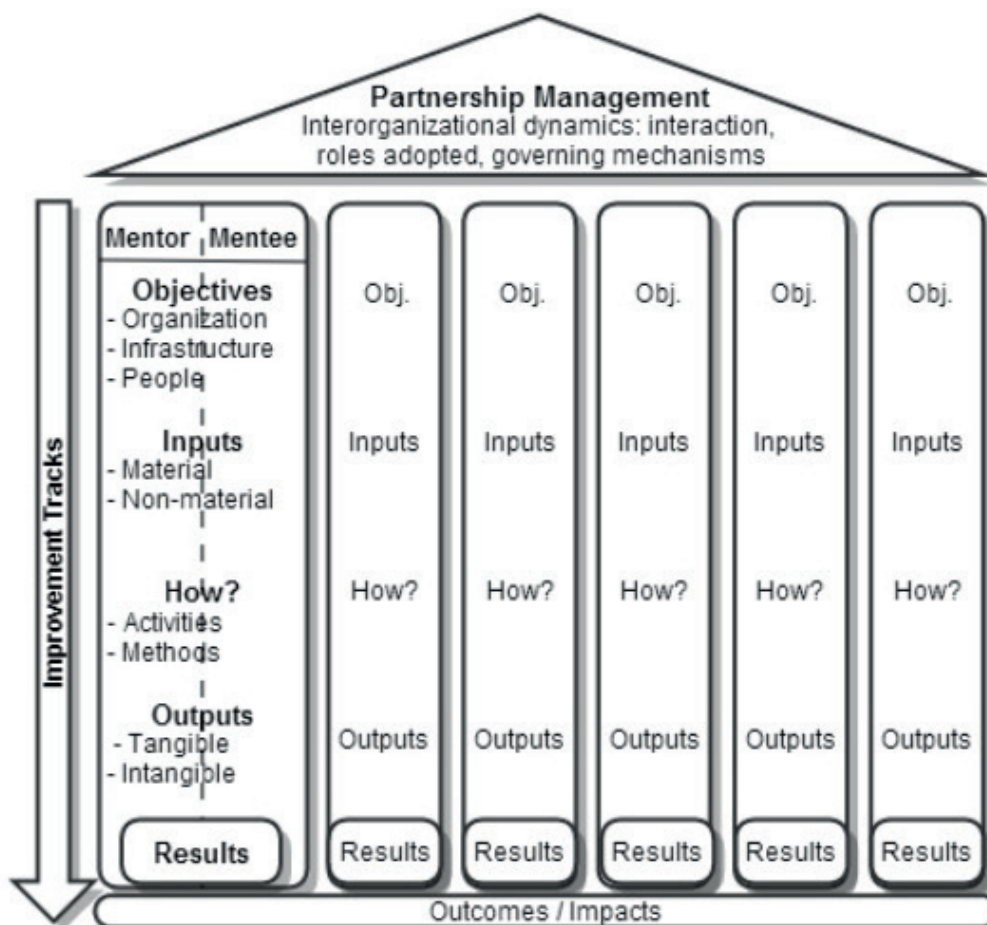


Figure 4: Partnership implementation Building Blocks

Management of the partnership and Inter-organizational dynamics

58. What is the management structure of the project? Is there a specific person (or unit) in charge of the management of the partnership project in each of the partners?
59. Did the partners share an approach to the Water Operators' Partnership in terms of the roles to be played, the way of communicating, or decision-making?
60. How and to what extent do the partners share information about the partnership? Do the partners share information on a regular and comprehensive basis?
61. Have there been conflicts/misunderstandings between partners during the project? What type of conflicts and how have they been addressed? Has the relationship between partners changed after the conflict? Would have been possible to foresee those conflicts?
62. How is the interaction between partners at management level and operational level? Formal (planned) or informal (unplanned)? The frequency of each type of interaction? Collect examples at both levels. (e.g. daily contact working together in the same task, planned periodic meetings, sporadic meetings, occasional informal encounters, sharing coffee, others) moreover, at which levels in the organization (board, management, technical positions, etc.)
63. How has the level of interaction both at management and operational level changed throughout the project? Would you say that partners are working as a team or in an isolated way?
64. What were the perception and role in the partnership (both at management and operational levels) of each partner at the beginning of the project? Has that changed over time?
65. Which were the dominant governing mechanism(s) for decision making at the beginning and has it changed over time⁶:
 - The contract (obligations and responsibilities as stipulated in the underlying agreement of partnership)?
 - Decisions at a high level on one of the partners (i.e., CEO, managers; even if they were not aligned with the contract specifics)?
 - Shared understanding of what were the priorities (even if they were not aligned with the contract specifics)?
 - Trust and mutual understanding?
66. Has the level of trust between partners changed along the partnership time? How? Which have been the most influencing factors contributing to the evolution of trust (milestones of activities, changes)?

