

# WORKING WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO IMPROVE THE DELIVERY OF SUSTAINABLE WASH SERVICES

**DFAT CS WASH Fund, Regional Learning Event**

Harare, Zimbabwe

5 – 8 May 2015

# QUESTIONING SOME BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

1. Decentralisation improves basic service delivery
2. Providing reliable water and sanitation services isn't rocket science
3. Aid is a positive driver for sustainable WASH

# DEVOLVING POWER, RESPONSIBILITY AND THE SUBSIDIARITY PRINCIPLE

- Reaction against the apparent failure of central government to deliver – an historic and global trend
- Local governance, local awareness and proximity to the people served - stronger accountability
- Assumed that it is preferable to centralised systems - a leap of faith?

# LIMITED EVIDENCE THAT IT WORKS AND A LOT OF EVIDENCE OF THE CHALLENGES

## Central government

- Incomplete decentralisation and sector reforms
- Unwillingness to relinquish authority and financing
- Lack of support and inadequate funding to LGs
- Limited/no regulation of services

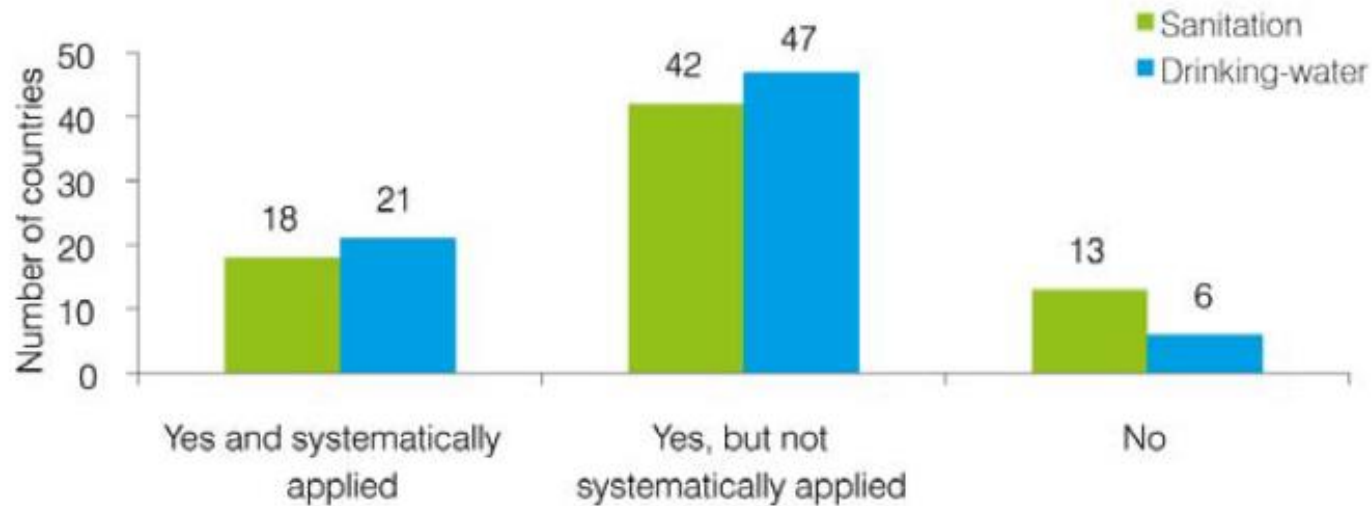
## Local government

- Mandate to ensure services without full authority and enough finance
- Inability to respond to locally identified priorities
- Low capacity
- Social marginalisation and elite capture

## Citizens and consumers

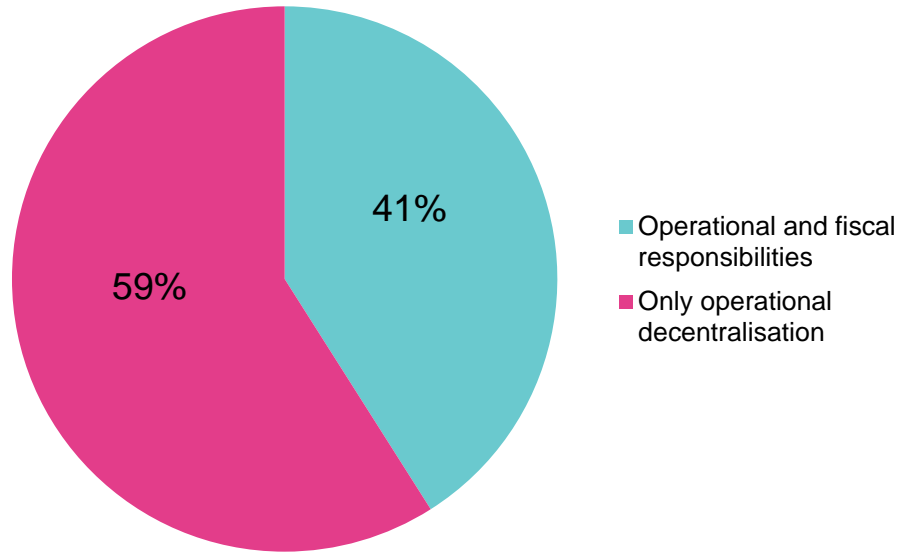
- Weak participation and accountability mechanisms – no consumer protection
- Monopoly of service providers - limited options
- Lack of information about local government actions and performance

