



WATER SERVICES PROVIDERS ASSOCIATION (WASPA)
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Report of the WASPA's Good Practices Dissemination & Awards Workshop:



“Acknowledging Exemplary Performance of Water Services Providers”

**November 5th 2015
Pan Afric Hotel Nairobi**



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The WASPA Chairman welcomes the workshop delegation:

Introduction:

In 2012, WASPA embarked on an intensive utility-led 'peer-to-peer' benchmarking programme – supported by Vitens Evides International (VEI), VEWIN (WASPA counterpart in The Netherlands) SNV Kenya, Kenya Water Institute (KEWI) and other partners (WASREB and GIZ). Through a yearly performance assessment (comparison) exercise¹ -acquired insight in utility performance² and 'leading practices' of peers- serves to support you in developing or refining utility-specific Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs). The good practices dissemination and awards workshop was organized in Nairobi, Kenya, on 5 November 2015 with a view to acknowledge achievements of trendsetters in the Peer-to-Peer Learning under the 4 year WASPA benchmark program.

¹ Printout of the ± 50 PI graphs (pertaining to NRW, Cost Recovery and Service Levels) disseminated to participants.

² And underlying work processes, behavioral and capacity constraints.



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The event was organized to achieve the following broad goal; to unravel the (*internal and external*) actors and factors that ***contributed to the development/initiation of the 'leading practices'*** (i.r.t. 'NRW', 'Cost Recovery', 'Service Levels' or related topics i.e. GIS, KEWI training in use of NRW equipment e.g. in meter calibration), how were (which hurdles) overcome?

Specific objectives of the workshop included:

- I. *Disseminating the emerging leading practices of front runners to date;*
- II. *Acknowledging the positive participation of the growing number of utilities that made the initiative a success.*
- III. *Motivating other WASPA members to be part of the broad peer-to-peer learning curve organized as a collective effort of the utilities by the Association.*
- IV. *Strengthen networking and collaboration of key stakeholders (including partners) in the water services sector in the efforts to address performance of water & sewer services utilities in Kenya.*

This was also during the official closure of the four-year EU-funded 'Benchmarking and Collective Learning' programme, 60³ representatives from Water Service Providers (WSPs) across the country and lead financing and implementing partners gathered in Nairobi to celebrate achieved improvements in utility performance.

Sharing of theme - specific lead practices⁴ and awards:

NRW Management/reductions:

NB: The Best improved or trendsetter in NRW reduction/Management award was presented to Oloolaiser by Luuk Veens, Financial Director VEI:

1. ***GIS in Asset Management & Development by Muranga WSP***: the sharing highlighted the following:

Need for GIS in the utility:

- Need to Know location pipe networks within the area of jurisdiction (types, sizes)
- Need to Know spatial locations of water appurtenance e.g. Sluice valves, Air valves, washout.
- Rerouting and zoning exercise (Great importance during meter reading and NRW monitoring exercise)
- Determining water and sewerage area coverage and priority areas.
- To show pressure distribution, burst and leakages prone area within system for appropriate action.

Recommended GIS for the following uses:

- To generate maps and layouts for water and sanitation project proposals.

³ See attached Annex 1 with Participants list.

⁴ See attached Program annex 2



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- Planning of water development in relation to other town infrastructures like roads, power and telecommunication.
- Development of hydraulic models for water supply system which give the effect of any alteration on the system.

2. ***From talking to reducing NRW by Oloolaiser WSP:*** the sharing highlighted the following:
Factors necessitating action in the utility:

- Increased Non Revenue Water Levels both Physical & Commercial Losses
- Non digitized systems/Networks
- Increased water demand vis a vis supply
- Lack of Capacity in addressing NRW challenges strategically
- Increased Costs / Expenditure vis a vis revenue collection

Factors and actors necessitating success in NRW interventions;

- Willingness to learn from others
- Peer to Peer sharing and learning from others – Meter testing from Nyeri; GIS from Kericho; Good workmanship and quality materials from Embu
- District Metered Area (DMA) approach – developed 5 pilot areas, currently doing 10
- Development of Performance Improvement Plans
- Capacity Building, Tools and Fittings Support for DMA isolations – from Partners i.e. Vitens Evides, WASPA and KEWI
- Culture change levels improved;
- Caretaker system adopted on established DMAs
- Bulk SMS system adopted for ease of communication
- Endeavor to increase customer satisfaction

3. ***System Hydraulic Modeling by Kisumu WSP:*** the sharing highlighted the following:

Why use a hydraulic model?