6. Governing mechanisms: *market-oriented* (contract), *bureaucratic oriented* (SOPs, lines of accountability, subordination, etc) or *culture-oriented* (trust, shared norms of behavior and reciprocity, a sense of belonging that drives enforcement and compliance)

Improvement tracks implementation

67. What are the *improvement tracks, areas of improvement* and *activities* implemented within each area of improvement in the project so far, both at operational and at management/policy level?
68. Are these improvement tracks different than the initially specified tracks? What possible changes have been made?

For each improvement track, please specify:

69. What are the main objectives of each improvement track?
70. What inputs are used to achieve the objectives?

Material: funds, products, logistics, facilities, commitment

- Can you quantify the total material inputs from the mentees, mentors, and facilitators?
- What financial resources are provided by the mentees, mentors, and facilitators?

Non-material: knowledge, know-how, staff time, network

- Can you quantify the total non-material inputs from the mentees, mentors, and facilitators?
- What resources are provided by the mentees, mentors, and facilitators?

71. What activities are undertaken as part of the improvement track?
72. Briefly describe the process through which the improvement track is implemented.

Example extracted from the WOP case study: WAF and HWA

Energy efficiency

Interest in addressing energy efficiency became a clear priority during the analysis of needs. Half of WAF's operating budget is spent on energy bills for a total of about FJ\$25 million dollars (US\$12 million). The partners agreed on one primary objective for this improvement track: provide training opportunities to WAF staff so they would learn to conduct energy efficiency audits. WOP funds were allocated to bring a HWA energy efficiency audit expert to Suva. A reciprocal visit by a senior WAF manager to Newcastle, Australia, was also planned but has not taken place due to time constraints.

During the last week of November 2013, the HWA energy efficiency audit expert travelled to Nadi and Suva to undertake onsite training for four WAF personnel from the Energy Unit created in 2012 (a senior manager, graduate electrical and mechanical engineers). The topics addressed during this course included:

- Preparing and conducting energy audits
- Drafting energy plans and an energy policy
- Data collection methods
- Creating an energy baseline

The training sessions by HWA helped WAF staff to implement energy saving measures. Based on this capacity-building activity and others (e.g., in India), the Energy Unit started to renegotiate energy supply contracts and to lower energy consumption, starting with four pilot sites. The WAF had achieved a reduction in electricity usage of more than FJ\$2.7 million (approximately US\$1.3) from such initiatives by the end of 2014. Further, management has simulated “competition” between all operational sites to create incentives to reduce energy bills.⁹ Overall, the audit training by HWA has been helpful to WAF in identifying current energy use in its plants and in using this information to prioritize energy saving projects and identify maintenance, safety and control issues.

[...]

Evidence of progress towards impact and effectiveness of the project

Although the analysis of performance-based results is not sufficient to comprehend the functioning and performance of a partnership, it remains an essential element to monitor for most stakeholders, as well as partner utilities, to assess the effectiveness of a partnership. Particularly for WOPs, which have a strong emphasis on strengthening the capacity of the mentee utility, performance of the mentee utility may not provide a full picture of the overall impact of the partnership. In this sense, this framework also employs alternative assessment methods to evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership. The proposed assessment method for WOPs is a multi-faceted one covering different angles of results.

Project Outputs

- 73.** To what extent have the tangible outputs from each improvement track at the management and operational level been achieved (including documents, methods and procedures, equipment, infrastructure, information systems, resource mobilized, etc.)?
- 74.** Have they been delivered in the planned time?

75. If not, why not? Did the initially planned outputs maintain their relevance? , what were the obstacles identified for the delivery of the initially planned outputs? To what extent has the WOP achieved unexpected (or unintended) tangible outputs?

