



Institute of
Economic Affairs



Integrity in Water supply service delivery in the public sector in Machakos County

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Acronyms and Abbreviation

FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GOK	Government of Kenya
IEA	Institute of Economic Affairs Kenya
MOWI	Ministry of Water and Irrigation
UN	United Nations

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Kwame Owino
Chief Executive Officer

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1.0 Executive Summary

Water and water-related services are basic for human survival and human dignity. Kenya has been classified by the United Nations (UN) among the water scarce countries. The country's surface water coverage is only 2%, a water scarce category of 647m³ per capita against the global benchmark of 1000m³. This coverage, according to the Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MOWI) has been increasing in recent years. Access to safe water supply in the country varies greatly from region to region and poorer population groups are in the most disadvantaged position. This group relies on shared water points often at considerable distance paying a higher price for the commodity and spending more time in water collection or buying from intermediaries at higher prices.

Kenya's vision for water and sanitation sector is to ensure water and improved sanitation availability and access to all by the year 2030. The vision's goal for the water and sanitation sector is "to ensure water and improved sanitation availability and access to all by 2030." The Constitution of Kenya 2010 assigns county governments the critical role of service delivery in the water sector. There is therefore need for policy and actions by county governments, geared at ensuring that there is adequate supply of clean water that is accessible to all citizen.

Water resources in Kenya are threatened by pollution, over exploitation and degradation of catchments areas. Commitment by the government to water and sanitation governance is demonstrated by public documents such as the Water Act 2002, the National Water Services Strategy, the National Water Resources Management Strategy, and the Pro-poor Implementation Plan for Water Supply and Sanitation among others.

The state of water and sanitation in Machakos County as at the 2009 census was that 51.8 per cent of households in the county had improved water infrastructure and 97 per cent had improved sanitation. Most of the existing water and sanitation facilities in the county are old and dilapidated and require rehabilitation. The adequacy, equity and reliability of government rural water supply projects in the County have deteriorated due to: inadequate budgetary provision, facilities have not been upgraded to cope with increasing demand, and decline in technical performance with increasing age of equipment and inadequate maintenance. Uncontrolled sand harvesting in the county has led to severe environmental degradation resulting in change in the regime of some of the rivers and loss of retention capacities of some of the seasonal rivers.

This report highlights the findings of a baseline survey that was carried out by the Institute of Economic Affairs Kenya (IEA-Kenya) on how water consumers experience integrity in the water supply service delivery in the public sector in the County. The study was carried out between 16 and 21 September 2012 in the six constituencies that make up the County namely: Yatta, Masinga, Mwala, Kangundo, Kathiani and Machakos town constituencies . The study covered both rural and urban areas in the county targeting households and institutions.

2.0 Statement of the Problem

Water supply service delivery in the public sector in Kenya is largely affected by lack of integrity, low performance of water utilities and informal service providers. Exploring integrity of the public sectors is important as poverty alleviation efforts put in place by government have over time been undermined by poor governance. Corruption in this key sector of the economy may occasion inequity in access to water supply services, thus increasing vulnerability of citizens. It may also lead to inefficiency of the water operators. Corrupt practices tend to flourish when there is a lack of transparency, unwilling attitude by leaders to take positions that protect the interest of the general public, weak institutions and poor accountability among other factors. Corruption subverts transparency, accountability and inclusiveness. It has a debilitating effect on the environment in which it occurs and hampers economic growth and burdens the poor disproportionately. Thus, anti-corruption strategies by counties need to be an integral part of a development framework designed to help them eradicate poverty and stimulate economic growth. Reducing opportunities for corruption may thus improve access, financial sustainability and performance of water services.

3.0 Purpose of the Study

The survey's principal aim is to attempt to ascertain the extent of corruption in service delivery in the public water sector in Machakos County and to determine how citizens understand and perceive it and how actual "users" of the system, including businesses and citizens have actually experienced it in practice. The survey aims at: providing knowledge on the extent of corruption in service delivery in the public water sector in the county; provide data on some of the empirically describable dimensions of corruption upon which governance and anti-corruption policies, strategies and measures should be formulated by the county; and measure perceptions relating to corruption and delivery of public service in the sector.

The tool used in the survey was designed to gather in-depth County data that would provide a key input to the knowledge and the design of strategies and programs for the water sector. The data are meant to empower citizens and policy makers in the County and build momentum for reform in the sector. The survey should assist the county in its preparation of action programs. The results should be useful to the Machakos county government, Civil Society Organizations (CSO), Faith-Based Organizations (FBO), the private sector and the general public to jointly think through strategies and programs to fight corruption in the water sector in the county.

¹The number of constituencies in the county has since increased to 8 following the review of boundaries by the IEBC. These include: Masinga, Yatta, Kangundo, Matungulu, Kathiani, Mavoko, Machakos town and Mwala constituencies

Specifically, the household survey component draws lessons on what citizens think and experience about public water services and the level of service they receive when going through required procedures. Some of the questions and responses in the survey relate to the actual experiences, not perceptions, of these stakeholders and they are highlighted in this report. This study is important for monitoring and evaluation as it may serve as a tool to measure change in service delivery in the water sector in the county over time.

4.0 Study Methodology

The survey was conducted as a composite survey involving randomly selected households, institutions and businesses, who were asked to respond in a face-to-face interview to structured questionnaires. Focus Group Discussions (FGD) were also held in the survey. The questionnaires were based on those prepared by IEA-Kenya. Altogether 179 households and 23 business enterprises and institutions were interviewed.

