

Setting up a Benchmarking System

Results Dissemination Workshop on
Benchmarking and Water Utilities Data Book for India
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Why set up a benchmarking system?

- Benchmarking is a tool for performance improvement.
- It is needed to monitor performance.
- Water utilities need it.
- Regulators need it.
- Stakeholders need it.

Who should maintain a benchmarking system?

- Regulatory office
- Water supply sector organization
- Water utilities industry organization
- Independent rating company
- Consulting firm

Characteristics of a good benchmarking system

- Data is accurate, up to date and accessible.
- Different types and sizes of utilities are represented.
- Multi-year data is available for tracking performance over years.
- System must be sustainable.
- Accepted by the utilities and industry.

Data collection and clarification is important!

- Send out questionnaires
- Collect questionnaires
- Analyze information, *seek clarification until satisfied with data consistency and accuracy*
- Enter into data base
- Prepare reports in required format (depending on the user's needs)

Organization

- Requires small organization– 2 to 3 dedicated persons (2 to do the follow up and communications; 1 to analyze)
- Communications access important (e-mail preferable, telephone/fax/mobile numbers)
- Simple analysis can be done by specialist in the organization.

Organization

- Water utilities as data provider and user – most important element of organization
- Water supply sector organizations as nodes to help gather information and check for accuracy, consistency and data integrity.

Analysis and Reports

- Keep reports simple. Data book format with user-friendly presentation of information and indicators.
- Stick to simple analysis like trends, simple averages, ranges and top-quartile targets.
- Let researchers, academe, consultants do their own analysis.

Sharing of data/indicators

- Performance indicators must be shared in a timely manner – not much use for old data.
- Website – reports in pdf format; links with sector organization useful
- Help desk in benchmarking organization – electronic files should be available on request (excel files most convenient)

Sharing of data/indicators

- Hard copies of reports more costly to prepare and disseminate – sent only on request
- Summary reports may be used for wider dissemination (electronic files on request)
- Dissemination plan – mailing list (snail mail and e-mail), sector publications, seminars and conferences.

Sustainability

- Organization – established organization with qualified staff
- Financing – charges for other users (consultants, researchers, non participating utilities, etc.); funding from donor agencies (also users of sector data)
- Commitment from data providers
- Link to performance improvement programs

Finally,

*Get the data and indicators used
by the stakeholders!!!*

Thank you