Achievements in capacity and performance of the mentee water operator

Changes in performance of the mentee (KPIs)

76. Have the initially planned targets in key performance indicators of the water operator been achieved?

77. How has the partnership contributed to these changes?

Changes in capacity - organizational and individual- of the mentee water operator

78. For each improvement track what have been the identified changes at the individual and organization level?

Use the proposed framework with the main organizational domains to identify those domains that might have undergone capacity changes during the project implementation for each of the improvement tracks/working areas of the project. Do not limit to the framework categories. There might be changes that are not captured within the given domains of change.

Table 1 Domains of organizational and individual change

Individual	Organization- operational	Organization- strategic	External environment
Skills and knowledge	Structure	Mission/Strategy	Legal framework
Motivation	Management practices	Leadership	
Applied knowledge and skills	Systems	Organizational culture	
	Information	External relations	
	Equipment and infrastructure	Resource acquisition	
Working routines			

Below the definitions for each of the capacity components proposed.

External environment	The <i>external environment</i> is any outside condition or situation that influences the performance of the organization (governance, legal framework, natural resources, environmental conditions, political interference, others)
Organization - operational	<i>Mission and strategy</i> are what the organization’s top management believes is and has declared in the organization’s mission and strategy and what employees believe is the central purpose of the organization.
	<i>Leadership</i> is executives providing overall organization direction and serving as behavioural role models for all employees.
	<i>Organizational culture</i> is the collection of overt and covert rules, values and principles that are enduring and guide organizational behaviour.
	<i>External relations/networking</i> the relationships that the water operator has with different stakeholders and how that supports its strategy achievement.
	<i>Resource acquisition extra</i> resources acquired by the water operator to implement its strategy and work plans.
Organization - operational	<i>Structure:</i> arrangement of functions and people into specific areas and levels of responsibility, decision-making authority, communication and relationships to assure effective implementation of the organization’s mission and strategy.
	<i>Management:</i> practices that managers exercise in the normal course of events to use the human and material resources at their disposal to carry out the organization’s strategy (including elements such as managerial behaviour, work etiquette, professionalism, planning, communication and control).
	<i>Systems:</i> standardized policies, procedures and mechanisms that facilitate work, primarily manifested in the organization’s reward systems, management information systems, and in such control and support systems as performance appraisal, goal and budget development and human resource allocation. This category of the model covers much ground.
	<i>Information:</i> updated information on the conditions of any part of the water utility system, be it infrastructure (E.g. pipes) related or management processes related (E.g. customer database)
	<i>Equipment and infrastructure:</i> tools & equipment to do the job and their and available basic infrastructure for any required business process (E.g. water production and distribution)
	<i>Working routines:</i> is the way the tasks are executed. They are the working practices implemented by each of the units and sub-units daily.

Individual	<i>Individual skills/abilities</i> required behaviour for task effectiveness, including specific skills and knowledge required of people to accomplish the work for which they have been assigned and for which they feel directly responsible.
	<i>Staff motivation i:</i> stirred behaviour tendencies to move towards goals, take needed action and persist until satisfaction is attained.
	<i>Applied knowledge/skills</i> evidence that the newly acquired knowledge and skills are applied by staff in their jobs

79. To what extent have the partnership activities contributed to the identified changes in each improvement track/working area? Please, explain the main activities contributing to each of the identified capacity outcomes.

Sustainability of change trend

80. To what extent can the change trends obtained through the partnership be maintained beyond the partnership project duration?

81. Which conditions should be there for those change trends to be maintained?

Unexpected results derived from the project targeted improvement tracks

82. Have there been unexpected organizational changes to which the project has contributed?

Example extracted from the WOP case study: WAF and HWA

Stronger capacity

This WOP aimed primarily at strengthening the capacity of WAF. The knowledge and working methods acquired through WOPs have contributed to positive changes in mentee performance. As explained previously, attribution of performance improvements to the WOP is not straightforward; nonetheless, processes of individual, organizational and institutional capacity-building do drive these positive changes. The mentee implements new technical and managerial knowledge, know-how and working methods gained through the partnership to improve the quality of service delivery. However, this case study shows that changes in capacity are less likely to be measured. At the beginning of this WOP, staff capacities were not formally identified, and it is hard to precisely evaluate the progress made thanks to this partnership, as both partners recognize.