There are two ways to use a hydraulic model:

- For operational studies
- For strategic scenario studies

Operational examples:

- Locate and quantify NRW (the difference between expected and real pressures and flows)
- See the effects of operating valves in the network (e.g. when a pipe or area has to be shut down for maintenance)
- Optimisation of the operation of reservoirs, pumps and tanks in the system (Dunga / Kajulu / Kibuye / Watson etc.)
- Determine whether there is enough pressure for new connections



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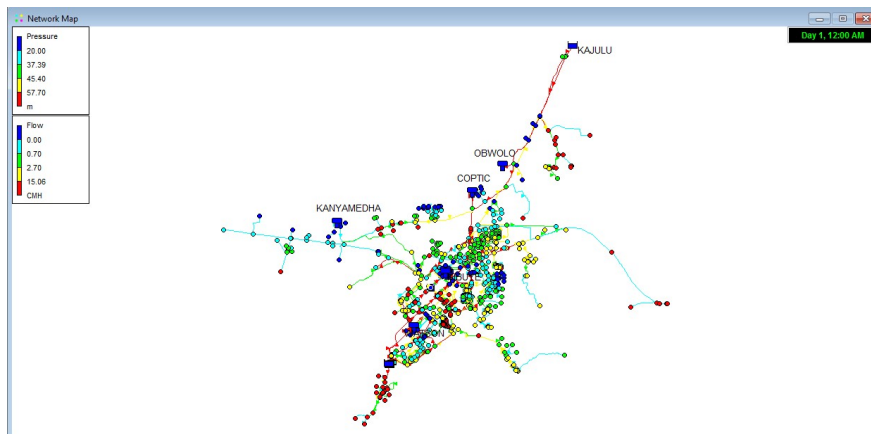
Strategic examples:

- Study the effects of future extensions, growing demand per connection and decrease of NRW on the whole system i.e. scenario studies
- Determine the necessary local adjustments for new connections in new areas for the next years
- Plan and improve a system's hydraulic performance
- Calculate the required specifications for new pipelines, pumps and tanks

Kiwasco's hydraulic model;

The model is integrated with GIS through GIS-centric hydraulic modeling software [Epanet]; Why?

- GIS provides up-to-date information
- Reduced response time in reconstruction of a model
- Used to manage attribute data of hydraulic model input sources[easy manipulation of data]



Service Levels Improvements:

NB: The Best improved or trendsetter in Service Level improvement award was presented to Meru WSP by Eng. Robert Gakubia – CEO WASREB:

4. Consumer Satisfaction Survey by Nakuru WSP: the sharing highlighted the following:
The general goal of the Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS) in Nakuru WSP is usually to:

- Assessing what Nawassco customers feel of the service delivery.
- Identifying opportunities to improve the customer's relations.
- Assessing the customers' satisfaction levels and ways of boosting it.

Outcomes and observations for improvements:

- Improve system, speed and efficiency in response to customer complaints.



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- Expand the prepaid metering services in Low Income areas to allow greater reduction of water loss and also prudent management to maximize company earnings.
- Allow for community involvement in water projects and also offer clear information on the same especially in cases of partnerships with CDF and other potential donors and partners.
- Improve water and sanitation services

5. The “Customer is King” by Meru WSP- Why an integrated system in customer management?: the sharing highlighted the following:

Manual system of customer complaints resolution in MEWASS was prone to

- Missing documents, time wasting in tracing the level of customer issue resolution and lack of accurate and timely reports on the customer issue resolution.
- Lack of ease of cross referencing in different aspects of customer details e.g. meter, payment, profile, billing, meter readings, tariff and issues management.

With Customer Information Management System therefore realized;

- Efficient information sharing
- Reducing staff dependence while working

Challenges during implementation

- Staff computer literacy levels were low
- Lack of enough computer equipment
- Lack of supervisors full support of the system

6. Improved Consumer Dialogue by Mavoko WSP: the sharing highlighted the following:

Key factors in customer dialogue:

- Customer complaints (response time) and compliments - registration, tracking action
- Billing – accuracy, timeliness, disconnection notice
- Supply interruptions/failures
- Finance – ease of payments
- Stakeholder involvement in water issues
- Collaboration with WAGs
- Access to service existing and planned – new connections
- Cashless office – Mobile money, direct banking etc

