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Reform and Finance for the Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Sector

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Description / Abstract

Since 2016 the World Bank has explored a wide range of country experiences in delivering better water supply and sanitation services. The analyses led to publication of three new global frameworks for designing water reforms: Policy, Institutional, and Regulatory Incentives, which looks at the broader sector enabling environment; Water Utility Turnaround Framework, which looks at utility-level reforms; and Maximizing Finance for Development, which looks at shifting the financing paradigm to reach the Sustainable Development Goals. The three frameworks—individually and as a compendium—set forth the key principles of a more holistic approach to reform that diverges from the traditional focus on infrastructure economics to a deeper understanding of the behavior of and between sector institutions and of the people within those institutions. Each country-specific reform path will gradually bring the sector to higher degrees of maturity with a strong focus on improving financial sustainability. This summary note integrates the three lines of work—utility reform, sector reform, and sector finance—for readers to understand the critical links between the three spheres. New contributions of this note are a Maturity Matrix for assessing where a country is in its reform process and where it wants to go and a Maturity Ladder that identifies typical actions to move from one stage of maturity to the next. Tools and references are also provided to help governments start on their reform path.

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