# LIMITED PROCEDURES IN PLACE FOR STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION



Over 70% of countries responding either no procedures in place or not systematically implemented; similar levels for water and sanitation (GLAAS 2012)

# FISCAL DECENTRALISATION DOES NOT FOLLOW OPERATIONAL MANDATES: SANITATION PROVISION



Only ~40% of countries (64 respondents) have decentralised fiscal as well as operational responsibilities for sanitation services (GLAAS, 2012)

# DECENTRALISATION TAKES TIME

1888

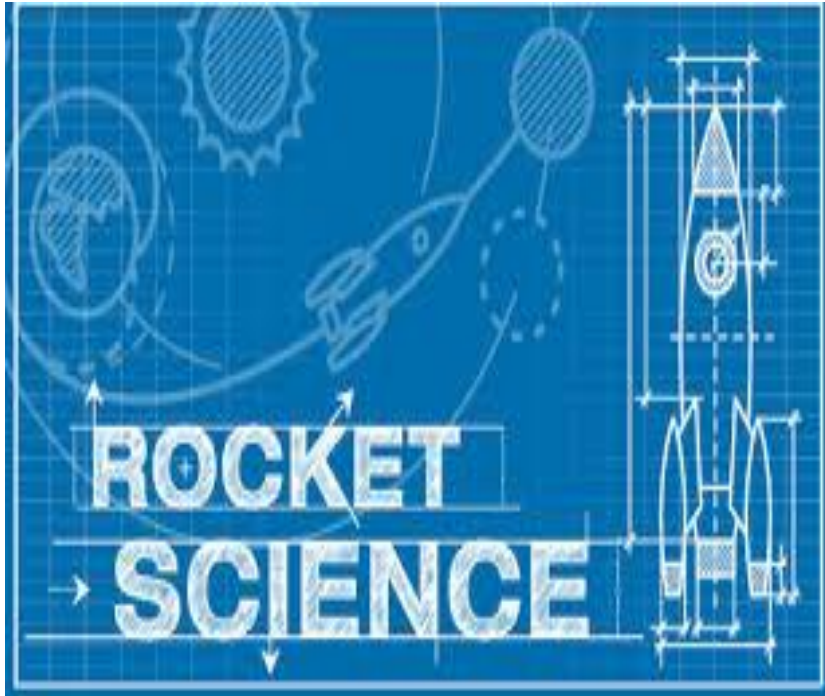
Local Government Act first passed in UK

# HOW COMPLICATED CAN IT BE?





# DELIVERING WASH IS 'ROCKET SCIENCE'



- No single entry point – continuous services
- No silver bullets – certainly not technological solutions
- Not a logical market – public good
- Complex and messy – hard investment and equity choices - universality

# OF COURSE EXTERNAL AID MATTERS

- 12 major donors will help 100 million people gain access to drinking water and 125 million to sanitation in 2015
- *And it's going where it is most needed – 38% to sub-Saharan Africa (GLAAS, 2014)*
- Increasingly being targeted to have a catalytic effect on sector change