Tools in place to improve dialogue:

- Hotline number – 0719 148866
- Email – info@mav-water.org
- Short code for bill query- 31155
- Stores-technical-customer care integrated platform in addition to billing software.
- Website
- MPESA payment platform

Results;



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- Improved billing - 98% of our customers receive their bills
- Cashless office – 85% domestic customers pay on MPESA hence reduction of cash risks, improved banking and expenditure controls, reduced costs and/or improved revenues
- Improved customer complaints registration – we have a stores-technical-customer care integrated platform in addition to billing software.
- 100% of complaints registered through the system real-time – enhanced data accuracy
- 100% complaints updated through the system – greater accountability
- Reduction on customer complains related to undelivered bills.
- Significant reduction in expenses, cost for printing and delivery has been eliminated.
- Re-focus of meter readers in more productive areas
- Customers can access and re-print the bills.
- Customers have access to their bills irrespective of location.

Operations & Maintenance Cost Recovery:

NB: The **Best improved or trendsetter in O&M Cost coverage improvement award was presented to Embu WSP by Dirk Schaefer** (Program Manager - GIZ)

7. ICT in Billing, collection & communication by Embu WSP: the sharing highlighted the following:

ICT systems in place:

- Accounting software - Sage pastel
- Billing software – Majics
- SMS biling
- GIS software
- Mpesa for collection

ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE

- EWASCO uses sage pastel for its accounting software which has following modules:
- Accounting module - Made reporting easy, multiple reports
- Payroll module – Easily uploaded into the accounting module by click of button payroll updated
- Human resource module – To manage human resource data thus able to have all staff data centrally
- Stock management module – linked directly into system upon issue of stocks they are updated

All modules are linked into system

EWASCO started using SMS billing in 2010.

Benefits:

- Cost effective a bill costs Ksh 1 instead of postage cost of Kshs 30



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- Saves time to send bills only seconds and batch of bills are sent
- Easy to communicate with all customers now have all contact for the customers
- Maintains report of bills sent for reference

8. Integrating Technology in water & sewer bill payment By Nairobi CWSC: highlights - Leveraging on Technology with various tools;

I. Mobile field Assistant (MFA)

- For monitoring and managing field operations by
 - Meter readings
 - Disconnections and reconnections processes
 - *Customer contracting module in preparation*

II. Jisomee Mita

- The system allows the customer to use a basic mobile phone to:
 - Submit Meter Readings by SMS
 - To have multiple billing in one cycle (a month)
 - Pay for Water as they use
 - Query Account Balance
 - Pay loan
 - Add/Remove another phone from the account

III. E-billing

Starting 1st January 2015, all bills for customers are now sent electronically i.e.

- a. SMS billing
- b. Email (PDF) billing especially for corporate customers
- c. Over 170,000 customers have registered for e-billing

IV. Automatic water dispensers

- a. 4 ATM water dispensers installed in Mathare Mashimoni on pilot

V. Maji voice

- a. It is a mobile based customer complaint handling and management system
- b. A platform for two-way communications between citizens and water providers using affordable, accessible and user-friendly technologies; developed by WASREB with support of World Bank
- c. In NCWSC the workflow is based on the customer service charter; For NCWSC customers access MAJIVOICE through USSD *888# on mobile phones

VI. Tambua services

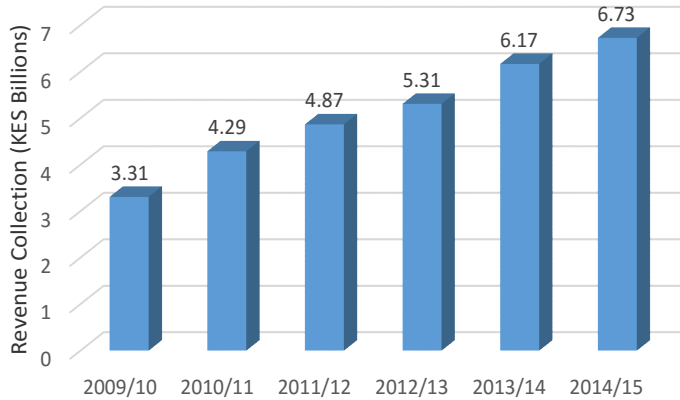
- “Tambua services” assist in identifying imposters who masquerade as employees of NCWSC
 - SMS sent through USSD *888#
- Media campaigns have been done to educate customers



