Concept Note for Kenya's Virtual Resource Centre on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and Water Resources Management (WRM)

Rationale and Purpose

Addressing Kenya's Water, Sanitation, Hygiene (WASH) issues and sustainably managing the country's Water Resources are vital to the achievement of Vision 2030, Kenya's development blue-print projecting the country as a middle income economy by the year 2030.   Kenya is home to a wide variety of WASH and Water Resources Management (WRM) information and data, and several Ministries are responsible for governing and leading these sectors.   In addition, hundreds of non-state actors, ranging from International NGOs to Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) are engaged in WASH and WRM activities across the country. Equally, many of Kenya's largest external donors, from the World Bank and UN agencies to bilateral aid agencies, are providing significant investments to the sector.

Within this information-rich and multi actor context, there is a need for a clear and dynamic knowledge management strategy to harness the full potential of the sector.   One core element proposed within this is the establishment of a national WASH and WRM online resource centre, to transform and improve the way sector information is stored, shared and discussed. It is envisaged that a virtual National Resource Centre can achieve inter-sectoral convergence and facilitate the process of coordinating all WASH and WRM information across Ministries, WASH learning institutions, CSOs and INGOs.

The specific purposes of the proposed resource centre are:
1) <u>Information exchange</u>: To facilitate effective sharing of lessons and experiences from the water and sanitation sub-sectors within Kenya (horizontally- among and within counties – and vertically– at the national level); and across countries, especially in the developing world, particularly sub-Saharan Africa.
2) <u>Policy influencing</u>: To inform research and policy making by targeting key decision makers at the policy level and service provision (utilities, regulatory agency and other oversight bodies); civil society (both national level and grass-roots based institutions); research/training and academic institutions; and, development partners.
3) <u>Sector Coordination</u>: To be the go-to place – or a one-stop shop – to access and research everything on water and sanitation in Kenya

Proposed Scope and Structure

The scope of the resource centre can range from a simple library of documents with a search function, to a more dynamic and interactive platform for finding, exchanging and discussing sector information. For the sake of this concept note, the wider scope is being considered with a more detailed structure with pointers to what can be considered as "essential" and what is "optional". This can then allow a staggered roll-out of the resource centre starting with the essential aspects and gradually adding other optional functionalities. Below is a graph of the proposed structure with the suggested tabs and drop down menus.

Proposed Structure for the Resource Centre
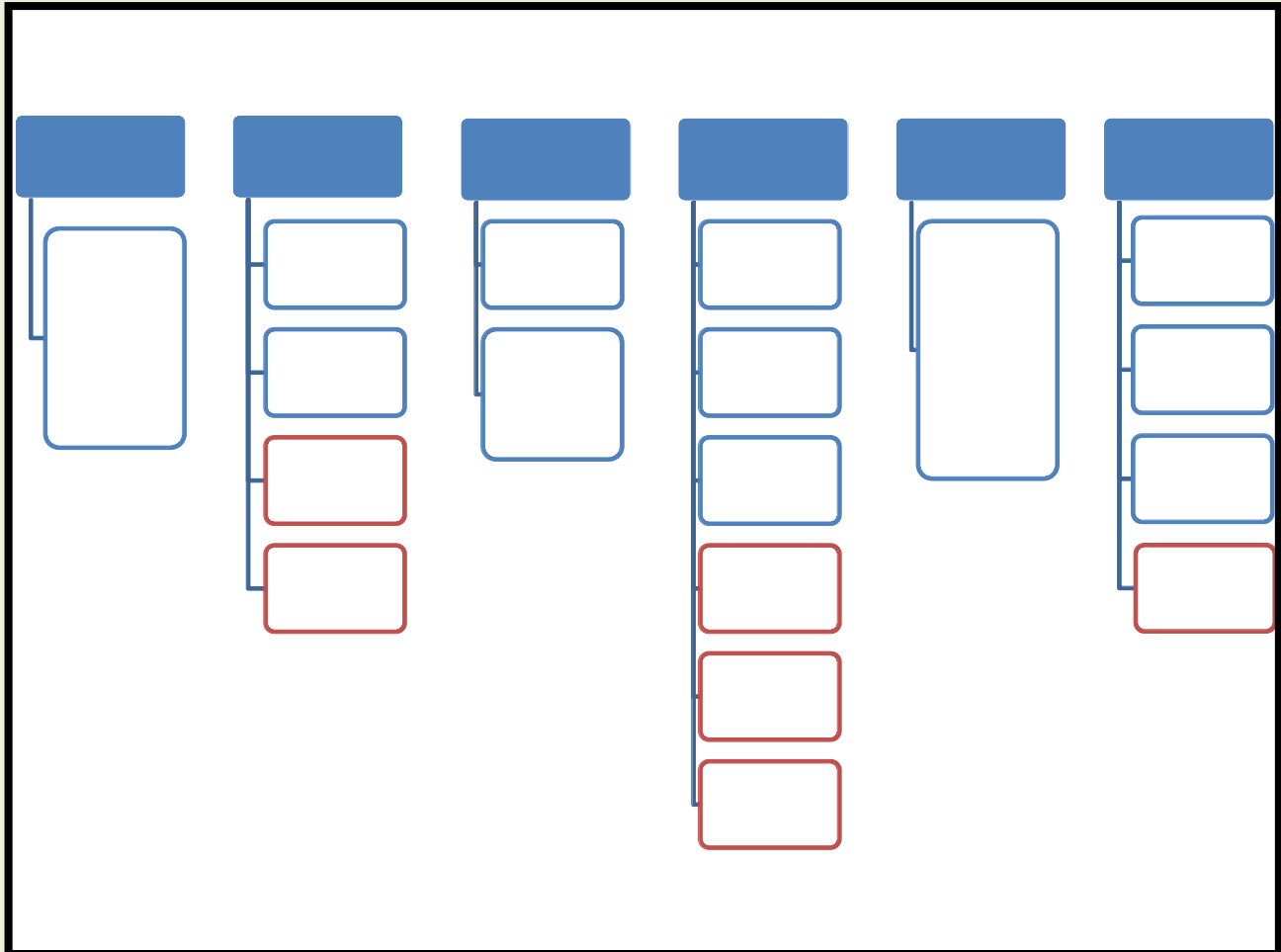
Proposed Content