5.0 Limitations of the Study

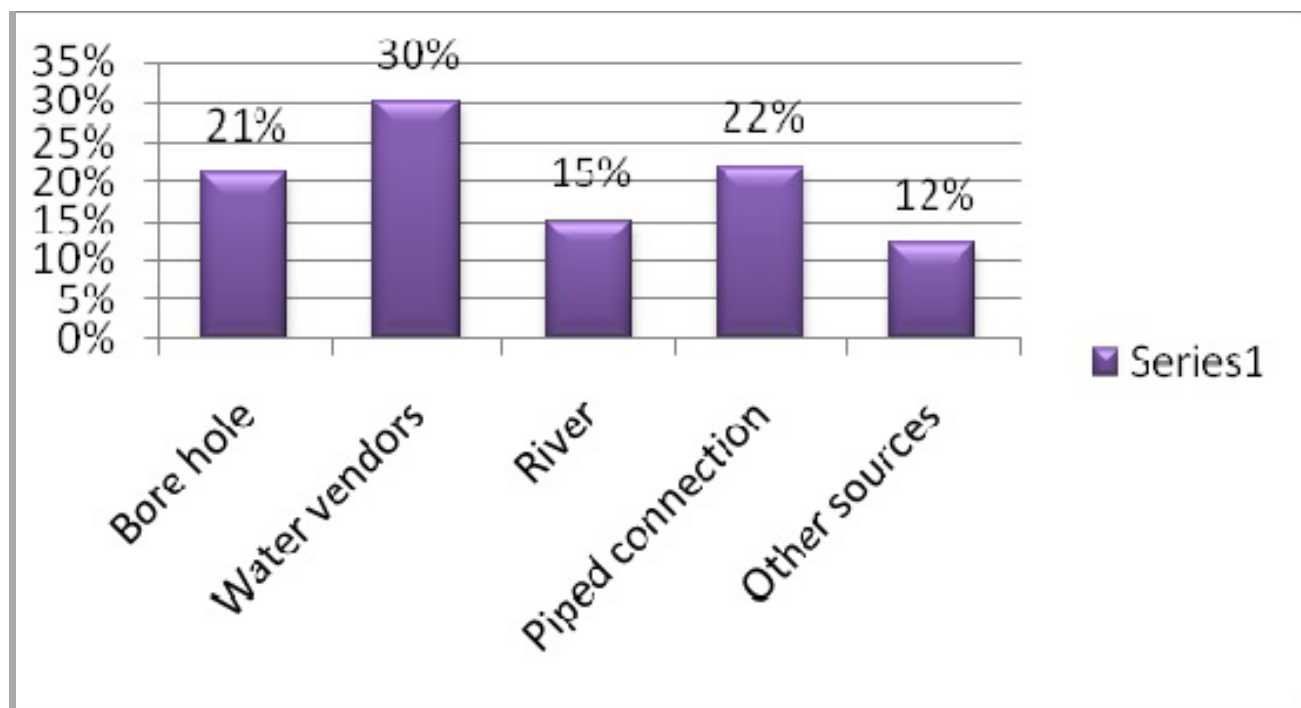
Though the survey provides a reliable representation of the views and quantitative estimates of those that responded, they cannot possibly assess the level of knowledge or honesty of each respondent interviewed during the survey.

6.0 Key Findings of the Survey

6.1 Source of water

Water is one of the main challenges facing Machakos County. Out of those interviewed in the survey 21 per cent reported that their main source of water was boreholes, 30 per cent reported that they bought their water from water vendors and 15 per cent reported that they obtained their water from the river. 22 per cent of the respondents most of who lived in the urban areas reported that they had piped water connection. Most institutions in Machakos town constituency reported that they obtained their water from bore holes that they had drilled. Most of these institutions expressed lack of interest in the services of the public water sector as their institutions, though connected to the public supply never had water flowing in their taps. A number of these institutions reported that they had requested for disconnection from the council to guard against being billed for services that were not being rendered.

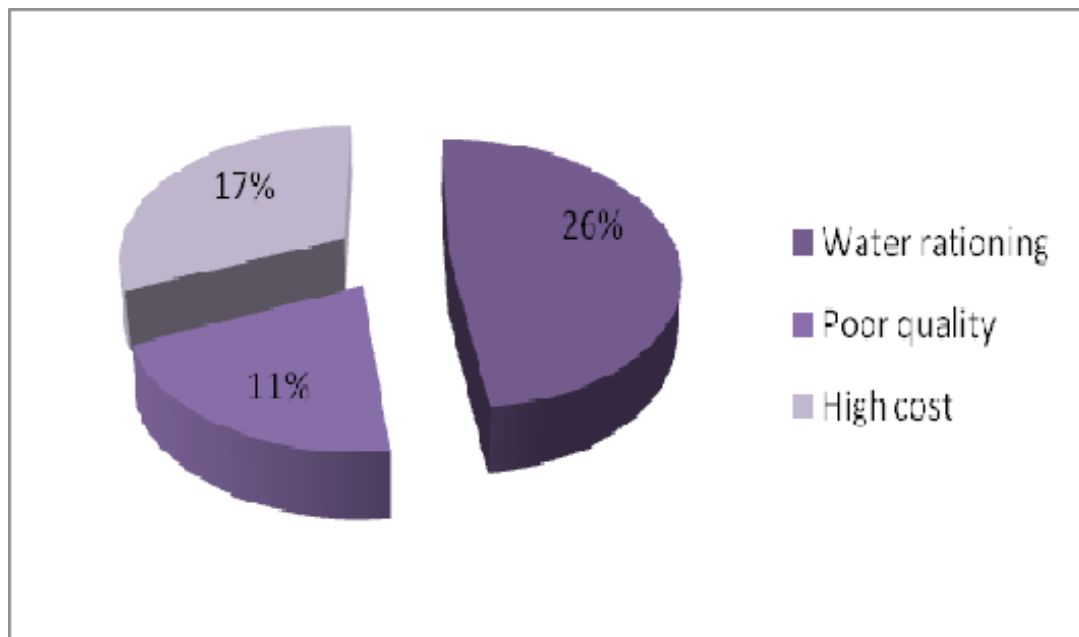
Figure 1: Source of water



6.2 Distance to the nearest clean/safe water point

Scarcity of water in the county is a concern as it may push desperate water users into corrupt practice in order to accelerate service provision. Eleven (11) percent of the respondents reported that they covered a distance of between 2 and 4 kilometers to get to the nearest clean/safe water point. Twenty four (24) per cent of the respondents reported covering a distance of between 1 and 2 kilometers. 59 per cent of the respondents most of who lived in the urban areas reported covering a distance of less than 500m. Majority of households in the rural areas covered long distance to fetch for water. This was obtained mainly from rivers (which are seasonal), water vendors and wells. 14 per cent of the respondents in the rural areas obtained their water from rivers which are dry for most of the period. Some of the respondents reported that they had to spend long hours at the water level in order to access the scarce commodity.