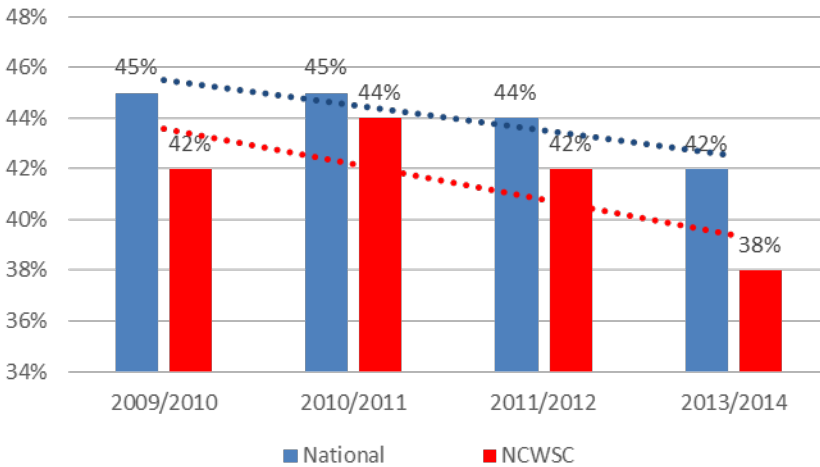
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- Imposters have been arrested with the support of customers

Annual revenue collection trend



NRW Trend



9. **Increase in O&M Cost coverage by Kericho WSP:** highlighted the following - Issues:

- Everyone clueless of the Spatial Location of most assets.
- High NRW – Less Billings/Revenue Collection;
- Poor Customer Management/Communication - Complain Resolution;
- Porous and Poor Customer Data Base;
- Very high O&M costs.
 - Poor Data Management and Wrong Reporting.
 - Change Management and Integrity issues among staff.



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Process:

a. Customer Identification Survey (CIS);

- Billing problems for correction.
- Unbilled metered connections.
- Illegal connections.
- Unfulfilled reconnection request.
- Leaking pipes.
- Potential customers.
- Contacts and details of customers.

b. Integrity Management Toolbox (IM);

- Integrity change process.
- Integrity Instruments.
- Integrity Risks.
- Change management.
- Operation and Performance Improvement.
- Team Work

