MONITORING **W**ASH **in S**CHOOLS (WinS)

This checklist and associated details that follow provide generic guidance to create or improve national WinS monitoring frameworks. These steps can be modified as needed based on country context. Monitoring should be one component of a larger package including national policies, guidelines, standards, strategy, and budget for WinS.

Please review the reflection questions to prepare for Friday's monitoring session.

❑ **Agree on roles and responsibilities**

Convening key actors to agree on roles and responsibilities for WASH in schools, including monitoring, can strengthen national efforts and promote the effective use of resources. Efforts are typically led by the Education sector in coordination with Health, Water, Sanitation, and other key sectors depending on national context.

Reflections: Who is responsible for monitoring WinS in your country? How were roles & responsibilities determined?

❑ **Identify a monitoring system**

It is recommended to include the SDG4 indicators in the EMIS to be able to measure progress which can feed into SDG reporting for Education and provide comparable data between countries. Some countries may also want to measure compliance with national guidelines in more detail, a such as the Three Star Approach, and may adopt a separate stand-alone questionnaire or an attachment to the EMIS (to not overload the EMIS system).

Reflections: How is WinS monitored in your country (e.g. EMIS, standalone survey, not monitored, etc)? Why is that system used? Is this working well?

❑ **Select indicators and questions**

The SDG indicators for WinS can be monitored with seven simple questions (Figure 2). These are intended to be universally applicable and provide a starting point for national monitoring. It is recommended to use the JMP wording, which allows for comparison between countries. For guidance, see Resource A. In countries with enough resources to monitor beyond the basic service level, there are additional 'expanded' questions that countries may wish to select from and adapt to support monitoring of additional national priorities. The core and expanded questions can be directly copied and modified from Resource B. When identifying questions, it's important to ask how the collected data will be analysed and used. There are many things that are interesting to collect data about, but what are the key things that will inform action?

Reflections: Can your country report on all the SDG elements for WinS (underlined in Figure 1)? What (if anything) is missing? If some are missing, why? If your country monitors them all, how was your country able to do this?

❑ **Collect and analyse data**

Some countries collect data through paper questionnaires, while others use digital systems. Digital reporting can save time on data analysis, but the transition can be challenging if a digital system is not already in place. For countries wanting to transition to digital platforms (e.g. KoBo Toolbox, ODK), expect the shift to take time and create a plan for some schools to continue using paper-based options as necessary. When analysing data, it is helpful to disaggregate by urban/rural, pre-primary/primary/secondary, and by sub-national regions (provinces or districts) as well as other nationally relevant categories, to support tracking inequities. It is also important to analyse data in a way that answers monitoring questions. For example, if data on sanitation are analysed as a proportion of toilets, it's not possible to respond to the SDG indicator which is the proportion of schools. Analysis guidance is provided in Resources A and B.

Reflections: How are data collected and analyzed? (e.g. on paper, mWater, Kobo, electronic EMIS system, etc). Why? Is this working well?

❑ **Disseminate and use data to inform policy and action**

WinS monitoring data should be disseminated to local, district, national and global levels. Feedback mechanisms to schools provide a strong motivator to induce change, specifically if the school community is involved in the monitoring process on school level. Publishing results in annual statistical digests or with a link to a WinS dashboard on the MoE website is one way to support data access and sharing and provides transparency on the status of WinS. Results can also provide a 'checklist' of what to focus on at district and school levels. Data can be shared globally by submitting reports, microdata, or data tabulations to the JMP at info@washdata.org. Monitoring data can be used to advocate for resources, inform policy changes, and support planning. Continued monitoring over time to track progress can support SDG monitoring, guide effective national and local intervention, and encourage improvement toward every child going to a school where they have the healthy environment needed to promote focus, learning, and equity.

Reflections: How are data reported and used in your country to improve WinS? Why? Is this working well?

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Resources

> **Principles to make WinS monitoring sustainable**
> - Keep it SIMPLE
> - Use existing systems for data collection, data management and resources where possible (e.g. EMIS)
> - Consider how data will be analysed and used to be sure questions are easy to analyse and report (e.g. multiple-choice questions are more complicated to analyse than single-response questions)
> - Limit questions to a number that is easily manageable
> - It's not possible to measure everything. A simple monitoring framework that is used to make decisions is better than a complicated detailed framework where data are not analysed or used.

Resource A: Core Questions and Indicators for Monitoring WASH in Schools in the Sustainable Development Goals (2016)

Resource B: Excel-based resource with core and expanded questions on WinS that can be copied and modified, in addition to data analysis guidance and tabulation (2022)

Resource C: JMP data submission for SDG monitoring of WASH in schools (2023) (one of many options to submit data)

All resources can be downloaded here:

Q&A

What is 'monitoring'?

Monitoring is the systematic collection of performance data to assess the progress and achievement of policy objectives against set targets and to identify and lift implementation bottlenecks[1]

Why is WinS important?