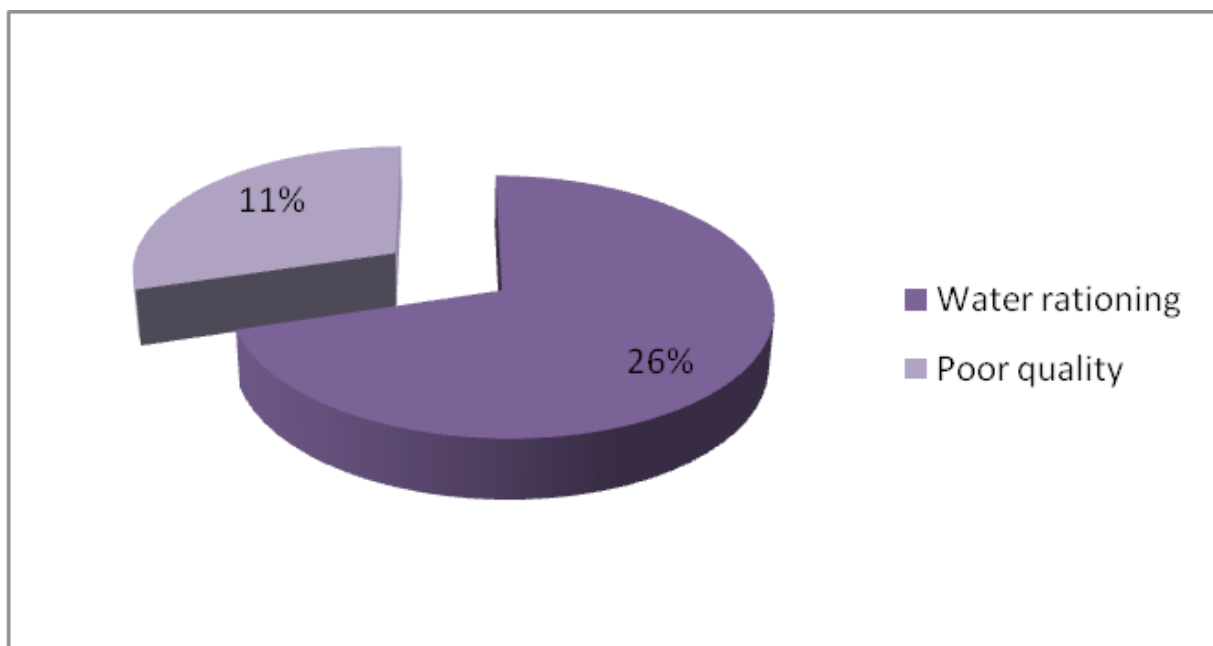
Figure 2: Distance to the nearest clean/safe water point



6.3 Water service provider

Forty six (46) percent of the respondents interviewed in the rural areas reported that they obtained their water for domestic use from the public sector/operator while 42 per cent reported that they obtained their water from the private sector/operator. Only 12 per cent of the respondents reported having their own sources of water supply which were mainly boreholes or wells. Most institutions in Machakos town reported that they had drilled boreholes due to persistent lack of water.

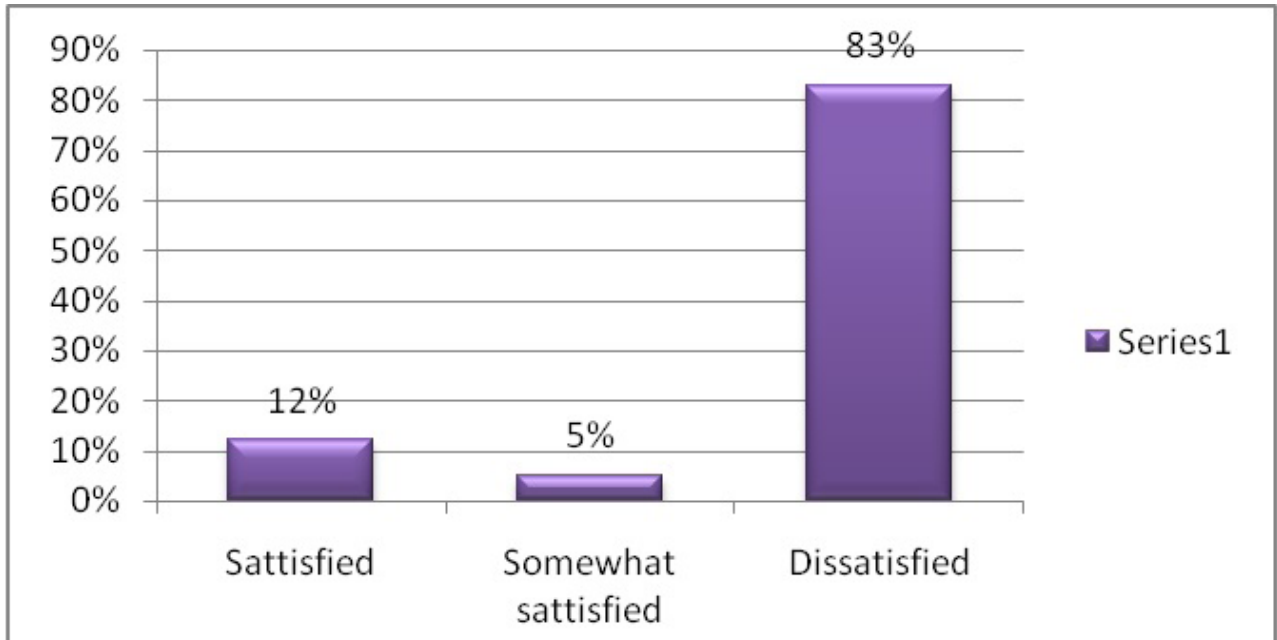
Figure 3: Water service provider



6.4 Level of satisfaction with public water services

Generally 83 per cent of the respondents who were being supplied with water through the public sector expressed dissatisfaction with the services. Only 12 per cent of the respondents expressed satisfaction and 5 per cent of the respondents reported that they were somewhat satisfied.