Increased Access

The partnership has contributed to improved services. According to the partners' conservative estimates based on WAF's intermittent supply list, the quality of drinking water

services improved for 12,732 people who moved from receiving intermittent supply to 24/7 water delivery. Furthermore, 400 people who were previously not connected to the WAF network but located in close proximity to pipes receiving the intermittent supply, gained access to drinking water services. According to the HWA modeling expert, these intermittent supply pipes were effectively inactive (i.e. no water supply), however once the intermittent supply issue was rectified and supply was restored, the adjacent customers were then able to connect.

[...]

Project evaluation

Impact in terms of sector targets

83. To what extent has the partnership contributed to the overall development objectives of the water operator and sector targets? How has the partnership contributed to these objectives?
84. Did the partnership trigger unplanned activities/any change that proved relevant for the development of the sector? What kind of activities and how did they impact the development of the sector?

Effectiveness

85. To what extent have the targeted objectives been achieved so far? Explain.
86. How do internal and external characteristics and ongoing events have an influence on the progress and results achieved through the partnership (size, finance, and budget, sector developments, donor facilitation, government interference, etc.)?

Efficiency

87. Do you think the partnership work was executed efficiently? What could have been done differently to increase efficiency?

Success factors and challenges

88. What are the strengths and weakness of this partnership?
89. Which would you consider the best practices in the partnership?
90. Which would you consider critical success factors in the partnership?
91. Which would you say are the main lessons learned from the partnership?

92. Which would you say are the main challenges learned from the partnership?
93. To what extent is current performance attributable to the partnership according to key informants?
94. To what extent have the partners' behaviors influenced the partnership (commitment, learning intent, and support to knowledge transfer and organizational change, capacity to train the local staff, etc.)? Explain.
95. Can you think of other factors that have positively or negatively affected the project?
96. Is the staff involved satisfied with the working processes of the external partner? Explain why.
97. Is the staff involved satisfied with the results obtained so far?
98. Which are the most valuable activities? Why?
99. Which are the least valuable activities? Why?

Replicability

100. To what extent do you think this partnership project can be replicated elsewhere?
101. What would be the conditions under which this partnership project would be replicable?

Contribution to SDG6

102. To what extent has the WOP contributed to SDG 6.1?
103. To what extent has the WOP contributed to SDG 6.2?
104. To what extent has the WOP contributed to SDG 6.3?
105. To what extent has the WOP contributed to SDG 6.4?
106. To what extent has the WOP contributed to SDG 6.5?
107. To what extent has the WOP contributed to SDG 6.6?
108. To what extent has the WOP contributed to SDG 6.A?
109. To what extent has the WOP contributed to SDG 6.B?

Cross-cutting issues

110. To what extent has the WOP contributed to gender balance?
111. To what extent has the WOP contributed to climate adaptation and resilience of the water operator?
112. To what extent has the WOP contributed to inclusiveness?

Example extracted from the WOP case study: BWS and CCWD

Success factors

Alignment with strategic planning

A key lesson learned is that if the initial analysis of needs serves to align WOP activities with ongoing operational interventions and priorities of the mentee, there is greater buy-in and limited funding can go far. Management and political buy-in on the mentee side were essential to access/free-up the funding necessary to implement changes.

The WOP started at the time the strategic plan of BWS was finalized. As the Chief Financial Officer of BWS highlighted “the WOP benefited from the momentum of the new strategic planning finalized in 2011”. The partnership helped to guide BWS toward the achievement of its strategic objectives. In particular, the influenced the achievement of the following goals directly: Empower Employees (improving knowledge and skills of staff), Increase/ Improve Strategic Partnerships, Improve Operational efficiency, and Effective investment in Technology (GIS, SCADA, billing system). The demand-driven nature of WOPs is expressed in this alignment between the improvement tracks chosen and the strategic objectives of the recipient company. This configuration has allowed, not only emulating the motivation of staff toward the fulfilment of the overall mission of the company but also providing direct instrumental support to achieve the strategic objectives efficiently. Today, BWS is on track with the realization of its strategic plan.

[...]

Challenges

Lack of guiding tools

Despite support received in the creation and formalization of the partnership, the partners were critical of the lack of support available in the implementation of the activities of the WOP. For instance, the mentor expressed its difficulties in preparing the visits and a group adequately from a foreign country. Preparation activities were time-consuming. Still, staff mentioned many improvisations during the visits. Despite such hurdles, the mentor took the partnership extremely seriously and mobilized appropriate resources to develop efficient and simple instruments and monitoring tools which have overall allowed for smooth and efficient interactions.