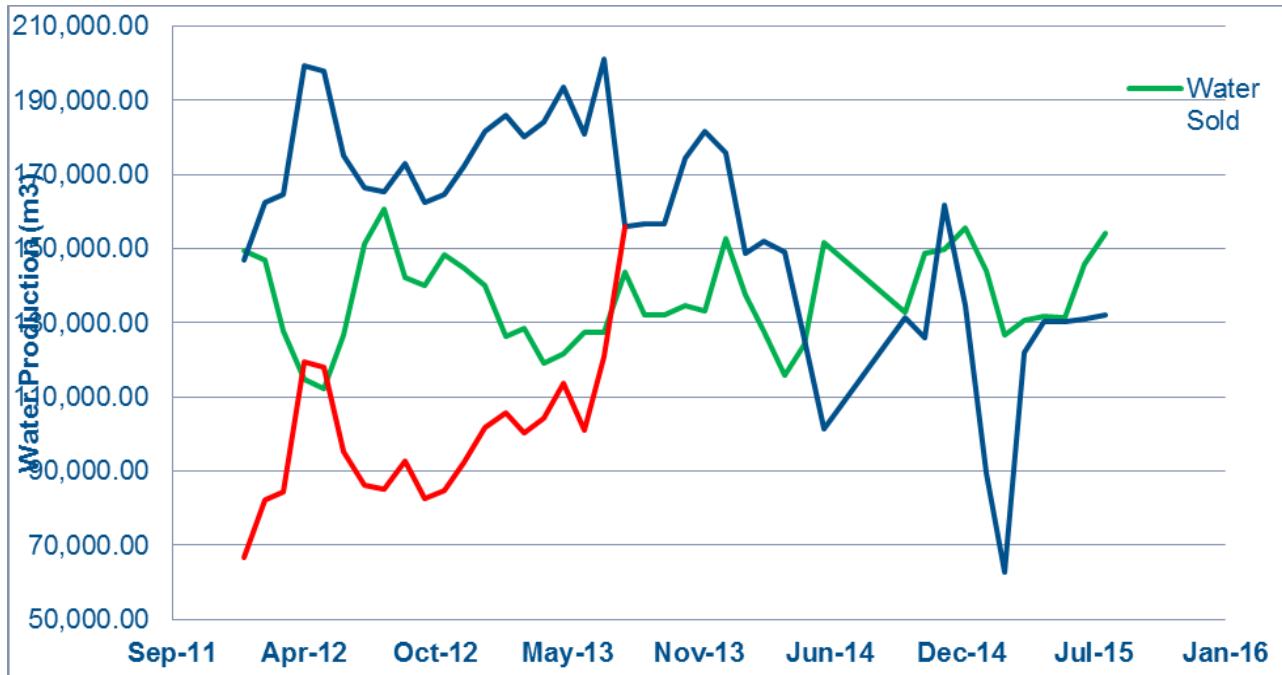
c. Job Cards

- All outdoor staffs capture all their works in a job-card with coordinates and materials used.

d. Strategic Mass Disconnection

- Timely action time;
- Result oriented;
- Proper planning and execution;

Production & billing in M³





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Technical Manager from KEWASCO, Eng Peter Karanja responding to questions regarding “how do you ensure sustained improved integrity among staffs?” during good practices awards diner Nov, 2015

Way forward on the WASPA benchmark program:

Following successful actualization of the WASPA’s utility led benchmark program in the Financial Year 2013/2014 and with growing of participation of the utilities reaching 28 WSPs, plans are underway to;

- Accommodate all interested (voluntary) WSPs in coming years; in deed WSPs participating will have a broad range of peers with similar contextual similarities with whom to learn from;
- WASPA is making heady steps to improve the capacity of the secretariat to manage the processes especially those of data management (collection, analysis & presentation) and to be able to provide need – based and targeted support to the WSPs to enhance their performance improvement agenda. This will include among others;
 - Support in use of NRW reduction equipments available within the Association;
 - In house and on the field trainings on identified topics;



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- Facilitation of technical task group activities bringing together WSPs participating in the peer learning curve;
- WSPs will fully finance (through - WASREB has allowed for tariff approvals) PIP implementation costs as well participation charges for those WSPs continuing in the peer to peer benchmark program; this is envisaged to be in line with WSPs own yearly priority plans as will be reflected in their Regular Adjusted Tariffs;



WASPA's NTA's explaining to WSPs and partners on the realized targets under the EU financed period and on the future outlook of the benchmark program

- WASPA aims at continuing to mobilize for necessary technical assistance from lead implementing partners among them VEI, SNV and KEWI especially under the auspices of 'Performance Enhancement of Water Utilities in Kenya (PEWAK) through benchmarking, collective learning and innovative financing (RVO)'.
 - It is forecast that 25 participating WSPs will show better than average performance (i.e. NRW), including a sales increase of 15% and improved service levels (i.e. pro-poor focus).
 - WASPA will be investing in pro – poor support to WSPs. Accelerated improvement in (pro-poor) water and sanitation services to Low Income Areas households, with access strategies developed for at least 750,000 people



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Other Words of encouragement:

By Resident Project Manager – Reint Jan (VEI)

In a continuous effort to improve the quality of water and sanitation services to the Kenyan public, the results of a yearly performance assessment (comparison) exercise is guiding WSPs in identifying- and replicating 'leading practices' of peers in their own utility-specific context. The Water Services Provider Association (WASPA) has been spearheading the € 1,2M capacity development programme.



Resident Project Manager – Reint Jan (VEI) giving his observations and remarks

Vitens Evides International (VEI)⁵, VEWIN (association of water utilities in The Netherlands), SNV Netherlands Development Organization, the Kenya Water Institute (KEWI), the Water Services Regulatory Board (WASREB) and GIZ are providing capacity development services. Initially targeting 9 WSPs⁶, voluntary participation has since increased to 27. WASPA will further scale-up

⁵ VEI is an international water operator, helping water companies in developing and transition countries to improve their operational and financial performance in a sustainable manner.

⁶ Nyeri, Malindi, Murang'a, Thika, Isiolo, SiBo, Kericho, Nzoia and Ololaiser Water.



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the programme outreach and impact with financial and technical support from the Government of The Netherlands, 25 WSPs, VEI, WASREB, the Water Services Trust Fund (WSTF), UNESCO-IHE and SNV.