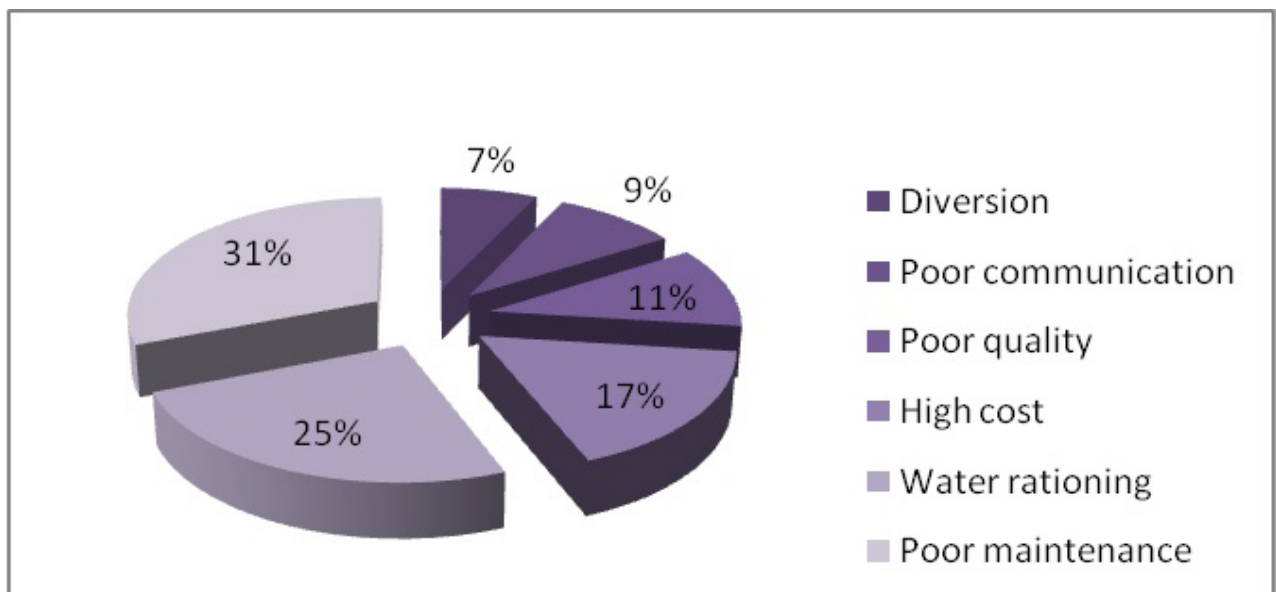
Figure 4: Level of satisfaction with service



6.5 Reasons for dissatisfaction

Respondents identified several reasons for dissatisfaction with service delivery in the public water sector. Seven (7) per cent identified water diversions, 9 per cent poor communication, 11 per cent poor quality water, 17 per cent high cost of water, 25 per cent water rationing and 31 per cent poor maintenance of water infrastructure.

Figure 5: Reasons for dissatisfaction with service



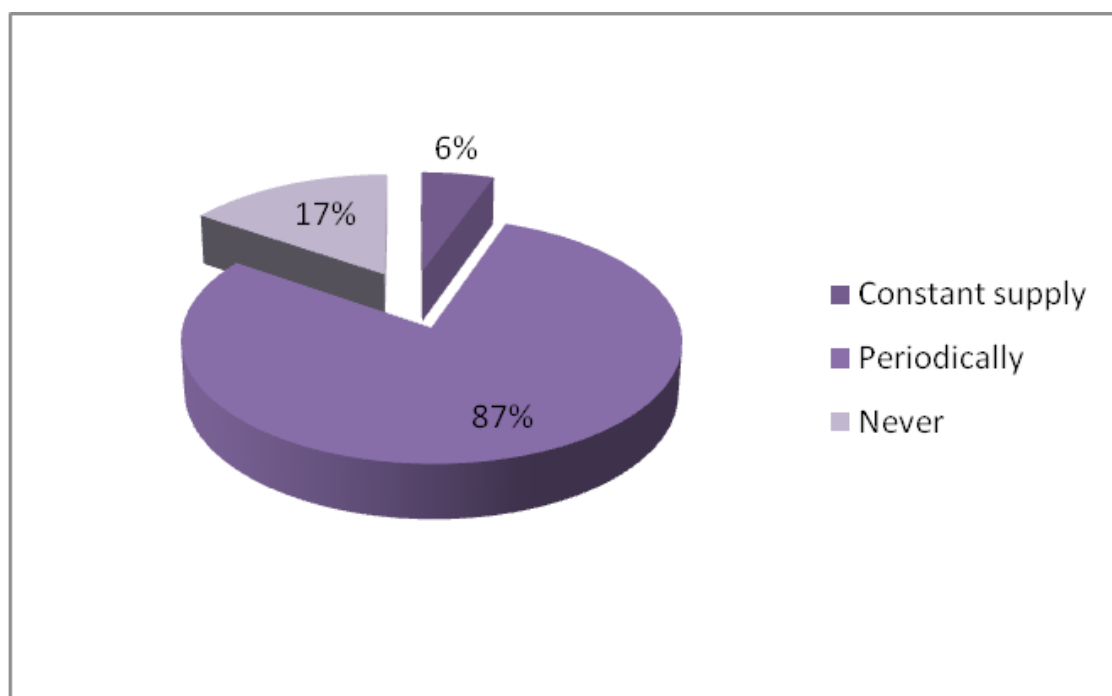
6.6 Challenge in securing connections

One hundred (100) per cent of the respondents who were connected to the public water supply reported that their houses or institutions were connected officially. They also reported that they were paying their bills officially. Majority of the respondents occupying houses that were connected to water were not able to tell whether there were any challenges in securing water supply to the house. Out of those interviewed only 12 per cent reported having faced challenges as they were directing involved in securing the connection. 5 per cent of these reported having paid some money to the connecting officer to facilitate faster connection.