WinS is critical for the **health and education of children**. Children spend a significant part of their day at school where water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services can improve educational opportunities and decrease the potential for disease transmission between students, while addressing issues around dignity, particularly for girls.

WASH changes the school atmosphere to create a safe, hygienic, and positive environment that encourages attendance, learning, and improved performance. Additionally, interventions for social and behavioural change are often more effective in children than in adults, and children can become agents of change in their families.

Why monitor WinS?

Monitoring is a key step to ensuring children have access to WASH in their school. **If it isn't monitored, it can't be improved.** We must collect information to understand the current situation and use that data to inform action. Regular data collection allows progress tracking and informs improvement over time and can serve as an advocacy, accountability, and capacity development tool in the process.

> **4 QUALITY EDUCATION**
>
> **4.a** Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide **safe,** nonviolent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all
>
> **4.a.1** *Proportion of schools with: …(e) basic drinking water; (f) single-sex basic sanitation facilities; and (g) basic handwashing facilities (as per WASH indicator definitions)*

Monitoring data are also needed to track progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDG 6 targets aim for 'universal access' to safe drinking water (6.1) and sanitation and hygiene (6.2) 'for all' which imply all settings and populations. Furthermore, **SDG 4 (Quality Education)** includes an explicit reference to WASH in the school setting, as a key component of a 'safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environment' (4.a).
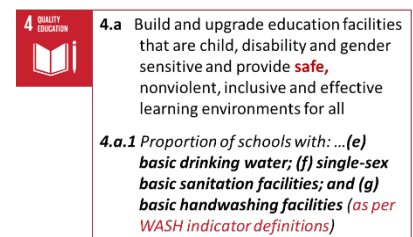
What are the SDG indicators for WinS?

The basic service level represents a universally applicable minimum standard. Harmonized indicators for monitoring 'basic' WASH services in schools have been defined by a global task team from multiple regions and organizations convened by the JMP. These define the criteria (in italics in Figure 1) for meeting the SDGs for basic WASH services in schools.

For countries where the basic service level is not aspirational, a higher 'advanced' service level can be defined that is appropriate to the national context. For guidance, see Resources A and B.
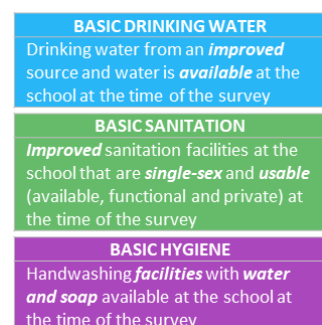
> **BASIC DRINKING WATER**
> Drinking water from an *improved* source and water is *available* at the school at the time of the survey
>
> **BASIC SANITATION**
> *Improved* sanitation facilities at the school that are *single-sex* and *usable* (available, functional and private) at the time of the survey
>
> **BASIC HYGIENE**
> Handwashing *facilities* with *water and soap* available at the school at the time of the survey

Figure 1. SDG indicators

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What are the globally recommended core questions?

> **1. What is the main source of drinking water for the school?** *(check one)*
> ☐ Piped water*   ☐ Tubewell/borehole*   ☐ Covered well/spring*   ☐ Rainwater catchment*
> ☐ Open well/spring   ☐ Cart/tanker-truck*   ☐ Lake/river/stream   ☐ Bottled water*   ☐ No water
>
> **2. Is drinking water from the main source <u>currently</u> available at the school?**
> ☐ Yes   ☐ No
>
> **3. What type of student toilets/latrines are at the school?** *(check one – most common)*
> ☐ Flush/Pour-flush toilets*   ☐ Pit latrines with slab*   ☐ Composting toilets*   ☐ Pit latrines without slab
> ☐ Hanging latrine (hole over water)   ☐ Bucket latrine   ☐ No toilets or latrines
>
> **4. How many student toilets / latrines are <u>currently</u> usable (accessible, functional, private)?** [____]
>
> **5. Are the toilets/latrines separate for girls and boys?**
> ☐ Yes   ☐ No
>
> **6. Are there handwashing facilities at the school?**
> ☐ Yes   ☐ No
>
> **7. Are both soap and water <u>currently</u> available at the handwashing facilities?**
> ☐ Yes, soap and water   ☐ Water only   ☐ Soap only   ☐ Neither

Figure 2. The globally recommended core questions for monitoring WinS (*considered 'improved')

WHO monitors WinS?

With the explicit inclusion of WinS under SDG 4 as schools are under the jurisdiction of governments' Education sector, it is typically Ministries of Education that are responsible for national monitoring of WinS, with the support of other line ministries such as health, water, and sanitation. National data are then compiled for global SDG monitoring. The WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (JMP) is responsible for global monitoring of SDG targets 6.1 and 6.2 and supporting monitoring of other WASH-related targets, such as the WASH elements of SDG 4.a.