GWOPA is now developing tools for that purpose to be tested and tuned in collaboration with partner operators.

[...]

For any further questions, please feel free to contact the BEWOP management team, the GWOPA Secretariat or the UNESCO-IHE. You can also consult the gwopa.org website to access full case studies.

Annex 1: Methodology

The figure below represents schematically the overall process proposed to the user to produce a case analysis. Three main phases can be distinguished: planning and preparation, data collection, and analysis and writing. An estimated length for completion of a case study is 6 to 8 weeks, although it depends on many factors such as the depth with which the case focuses on each of the dimensions of the project.

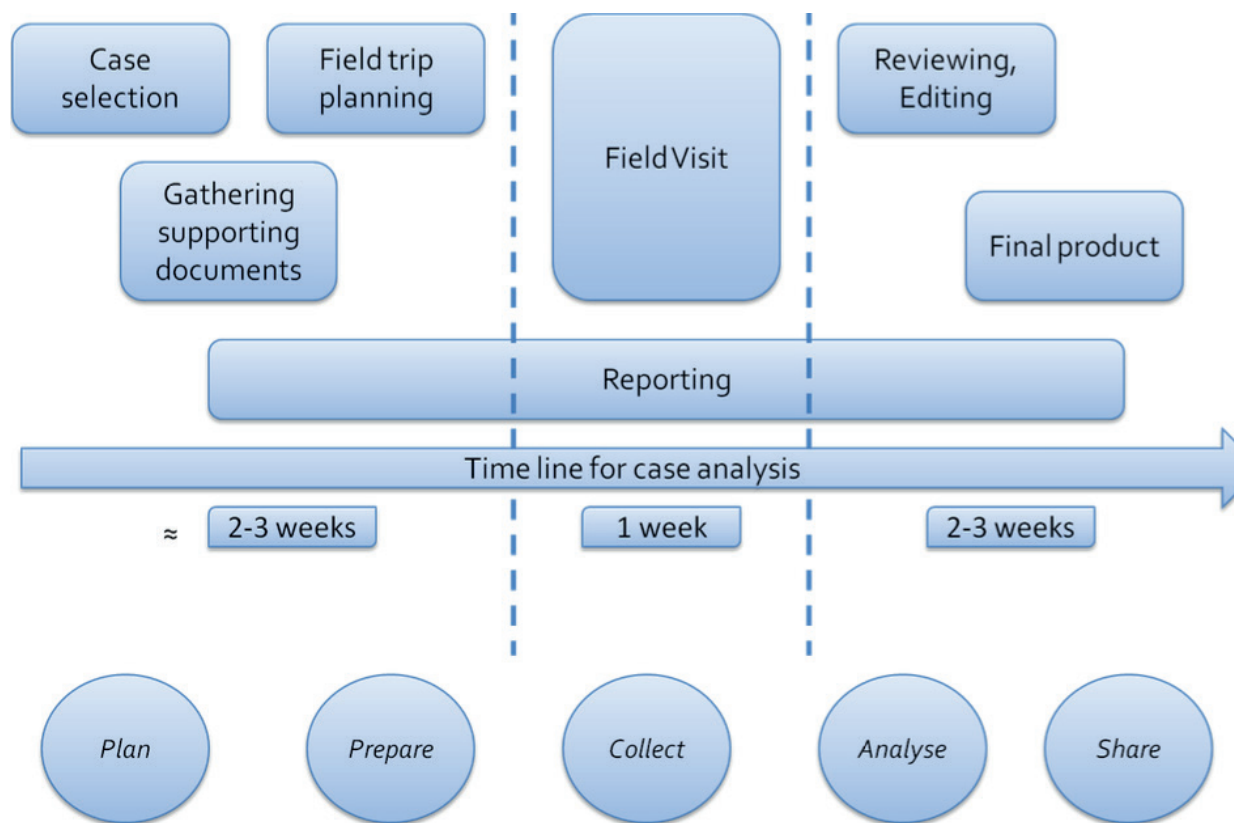


Figure: Case analysis chronological process
(based on Yin, R.K., 2009: Case study research - Design and Methods)

Selection of the case

The selection of the case to analyse is the first step. There is a vast diversity of WOPs worldwide, and the user needs to select a case which fits with the purposes of his/her analysis. Case study selection may be based on location, accessibility to information and willingness to participate of the partners, nature of WOPs (North/South, South/South, national cases), type of funding mechanisms, the scope of the WOP, or size of utilities among others.