6.7 Frequency of water supply

Only 6 per cent of the respondents reported having constant supply of water, 87 per cent reported that they received water periodically and 17 per cent reported that they never water flowing to their houses or premises.

Figure 6: Frequency of water supply



6.8 Alternative source of water in the event of shortage

Respondents with piped water connection reported that their main alternative source of supply was the water vendors at 68 per cent, 33 per cent reported that their alternative source of water was boreholes. The alternative source of water for rural households that obtained their water from the water kiosks in Masinga constituency was boreholes at 56 per cent and wells at 41 per cent

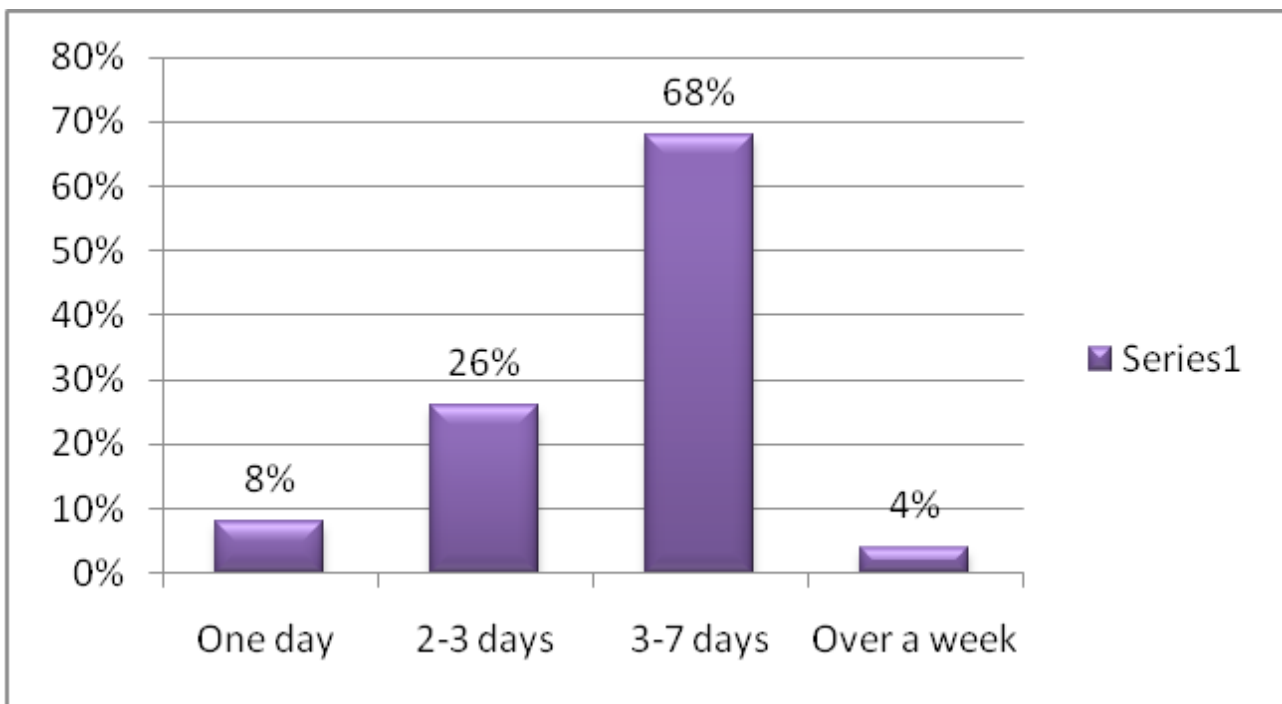
6.9 Reasons for cause of poor services

Respondents were of the opinion that water service delivery by the public sector in the County was poor. They attributed this to over billing, inaccurate billing, poor communication, poor connection, poor delivery of bills, and collision between public officers and the private water providers. They reported that the commodity was being sold at a higher price by the water vendors.

6.10 Disconnection from water supply

Eight (8) per cent of the respondents who had at one time been disconnected from water supply reported that it took 1 day to get reconnected to the supply, 26 per cent reported that it took between 2 and 3 days, 68 per cent reported that it took between 3 and 7 days, 4 per cent reported that it took more than a week. Twenty three (23) per cent of the respondents reported having paid the officer from the council to get reconnected even after settling the outstanding bill.