How do I report WinS data to the JMP?

Data can be sent directly to info@washdata.org. You can send reports, data summary tables, microdata, or a completed JMP WinS data submission form (Resource C). JMP collaborates with countries through UNICEF and WHO country and regional offices to compile datasets.

Can countries add to or modify the SDG indicators?

The SDGs remind us that we are striving toward common goals. The SDG indicators should therefore be harmonized as best as possible between countries. However, they should be localized or augmented, as needed, to support national priorities, and be relevant to local needs and conditions.

For global monitoring, the JMP harmonizes indicators across countries to support cross-country comparison. However, some countries may interpret results differently or include additional indicators and may therefore have different values than those used for global reporting.

What about safely managed water and sanitation in schools?

Household water and sanitation have been monitored since 1990 and it has taken time for data availability to improve. Harmonized global monitoring of WASH in schools is a more nascent effort (since 2016). There are still data gaps on the simple indicators for 'basic' service and very little data on the elements of safely managed services at the school level.

The EMIS includes a lot of questions and there isn't always space for more than 1-2 WASH questions

Seven simple questions are needed for SDG monitoring. We need to advocate for the inclusion of WASH in the EMIS as a critical part of an effective learning environment. Keeping questions very simple may help with efforts to advocate for their inclusion.

What if water availability changes over time? How can we monitor that?

The SDG definition of basic service focuses on water availability at the time of the survey. This provides a good start in understanding the situation and tracking progress over time, but of course it does not provide a full picture. For many countries this is a good starting point. For countries that are interested in water availability over time (and have resources for more detailed monitoring), there are two globally recommended questions on water availability (throughout the school day) and (throughout the school year) that could be modified and used, as needed. See the WHO/UNICEF JMP 'Core questions and indicators for monitoring WASH in schools in the SDGs' (Resource A, p. 13).

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The EMIS in our country is self-reported by teachers. How do we know if the WASH data are valid?

Since EMIS are typically submitted by head teachers, the WASH questions and responses should use simple and localized phrasing that can be understood by those who don't have technical WASH experience.

Training can also be included in teacher in-service training which has the added benefit of creating advocacy and capacity development. Training is helpful to ensure that all EMIS/survey questions (not just WASH) are completed as accurately as possible. Involvement of members of the School Governing Board and/or Parents Teacher Association in the monitoring team at school level has been successful to improve data quality. In addition, district education offices can also conduct random validation visits so that not every school needs to be visited but teachers know that their school could be selected for a random visit which encourages accurate reporting. And most important to remember, use of data and data transparency is the best way to ensure data validity.

How can we encourage schools to submit data?

Incentives should be used with caution to encourage submission of data but not be linked to self-reported results. They should fit within existing structures so that incentives are sustainable over time. One example is to link EMIS data submission to pay out of the school management fund.

**We have WinS data, now how do we analyse them?**

The Excel-based tool and core questions document (provided in the resources section above) provide some simple guidance for data analysis and tabulation. You can also contact your UNICEF country office or the JMP for technical support (info@washdata.org).

What are the different functions (and scopes) of monitoring?

There are multiple functions of monitoring. At the national, regional and global levels, WinS monitoring is needed for responsible sectors (education, water, sanitation, health) to track progress toward improving service provision and support decisions around relevant policies and resource-allocation. National, regional and global monitoring therefore typically focus on "outputs" (i.e. if services are in place to enable and encourage WASH behaviours, Figure 3).

At the programme level, monitoring is needed to understand if activities were implemented as planned and if they produced the intended outputs and outcomes (and impacts if resources allow). This creates accountability and informs improvements to programme implementation. "Inputs" (e.g. maintenance budget) and "outcomes" (e.g. student handwashing practices) are important for programme monitoring and evaluation but are typically beyond the scope of national and global monitoring.

It is recommended for development partners and Ministries of Education to coordinate and look for opportunities for programme level monitoring to align and support national monitoring where possible.
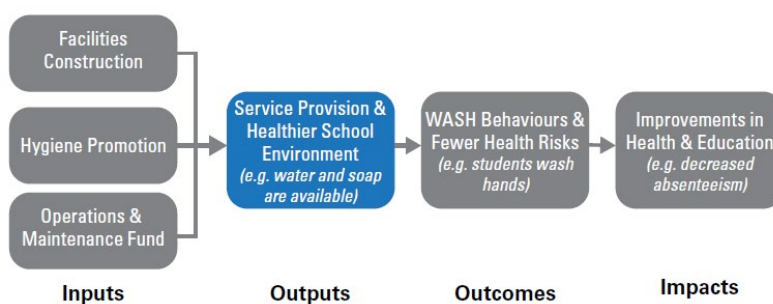
Figure 3. Example of a simple results chain for WinS; national and global monitoring typically focus on "outputs".
Source: Resource A (link provided on page 3 of this document).

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