

The 6th World Water Forum - Marseille 2012



The right to water: how can we move to implementing concrete solutions ?

Following the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of a resolution recognizing access to clean water and sanitation as a human right in July 2010 and the adoption by the Human Rights Council of a further resolution on the same subject in September 2010, it is now up to each state to make this universal right a reality.

However, there are a number of questions associated with the effective implementation of this right to water.

These questions were compe-



tently dealt with on Tuesday 13 March during the session organized by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Aquafed, the World

Bank and Eau Vive, and notably attended by Catarina de Albuquerque, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Right to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation.

Following a presentation by a group of multi-stakeholder representatives giving examples of different legal responses and concrete experiences of implementing the human right to water, a debate was held on how best to monitor and define appropriate post-2015 targets.

The session ended with testimonies from water users who have experienced insufficient access to water and sanitation.

Monitoring water services: a condition for sustainability



Standpipe abandoned due to lack of maintenance (Madagascar)

In developing countries, nearly a third of the small-scale water supply systems installed in rural areas and small towns either do not work or perform less effectively than anticipated.

On Wednesday, AFD, in partnership with pS-Eau, SEDIF and IRC, organized a session on monitoring water services in small towns and peri-urban areas. The aim of the session was to highlight how monitoring can improve water service performance. Sixteen countries, from different continents, attested to the benefits of these monitoring mechanisms: a reduction in the number and duration of service interruptions, improved financial stability, increased and secured reserves, better informed and educated users, transparency and conflict

resolution assistance.

Two key findings came out of this session: firstly, in those countries where monitoring has already been put in place, its effectiveness and integration into the country's sector policy needs to be improved so as to facilitate nationwide implementation; secondly, in those countries with no monitoring mechanisms in place, there is a need to promote their implementation.

Good governance: a condition for success

Managing water for all is not only a technical or financial issue, but also a matter of good governance. In 2011, OECD conducted a review of the principle water governance challenges. One of the major issues identified was that of the fragmentation of those institutions in charge of water: basin authorities, local authorities, regions, states, etc. This fragmentation of responsibilities limits the capacity to mobilize the financial resources required to develop access to water.

Participants in the session on 'good governance and sustainable financing' advocated a number of key principles, including the importance of:

- organizing widespread consultations in order to attain the required compromise between stakeholders with occasionally diverging interests;
- ensuring the active participation of users, particularly so as to facilitate the payment of contributions;

- affording attention to those actors organizing the dialogue, not only to technical stakeholders.

Improving the performance of water service management is also a matter of governance between stakeholders. Whether public or private, this service management performance depends both on the public authorities' capacity to define a clear regulatory framework and on collaboration between stakeholders. Performance objectives can be achieved using quantitative and qualitative indicators that place the operators in competition with each other (benchmarking). The contractual model is also key to ensuring service sustainability. During the session on 'governance and service performance', Jean Marc Jahn, General Director of the Algiers water and sanitation company (SEEAL), specifically highlighted those contracts that establish a knowledge transfer based management approach.

A fund for local authorities in the Sahel

Participants in the workshop 'Decentralized cooperation in arid areas, issues and experiences' welcomed the initiative undertaken by the permanent inter-state committee for drought control in the Sahel (CILSS), which on 12 March announced the launch of a call for proposals from local authorities.

With funding of 1,200,000 euros from the French Global Environment Facility (FFEM: *Fonds français pour l'Environnement Mondial*), this call for proposals aims to support those (particularly rural) local authorities seeking to prevent the degradation of natural resources within their area and rehabilitate degraded land.

For more information, visit: www.cilss.bf

Meeting the Forum's participants



Sita Ouatarra, Deputy Mayor of Bobo Dioulasso, and Moulay Mehdi Lahbib, Mayor of Tata, with Jean-Claude Magalhaes, Deputy Mayor of Cherbourg-Octeville, and Jean-Louis Bonnet, General Councilor in the Drôme, describing the experiences of their respective decentralized cooperation partnerships and their impact, during the roundtable on: *1% in solidarity for water – Local authorities, your action counts.*



Mostafa Laly, Vice-President of Figuig local authority (Morocco), and Khalil Harfouche, President of the Union of Municipalities of Jezzine (Lebanon), discuss their strategic sanitation program.

Planning sanitation strategies at the national and local levels

Sanitation is now top of the international, national and local decision-makers' agenda.

However, the challenges of providing universal access to sanitation facilities and wastewater evacuation and treatment still need to be addressed in developing countries. And, as highlighted by Jacques OLIVIER, Managing Director of the sanitation authority for the agglomeration of Paris (SIAAP), towns and cities in Northern countries also have to face new social, environmental, technical and economic issues.

Uschi Eid, Vice-President of the UN Secretary General's Advisory Board (UNSGAB) on Water and Sanitation, recalls that, in order to draw attention to sanitation needs, we had to break down taboos. And we now need to develop a better understanding of sanitation and think 'outside the sector' by involving and building the capacities of all potential intermediaries: citizens, teachers, researchers, elected officials and technicians, the private sector, etc.

The implementation of national and local strategies, designed and initiated in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, is also a

prerequisite for effective public sanitation policies, and for sustainable sanitation services.

The initial session, chaired by the Prince of Orange, President of UNSGAB, dealt with national sanitation planning and discussed the tools available for supporting strategy development.

In the thematic session on local sanitation planning, coordinated by pS-Eau, Jean-Pierre Elong M'Bassi, UCLGA Executive Secretary, observed that local authority level is where sanitation service development needs to take place. However, externally formulated strategies rarely work and donor-funded sanitation master plans tend to accumulate yet are seldom implemented.

During this session, different approaches were discussed, such as those piloted by IWA, EAWAG-SANDEC and pS-Eau as part of its Concerted Municipal Strategies (CMS) program. Each of these approaches has its own specific characteristics and none can be considered 'the' solution for implementation; however, in spite of their differences, all approaches do have certain elements in common.

Considering the different levels (dwelling, neighborhood, town, outside the town) and taking ac-



**Session on local sanitation planning,
Wednesday March 14th**

count of social, institutional and cultural aspects makes it possible to select the appropriate technologies and management and financial models to be put in place.

Emmanuel Ngnikam, Era Cameroon consultant, has worked on several concerted municipal strategy processes. In his opinion, by talking and listening to all stakeholders, consultation results in a refined sanitation service diagnostic being carried out with all local actors of supply and demand.

Amadou Ousmane, consultant with Beria in Niger, noted that, by working on the development of a local authority strategy, the elected official is able to "rediscover his local area". He is equipped with "a negotiation tool" and the strategy development process enables "a human structure" to be put in place to help ensure sustainability of the sanitation service over the long term.