The content of the website will be guided by the structure ultimately decided upon. Below is a description of each of the sections and drop down menu suggestions included in the proposed structure.

Brief description of each section

HOME (Homepage of the resource centre): This page should be engaging and attractive as will shape the users first impressions of the website. Keep it simple and colourful, with fresh and regularly updated content.
Suggested content: **Latest News Feature** (change weekly or at least monthly – could be a new case study, media story, or about new resources added to the website); **Snapshot of the months activities** (could be a few simple bullet points with numbers); **Photo of the Month** box; **Top Tweets of the Week**

ABOUT (Information about the centre and owner): This section should be brief and clearly explain what the centre is about and how people can get in contact with the owner's of the website.

Suggested content: **Vision/Mission** (brief sentences on the purpose and vision of the centre); **Contact Us** (contact details of the organisation and person managing the website – tel and email contacts); **Frequently Asked Questions** (to provide more detail on Why have a national resource centre? Who is involved? What purpose does it serve? How can I provide and contribute content? How can I receive the Newsletter? Etc...); **Help** (optional section but could repeat the contact details for reporting bugs/incorrect information and include tutorials on how to navigate the website)

SECTOR COORDINATION (Information about the key sector actors and the existing coordination mechanisms): This needs to be simple and informative to help people better know how the sector works and enable them to link up and network with the main sector agencies.

Suggested content: **Mechanisms** (to give an overview of sector governance, could break this down into a) **Meetings** – only include institutionalised recurring meetings such as Annual Water Sector Conference, ICC meetings etc; b) **Entities** – brief description of key committees, task forces etc such as National Committees, County Water Groups etc); **Partners** (to give brief information about the main actors in the sector which includes at a minimum Name of Organisation/Entity, Contact Number/Email; Website Link, and Logo, this could be broken down into sub-sections a) **Government** – mention the main Ministries and Authorities (e.g.: WRMA); b) **Civil Society** – A to Z list of CSOs and Civil Society Networks; c) **Donors** – list of main donors in the sector including multi-laterals, bi-laterals, corporations, foundations and trust funds; d) **Private Sector** – list of private sector service providers)

SECTOR NEWS (All relevant and up to date news relating to the sector): This page should be engaging and easy to navigate so users can easily find the news they are interested in.

Suggested content: **Events Calendar** (An actual calendar with dates and month including title of the event within each relevant date box which is clickable to get further details on timings, venue etc); **Newsletter/Bulletin** (A list of downloadable monthly/quarterly newsletters); **Blogs** (posting of interesting relevant sector blogs with date, title and author); **Media Coverage** (Weekly media digest with links to online articles including date, headline and source of information); **Discussion Forum** (A platform for people to post comments and discussion topics)

LIBRARY/DOCUMENTS (Library of all relevant sector documents): This page should contain an easy search/browse function divided into criteria to help the user find the document they are looking for. Next to the search boxes, a list of the latest documents added to the library could be included.