Key achievements, to date, include:

A. Qualitative results (leading utility)

- Establishment of dedicated Non Revenue Water teams (**Nyeri**) - leading to tangible reductions in commercial (revenue) and physical (water) losses (**Oloolaiser, Isiolo**)
- Geographic Information System (GIS)-based utility management curriculum and training center established (**Kericho, KEWI**)
- Debt management policies actualized by dedicated debt management teams (**Nairobi, Nakuru**)
- Introduction of innovative technology in reducing billing costs and improve customer convenience e.g. smart phone-based meter reading (**Nairobi, Meru, Kericho**), e-billing (**Embu**), no cash in office policy (**Kitale**)
- Cost reducing energy efficiency improvement measures (**Thika**)
- Digitized registration and reduced response times to type-specific complaints (**Meru**)
- Appointment of pro-poor programme coordinators to spearhead service delivery improvements to the un(der)served residents (**Kisumu, Nakuru, Mombasa, Nairobi**)
- Commercial financing for investments to reduce donor dependency (**Murang'a, Embu, Meru**)

B. Quantitative results e.g. pertaining to NRW reduction

While the *qualitative* results are very encouraging, *quantitative* results/trends are also emerging. The weighted NRW level for the participating WSPs, for example, reduced by 1-2% per year. **Oloolaiser** (serving Ongata Rongai, among other satellite towns), for example, reduced NRW levels within a designated pilot neighborhood from 66% to 44% in one year through meter testing/servicing/replacement efforts. As a result, sales levels increased by more than 50% within the pilot area and 20% (through up-scaling) at company level.



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Embu Water receiving an award for introducing SMS billing to the sector – hereby improving billing reliability, collection (financial gain) and consumer convenience.

Home-grown solutions as the key to performance improvement

Eng. Philip Gichuki (WASPA Chairman, Nairobi Water Managing Director) highlighted that ‘the programme is different (from other capacity development programmes) in that utilities are learning from each other. They have been able to challenge each other so that they can improve in identified priority areas hereby improving levels and sustainability of services by utilities in Kenya. The good thing is: it has demonstrated there is a lot of knowledge among the members - that we can learn from each other and replicate ‘leading practices’ in other utilities. If a utility has attained a certain efficiency, why would others not be able to do so?’

Impact of the programme on Nairobi Water and its consumers?

- 1) Internally: appreciating the importance of (factual) data that you can rely on. This has enabled utilities to realize their weak and strong points - to make decisions: what can be done to improve on efficiency and quality of service. This is the approach that now is being taken by most of the 27 participating utilities.



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- 2) Peer-to-peer: utilities are better able to focus and prioritize performance improvement needs. Everyone is talking about Non Revenue Water, for example. There are utilities who have now units that are specifically focused on addressing NRW. We have heard utilities promoting investments which are generating good financial returns (editor: e.g. meter testing/calibration/servicing/replacement) and improving service levels.
- 3) Externally: the consumer is able to benefit from more efficient services (value for money), improved access (supply hours, pressure, quality) through reinvested revenue and other services e.g. SMS billing, bill querying and payment through mobile money.

In motivating the award of the contract to the consortium partners, Sanne Willems (Programme Officer EU Delegation) reiterated the uniqueness character the programme: *'We didn't want to go for capacity building in the traditional sense. We heard a lot today about consultants being sent to a water company not really delivering what is expected. What we see now is that the change comes from within. In the four years that the programme has been implemented, it's actually not going to stop here. We can see that there has been a huge cultural change where it is not bad that to show that you are not performing that well. It is actually good to show that you are not that well but that you are working on improving. If you compare today with four years ago: a) the performance figures look better in many cases i.e. real figures: truer picture, b) acknowledging where we stand we can make huge improvements and we have seen a lot of these improvements today. The idea is not to bring external knowledge to tell companies how to do it. They have a lot of knowledge but they have different knowledge and bringing them together has resulted in what we hoped: that there is a different way of working basically'. Benchmarking sounds abstract but we've heard concrete examples of the benefits for consumers today: better customer service, much easier to pay bills (based on real figures), network expansion through generated revenue'.*

Harm Duiker (Country Director, SNV Netherlands Development Organization) added *'self-regulation is the key word here. We can stimulate some change from outside, but the industry –the*



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water companies- have to self-regulate their performance.



Kakamega Busia receiving an award for the extemporany contributions towards engaging local community in a Public Private Community Partnership for sustainably managed water systems from Harm Duiker (Country Director, SNV, Kenya)

Peer-to-peer learning through benchmarking is key, driven by the companies themselves (through WASPA). What I have seen here today in the presentations it's enormous what has happened in all those companies compared to some years ago. I see really a momentum and a movement and healthy competition (stimulated by awards)'.