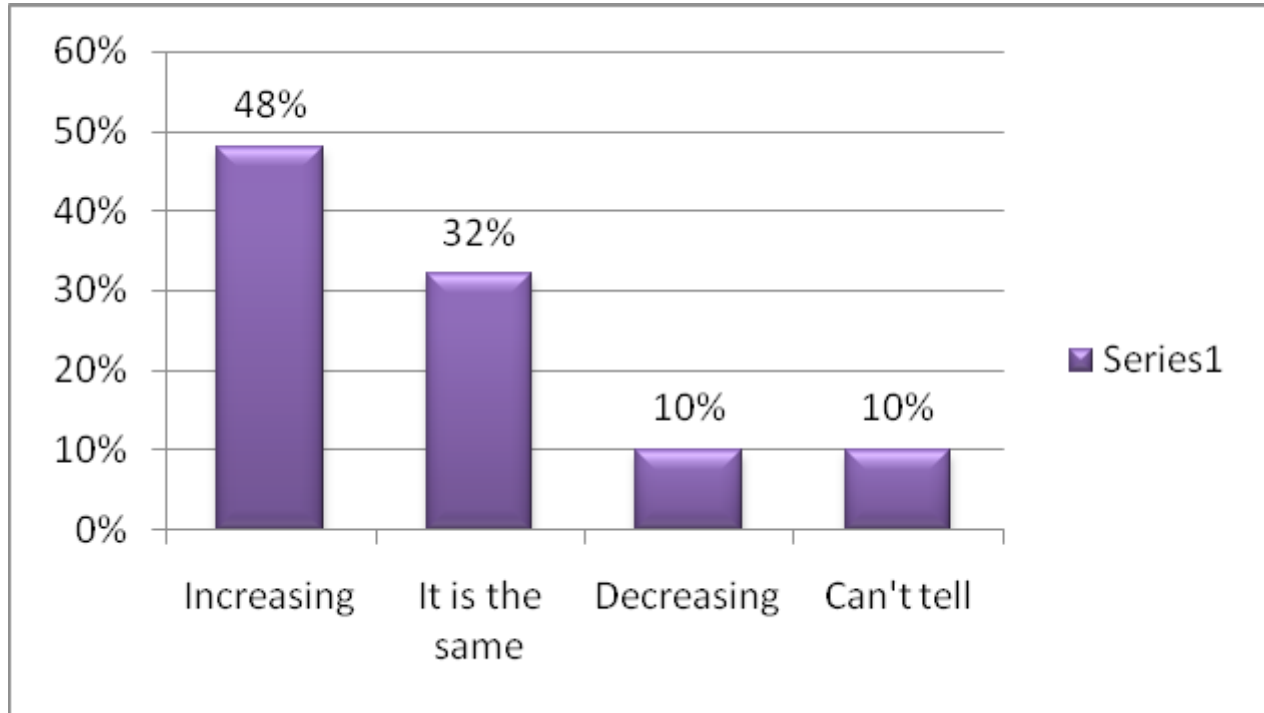
Figure 7: Reconnection time



6.11 Rating corruption in the water sector in the county

Fifty six (56) per cent of the respondents rated corruption in service delivery in the public water sector in the county as being very high, 32 per cent rated it high and 8 per cent rated it low. Four (4) per cent of the respondents could not rate it. The opinion of some of the respondents was that some officers in the sector were colluding with the water vendors in order to make profits accruing from the sale of the commodity.

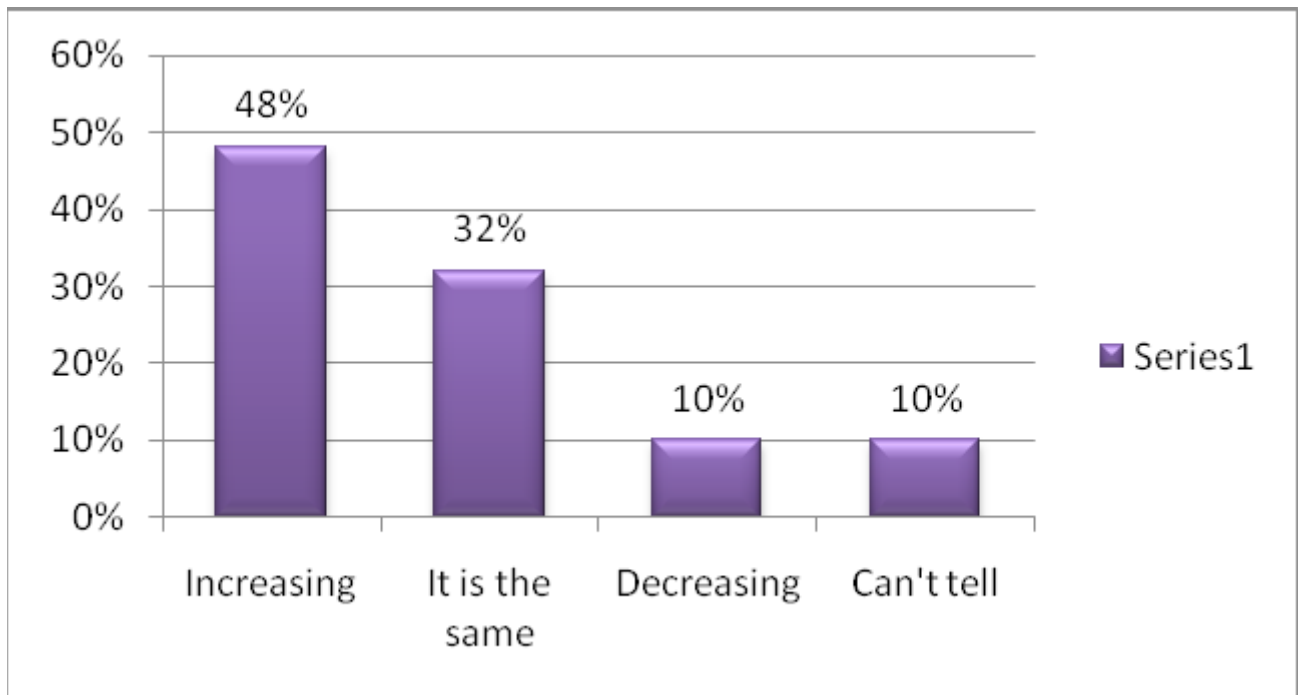
Figure 8: Rating corruption in the sector



6.12 Changes in corruption in the sector

Forty eight (48) percent of those interviewed were of the opinion that in service delivery in the public water sector in the county was increasing, 32 per cent were of the opinion that it was the same, 10 per cent said that it was decreasing and 10 per cent were not able to gauge.