Suggested content: **Browse/Search Boxes** (divided into search boxes by: **Theme**; **Type**; **Year/Date**; **Country**; **Title**; **Author**; **Keyword**, **Level** – see the proposed database below for further details)

TOOLS & RESOURCES (Library of visual and training materials): This page should provide the user with instructions on downloading and uploading visual and training materials for their use (could potentially be a restricted area for members only).

Suggested content: **Photos** (Catalogue of photos organised by date, location, theme, source + caption if this exists – you could use www.Flickr.com or similar type of photo sharing application); **Videos** (Catalogue of videos organised by date, location, theme, source + weblink to video (e.g.: You tube)); **Maps** (List of all the Waterpoint maps, maps of catchment areas etc); **Training Materials** (list of useful and relevant training materials and resources such as handouts, manuals, toolkits etc.)

The required functions of the resource centre will vary depending on the scope and structure that is opted for. For the sake of this concept note, a multitude of functions are put forward to be discussed and selected.

Library Search Function

One of the key roles of the resource centre is to provide a platform where all the key relevant sector documents are stored and accessible. In the case of the WASH and WRM sectors this translates as a vast list of policies, strategies, laws and studies. In order to enable the user to easily identify and find the document(s) they are looking for it is recommended that the Library has a built in browsing/search function.

For the collection of documents to include within the resource centre the proposed database system (see below) is being suggested. This will help to catalogue all the documents before they are uploaded and can then be used for creating search boxes for the library (see the WSP website for an example of search boxes - https://www.wsp.org/library).

<u>Proposed Database to log each of the documents into the library</u>

DATABASE	DATE	TYPE	AUTHOR	TITLE	KEYWORDS	THEME	COUNTRY	LEVEL	WEB LINK
Description	Month + Year of Publication	Type of Document (see drop down menu)	Name of author or producer of document (person or organisation)	Title of document (max. 20 words)	Max. 5 key words reflecting document content	WASH related theme (see drop down menu)	Name of country relevant to the document	Level of the document (see drop down menu)	Link to web location of document
Drop down Menu options	Free text	Policy, Legal, Report, Case study, Map, Chart, Other	Free Text	Free text	Free text (each word separate by ";")	Water, Sanitation, Hygiene, WASH, WRM, Climate Change, Other	Free text	Global, Regional, National, County, Project, Other	URL link
Example	Mar-13	Policy	Ministry of Environment, Water and Natural Resources	Kenya National Climate Change Action Plan 2013-2017	Climate; WRM; Environment; Kenya; Policy	Climate Change	Kenya	National	http://www.kccap.info/

The search criteria can be divided into two – the "essential" or "basic" options – by date, by type, by theme, by country (which are the most likely to be used); and the "optional" or "additional" options - by author, by title, by keyword, by level (which provides further detail for the more research-based searches). For the database, it may however be worth collecting all these elements in one go.

Discussion Board

Depending on the level of interactivity the resource centre wants to provide for the user, it may be worth experimenting with a discussion board. This is a place where users can post questions, suggestions or respond to queries posted by others based on their area of expertise. The board could simply be organised chronologically by date for each post or be broken down into thematic areas (e.g. Water, Sanitation, Hygiene, WRM, Climate Change, etc). The resource centre manager would need to act as a moderator for the discussions and it is advised to develop a "Terms of Use" and possible a "FAQ" to guide users.   Visit http://www.aashe.org/forums for an example of a discussion forum space.

Share Functions

Being able to share and disseminate information instantly is a feature of most websites and resource centres nowadays. This enables the user to share a document, photos, videos that they come across on the website with any of their contacts via their preferred sharing medium. The most common sharing functions include buttons for Facebook, Twitter, Email (various – yahoo, gmail, etc) and Linkedin. The idea is that a share button with a dropdown menu of each of these sharing mechanisms would be available at the top of bottom of each of the resource centre's webpages. See https://www.wsp.org/library for an example of a Share button.

Uploading/Downloading/Printing Functions

The credibility of a resource centre lies on its ability to be well organised and contain up to date information. This requires the frequent uploading of new material to the website. Whether this is done centrally via the website manager, or via users, depends on the level of control desired, but either way, clear instructions should be available to the user. This could be to send a document or photo by email to the website manager to upload, or an online system for the user to directly upload the material which can then be reviewed by the website manager before posting. Equally, instructions should be clear and easy for the user to download documents, maps, photos, videos etc either by saving them on their own devices or printing them.   Therefore clear download and print functions should be available as a standard feature on all relevant pages.

