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Description

This paper summarises the findings of a review of policy and strategy documents published circa 2008 by a diverse set of eleven development partners in the rural water sector. It was carried out as part of the Triple-S (Sustainable Services at Scale) Initiative using a Qualitative Document Analysis (QDA) approach to assess the extent to which the reviewed documents align with a set of 'building blocks' identified by Triple-S as integral to ensuring sustainable service delivery in the rural water sector. Based on the reviewed documents, the policies of the development partners included in this analysis demonstrate a clear commitment towards a number of important elements believed to be necessary for sustainable service delivery including learning and adaptive management, coordination and collaboration, capacity support for local government, and harmonisation and alignment. However, the analysis of the policy documents results in low scores for planning for asset management (i.e. renewals) and recognition and promotion of alternative service delivery options to community management (e.g. Self-supply of, or delegated management to, the private sector). Thus, this study indicates that these areas, considered by Triple-S to be crucial for improving sustainability, are relatively neglected and merit more attention in the policies of organisations.

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