The Programme Manager, Reint-Jan de Blois (Vitens Evides International) further emphasized the complementary contribution of participating partners. *'We have been working with GIZ and WASREB who have helped to create a lot more transparency in the sector by putting sector performance on the agenda, in the spotlight. Beginning to mirror utilities in terms of their performance. Combined with this programme, utilities are increasingly internally questioning each other and saying, ok, what needs to be done to achieve that performance improvement which we ultimately all are trying to support as partners. That has been a unique combination which has turned*



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out to be quite productive. For us as Vitens, VEI, we are also water operators. For us this is also a learning experience. We don't have the illusion that we are bringing in the solutions. We are learning from our Kenyan peers - how to apply approaches technology in a different -Kenyan- context. That is what the programme is celebrating'.

Dirk Schaeffer (Water Sector Reform Programme Manager, GIZ) further underlined the complementarity value of 'regulatory' and 'utility-led (peer-to-peer)' benchmarking: 'It's instrumental to have what WASREB has been doing as the regulator for so many years now, creating that mindset that we need data in the sector, that you need transparency, that you publish that information. This is slightly different from the approach that under this EU project but it is a perfect combination. In addition to creating that national transparency and that accountability that comes with it as the role of the regulator, a learning platform was introduced. You look at the data, analyze it and you also provide a platform for exchange and learning. That is something which the utilities amongst themselves have taken up. We've seen very strongly examples here and I think that the combination of accountability that has come from regulatory benchmarking in addition to platform that goes more into depth in understanding what want well, what goes wrong within the individual utility and then also providing the platform for peer-to-peer learning. That is the added value which really came in with this programme'.

The WASREB CEO, Eng. Robert Gakubia, underscored the value of the localized benchmarking programme: *'Many benches have been marked during foreign trips, while this benchmarking initiative focuses on local solutions for local problems'.*

Other Acknowledgements:

- I. Nairobi CWSC** was presented with an award for *the promotion of Associative Culture* following;
 - Identified as lead WSP in motivating a positive networking amongst WSPs and stakeholders both locally and internationally;
 - Promoted the interests of Kenya WSPs being the very largest⁷ utility in Kenya
- II. Eng Joseph Nguiguti** formerly the Managing Director was presented with an award for *being the longest serving retired Managing Director* following;
 - Spearheaded the formation of the Association as a voluntary membership association of Kenyan water utilities;

⁷ This category of WSPs is established by WASREB as according to the number of connections. According to WASREB's IMPACT 8 Report Nairobi CWSC had a total of 522,141 connections .



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- Has led Nyeri WSP towards achieving the sector benchmarks on performance especially on NRW, O & M cost recovery and service levels. Nyeri WSP has over the years being the best ranked WSP by WASREB.
 - Has been instrumental to provide managerial and technical mentorship to other operators and utilities in their endeavor to performance improvements.
- III. **Nyeri WSP** was presented with an award for *being the most active member* following;
- Has been prompt in payment of annual subscription fees as well as other levies owed to the Association. Nyeri has since becoming a member paid up the subscription fee by the first month July of every financial year;
 - Was identified as dynamic and active in all WASPA related activities i.e. bi monthly meetings, Annual General Meetings, workshops/trainings, WASPA benchmark program among others
 - Nyeri WSP has also closely liaised with the Association in the identification, dissemination and sharing of technical and other best practices. It was observed that majority of WSPs visited Nyeri WSP at one point for benchmarking and learning. Nyeri WSP also provided technical support to the Association especially in the training on NRW as well calibration of equipments for the Association and other members.

Special thanks:

On behalf of the Executive Board, the Secretariat and all Members, the WASPA Chairman, wishes to thank all the WSPs who prepared to make their sharing during good practices dissemination workshop. Inevitably this would not have been a success without the active participation of other members (both WSPs and other) who attended the workshop.

Special appreciation is also extended to the program's implementing partners who provided technical and financial resources to develop the program that is currently anchored in the WASPA Strategic Plan 2013 – 2017. The European Union, Vitens Evides International, SNV Kenya, KEWI, GIZ as well as WASREB have been very close to the heart of the program.

It is our hope that this product/service will be facilitated to benefit all the WSPs now and in the future.