RSS Button

An easy way to keep users updated and informed of new content published on the website is to install an RSS button (Rich Site Summary) on the resource centre. Subscribing to a website RSS removes the need for the user to manually check the website for new content. Instead, their browser constantly monitors the site and informs the user of any updates. The browser can also be commanded to automatically download the new data for the user.

Membership/Login

As mentioned previously, you may want to consider restricting certain areas of the website to registered users. For this you would need a function for users to become members and create a login/password. This would mainly be useful if there is certain content such as documents, photos or contact information of a sensitive nature that you feel needs to be protected and therefore enable you to restrict certain parts of the website to members only. However it may also be useful to install a membership system to be able to monitor website access and collect contact information on users that you can then potentially use for mailing newsletters and other communications. You can use external plugins for this feature or see this web link for further details: http://www.websitebuilderexpert.com/webs-com-review-membership-website-builders/

Proposed Marketing of resource centre

Finally, once the resource centre is completed, a clear plan for marketing it and attracting users towards the site is needed. Below are a few suggestions for launching and promoting the resource centre.

Launch of the resource centre: To attract maximum attention for the resource centre, a strategic launch should be planned. You may want to organise a separate event with a short launch unveiling the website and a short demonstration of the various pages. However, ideally it may get more attention if included as part of a wider sector event such as the Annual Water Conference, National Sanitation Conference or World Water Day.

Promoting the resource centre: The resource centre will only achieve its aim of being the go-to place for sector institutions if it is properly promoted. This requires people and organisations being made aware of the centre and understanding the information it contains and functions it can perform. The expected audience and users of the centre are broad ranging and likely to include: Government Officials, Civil Society Organisations, Development Partners, Private Sector Institutions, Journalists, Researchers, and Students among others. It is therefore important to tailor the marketing of resource centre to be able to reach out to all these groups. As such the following promotion suggestions can be considered:

- **Posters/Flyers:** A brief colourful one page poster or flyer summarising the purpose, benefits and functions of the centre can be developed and then put up/distributed within relevant government buildings, universities, and other relevant locations, including during World Water Day and the Annual Water Conference.
- **Press Release:** A press release can be developed to coincide with the launch of the resource centre to attract media coverage and get journalists to be aware of this resource for their own work and research.
- **Widget on key sector agencies' websites:** A small widget (normally a button or scroll bar) can be developed to promote the website by asking all the relevant sector agencies to install this on their homepage to reach out to all their contacts.
- **Presentations and talks:** Academic institutions and research groups can both be important users of the resource centre (i.e. for their research, teachings etc) and vital contributors of information and data to include. As such planned talks or presentations within universities and research centres may be a valuable promotional tool. Equally, other tailored presentations could be done for Donor Agencies (via the Water Sector Donor Group (WSDG)); to Water Services Regulatory Boards (WASREB) and to the media (via a press conference).
- **Social Media:** Social media is an increasingly used medium in Kenya (be it facebook, twitter or blogs) and can be a cheap but effective way to raise awareness about the resource centre to a wide variety of potential users. Writing an informal blog from both the perspective of the centre's moderator and of an user could be a powerful way to engage this audience.
- **Annual Water Sector Review:** The Annual Water Sector Review represents the sector's main document and has a specific readership. As such, a short paragraph on the Resource Centre, possibly under a cross-cutting issue of "Knowledge Management", could be useful in giving the website the visibility it needs to an interested audience. A brief presentation of the website at the Annual Water Conference could equally be effective.
- **Presentations at sector meetings:** Any event or meeting with a concentration of key sector actors should be targeted to present the centre, including the ICC meetings and other WASH related events. A simple powerpoint presentation with screenshots of the website (if web connection is not good enough) could be developed.

- **Resource Centre Champions:** To widen the promotion and not solely rely on your own marketing, identify groups who would have an interest in championing the resource centre. This could be an ICC "Resources Mobilisation & Research" thematic group, a keen Parliamentarian or a prominent academic.
- **Resource Centre Video:** To bring the centre to life and complement the presentations suggested, a short engaging 2-3mins explanatory video could be produced. This could focus on the benefits of the centre to users and take them through a virtual search of the website, and contain an interview with the MoEWNR Minister backing the resource centre.
- **Infographic:** In addition to the poster/flyer, a one-page infographic capturing the essence of the centre in numbers and drawings could be effective to grab the attention of data focused users and statisticians.
- **Articles on external websites**: Interest in knowledge management and data on the WASH and WRM sectors in Kenya is likely to go beyond the borders of the country. Consider therefore the promotion of the website through featured articles on websites of regional and global partners such as ANEW, SWA, WSSCC, WaterAid and others.