Figure 9: Changes in corruption in the sector

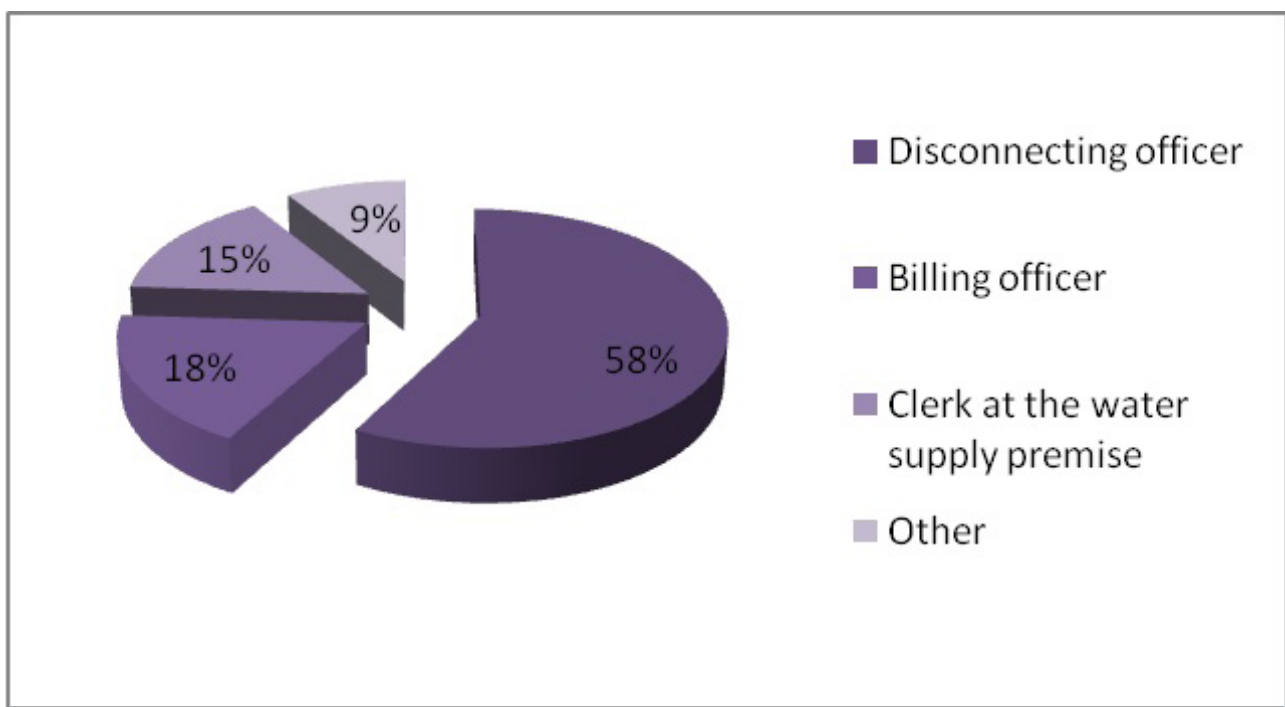


6.13 Experience with corruption

Eight percent (8 per cent) of the respondents owned up to having paid a bribe to a water services officer. 34 per cent of them reported that they had been requested for a bribe by the water service officer. 8 per cent of the respondents reported that they had been asked for a bribe within the last 12 months. Of those who reported having ever paid a bribe, 37 per cent reported that they had paid only once while 8 per cent reported having paid more than once. 5 per cent of the respondents reported knowing someone who had been requested for a bribe before being provided with service.

Fifty eight (58) per cent of the respondents reported having paid a bribe to the disconnecting officer in order to avoid being disconnected. 18 per cent reported having paid a bribe to the billing officer so that he/she may tamper with the figure, 15 per cent reported that the bribe was made to the clerk at the water supply premise.

Figure 10: Person to whom the bribe was paid



6.14 Corrupt practices by public water services experienced

Respondents reported having received offers from some of the officers in return for a bribe. 12 per cent of the respondents reported having received offer to get meter reading falsified in return for a bribe, 33 per cent reported on offer to get meter bypass in return for a bribe, 45 per cent reported offer to avoid being disconnected in return for a bribe and 11 per cent reported having received offer to speed up services in return for a bribe.

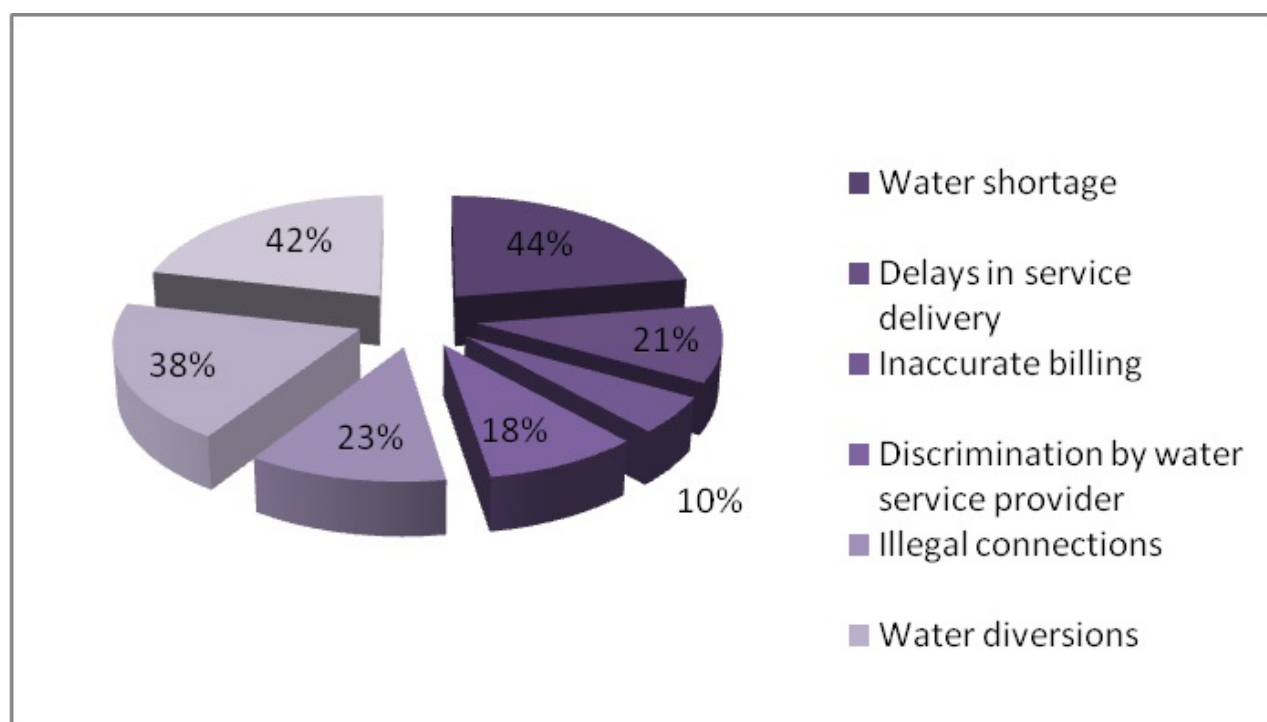
Table 1: Corrupt practices by public water services experienced

Practice	Percentage
Offer to get meter reading falsified in return for a bribe	12
Offer to get meter bypass in return for a bribe	33
Offer to avoid being disconnected in return for a bribe	45
Offer to speed up services in return for a bribe	11

6.15 Seriousness of corruption in the sector

Sixty two percent (62) per cent of the respondents were of the opinion that corruption was a very serious problem in service delivery in the public water sector in the county. 31 per cent were of the opinion that it was somewhat serious and 3 per cent were of the opinion that it was not serious at all. 45 per cent of the respondents were not able to gauge the level of seriousness.