Preparation phase

Once the case to be studied has been selected, the user would plan his/her data collection in consultation with the partners involved in the WOP. The user is recommended to introduce the purpose and procedures of the visit to all key stakeholders that would support or hinder the case study completion, at least to the management of both partner water operators. Usually, data collection for the case analysis involves the recipient utility principally, considering that is where the main changes occurred. If possible, a visit to the mentor's office can also be contemplated. In addition, the user should be able to interview donors and third parties that have facilitated the WOP process.

In some cases, the preparation phase can be short and straightforward if the mentee utility is forthcoming and available to receive the user of the framework. In other, it may be much more complicated for many reasons (e.g., political impediment, management reluctance, time constraints). The user must be aware of that and react accordingly. In the meantime, the user should ideally ask for all possible relevant documents in relation with to WOP (agreement, diagnosis of needs, work plan, progress reports, evaluation, presentations, etc.). During the preparation phase, it is recommended to examine the documentation received, first to get more insights on the project before filed work, and then to start analysing and reporting. Besides the user should ideally identify critical informants for the interviews and design tailored-made data collection protocols for each type of key informants. I.e. the questions to be asked to the top management level of the water operator will not be the same as those to ask to the staff at the operational level.

Onsite Data Collection

Data collection is the central activity to undertake in order to gather sufficient, reliable and coherent empirical data. As such, the field visit for data collection requires a strategy to draw the maximum benefits of the visits and interviews. First of all, the user could offer a brief presentation of the purpose of his visit as well as expected activities to carry out (obviously, this should have been done during the preparation phase, but an introduction presentation to a larger audience of the recipient utility might also strengthen the confidence of the interviewees in answering transparently). Our experience is that it is advisable to let the organisation of the field visit follow the stages of the analytical framework. First of all, the user should try to capture the context in which the mentee utility is operating. To do so, the user could ask managers or directors of the utility to present the local context and how it can interfere with their activities. Also, they should introduce the developments of the local water sector, both in terms of the institutional and bio-physical systems. In addition, a short visit to the main facilities of the utility is useful to get an overview of the operational setting. Then, to cover the design and formulation blocks, the user should ask the managers of the partnership to tell the history of the collaboration, its design and formalization. At this stage, lower level management within the utility can be interviewed, especially staff that have actively participated in the diagnosis of needs and the formulation of the agreement. The two following blocks (implementation and evaluation) would ideally need inputs of all staff that has been involved in the WOP improvement tracks implementation. In short, the organisation of the field visit can follow a top-down approach. Focusing initially on management and then concentrating more on operational staff enables the user

of the Analytical Framework to cover the entire framework chronologically. It is advisable to keep flexibility to readapt planning to possible unexpected contingencies.

In addition, some questions in the framework may be more or less applicable for a particular partnership. The user has to assess which questions of a block are relevant and which questions are superfluous. What this means is that the framework guides the broad line of inquiry and provides support for the user undertaking the case study. As such, the framework does not provide a blueprint that should be strictly adhered to.

Analysis

The framework is to allow for an analysis of a particular case. This means that the resulting report should go beyond the mere description of the partnership and also contain an interpretation of processes, activities, etc., of the partnership. Particular importance should be given to the questions 'why' certain things happened the way they happened (rather than just describing these events).

The presentation of findings to enhance the triangulation of information should ideally be adapted to the audience. It can be presented in a way that it addresses the initial aims for undertaking the case analysis. Opportunities for discussion are also necessary to highlight possible differences in interpretations.

Hereafter are some general recommendations:

- Beforehand, understand the logical structure of the AF and, if necessary, ask for clarifications in advance;
- Writing should ideally be made progressive.
- Capture exemplary, innovative and interesting practices-perceptions at different stages of the WOP;
- Identify lessons learned from failures;
- Assessors must be aware that by asking questions they can influence the relations between partners;
- Deviate from the framework if it better serves your purpose.

Share

WOP case studies have a great potential to support in making practitioners contribute to more efficient and effective projects. We encourage the case study writer to share and disseminate it broadly, particularly with GWOPA, so that we can further help with its dissemination Globally and extracting lessons for future global practice.