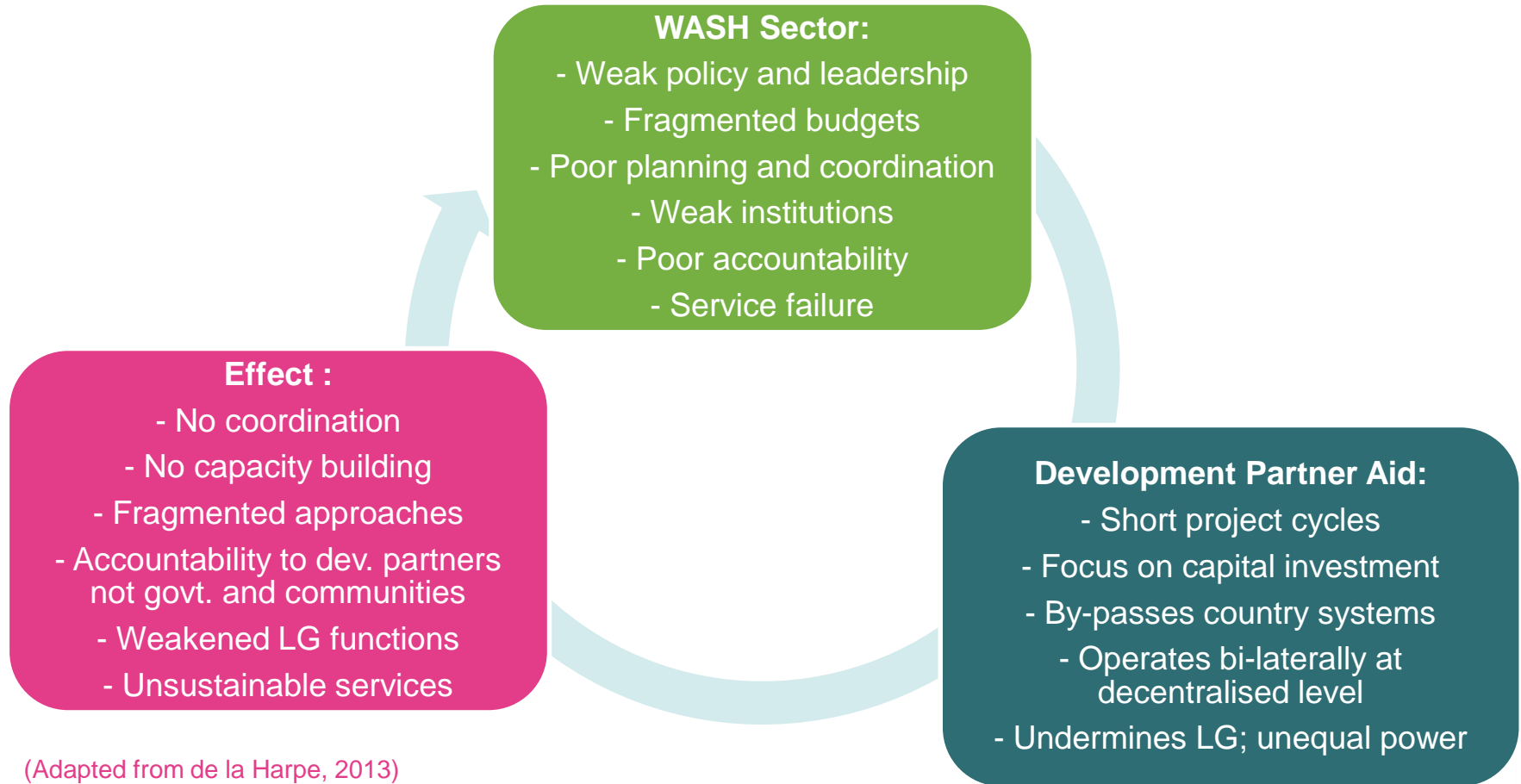


# BUT EXTERNAL AID CAN ALSO UNDERMINE LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT



- Pressure to deliver outputs quickly - accountability to the donor not to host governments or communities
- Short-term project funding often channeled in parallel to national and local systems
- Local government struggle to coordinate disparate actors and to enforce norms
- In aid dependent WASH sectors may generate disconnect with core public administration (WSP/AFDB 2010)

# VICIOUS CYCLE OF AID 'INEFFECTIVENESS'



(Adapted from de la Harpe, 2013)

# VIRTUOUS CYCLE OF AID EFFECTIVENESS



(Adapted from de la Harpe, 2013)

# REFLECTIONS FOR THE WEEK AHEAD

- Take the long view – while providing direct services, also build capacity and contribute to solving systemic weaknesses, not reinforcing them
- Support citizen voice and accountability of government – in communities and at higher levels – to improve WASH governance
- And don't ignore the elephant in the room – the financing gap!

THANK YOU

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WORKING TOGETHER: CSO AND  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROJECTS  
*CONTINUUM AND SPEED DATING  
EXERCISE*

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# CONTINUUM EXERCISE AND SPEED DATING

- Thinking about the DFAT-funded WASH project that you are involved with consider these five statements:

**Supporting Government:**

*Providing support to help Government do their job*

**Implementing directly:** *Delivering WASH services yourself*

**Strengthening Government:**

*Helping Government to do their job better*

**Implementing through a partner:** *Supporting a local organisation to deliver WASH services*

**Collaborating with Government:**  
*Telling Government what you are doing/aligning with their strategies*

# POST AND PERUSE THE CONTINUUM OF POSSIBILITIES

- As an individual CSO or LG staff member, write your project name on a sticky note
- Identify where your organization is on the continuum and post it where you think it fits best
- *Remember – you can put your project in more than one location on the continuum*
- Spend a few moments to observe where others are on the continuum

# *“SPEED DATING”: A HOW TO GUIDE*

At the sound of the whistle .....

- Pair off with someone you have never met before
- Introduce yourselves to one another
- Spend a couple of minutes each in turn asking why you placed yourself where you did on the continuum and what you would do to change – or why you would not change your approach

When the whistle blows swap partners and do it again!

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