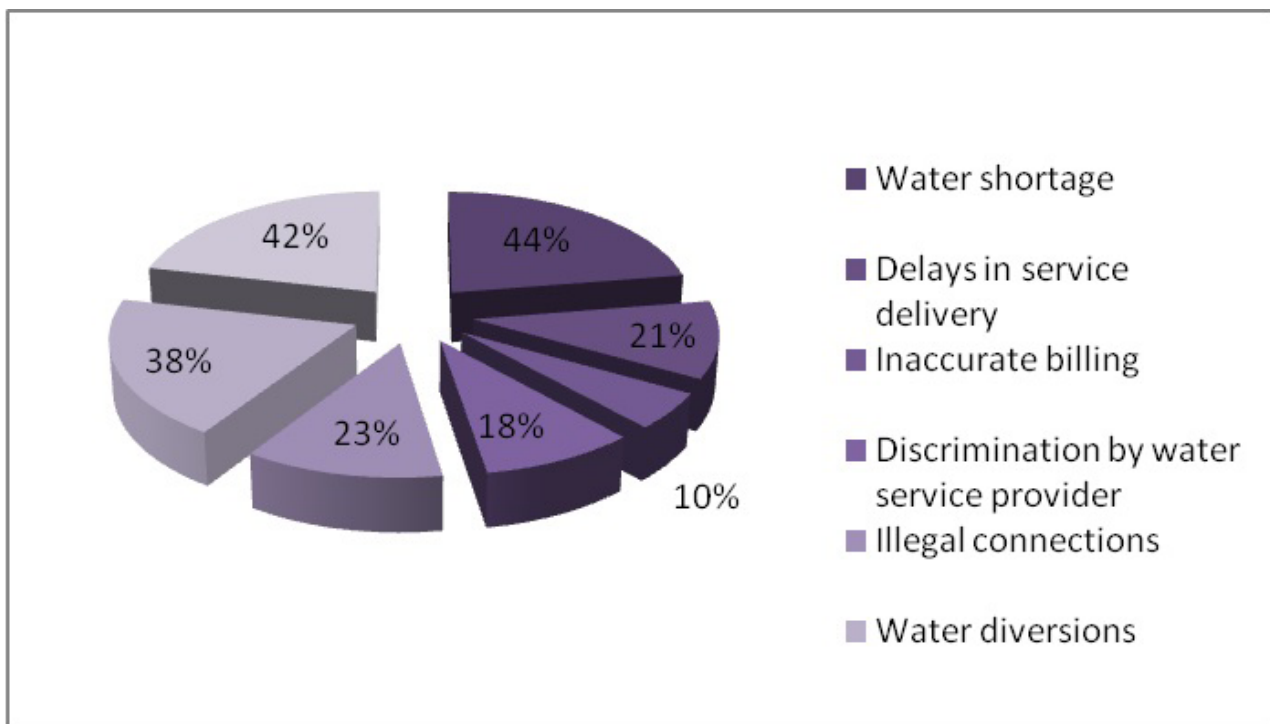
Figure 11: Seriousness of corruption in the sector



6.16 Problems encountered in the provision of water services which link directly to the manifestation of corruption

Respondents identified problems encountered in the provision of water services which link directly to the manifestation of corruption. 44 per cent of the respondents identified water shortage. Other problems identified included delays in service delivery (21 per cent), inaccurate billing (10 per cent), discrimination by the water service provider (18 per cent), illegal connections (23 per cent) and water diversions (38 per cent). Respondents who singled out water shortage were of the opinion that the shortage might be deliberately caused by some officers in the water sector so that citizen may purchase water from the water kiosks that are owned by the officers or their relatives. They were also of the opinion that water shortage may also be aimed at making affected households and institutions to resort to corrupt practices as they seek the commodity.

Figure 12: Problems encountered which link directly to the manifestation of corruption



6.17 Reporting corruption cases to the authorities

Ninety six percent (96 per cent) of the respondent reported that they had never reported corruption cases to the relevant authorities. Only 4 per cent had reported corruption cases to the authorities. 66 per cent of the respondents were of the opinion that follow up on corruption cases in service delivery in the public water sector in the county was not being done well. Only 8 per cent were of the opinion that it was being followed well.

6.18 Knowledge on service charter for the sector

Only 7 per cent of the respondents reported having seen the water service charter. 93 per cent of the respondents reported that they have never seen the charter. This is of concern as lack of knowledge of information in the service charter among the citizen may be used by some officers in the water sector to delay service delivery pushing people to engage in corrupt practices in order to fast track delivery of service.

7.0 Conclusion

A sustainable water supply is a cornerstone of sustainable communities and the provision of clean and accessible water goes a long way in the prevention of water borne diseases and the wastage of time in search of the precious commodity. It is therefore important that counties put in place mechanisms to ensure that there is adequate supply of water for its residents. Counties need to put in place deliberate measures be put in place by county governments to ensure address the issue of corruption in the provision of water.

For proper targeting of interventions aimed at addressing corruption in the sector, the study makes recommendations for county, private sector, civil society and community level attention. Their overall aim is to increase moral values, honesty and personal responsibility in the Sector. They are:-

- Carry out citizen mobilization and sensitisation on the dangers of corruption in the sector.
- Build the capacity of the public to fight corruption in the sector.
- Strengthen the capacity of civil society in the county to engage in sector anti-corruption activities.
- Promote the use of service delivery charters by all sector institutions.
- The water management institutions needs to develop measures to minimise corrupt practices involving water officers and the public by strengthening whistle-blowing protection as well as customer complaint mechanisms.
- Create a mechanism to gather and share findings from CSOs monitoring reports related to integrity with concerned sector officials.

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