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Africities 4

Solidarity funding mechanisms for better meeting the needs and expectations of African local governments in the area of water and sanitation

UCLG-A/ pS-Eau / WWC

RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED

OBSERVATIONS

With the Millennium Development Goals, the international community has undertaken to halve the number of people without access to a safe water supply and basic sanitation by 2015. The goal is an ambitious one, and to make any significant progress towards it, it has been acknowledged that considerable financial resources must be found and properly utilised.

In particular, two specific needs can be identified. Firstly, there is a need to increase the funding reaching local levels, for it is at local level that the specific needs and situation of the local population can best be understood and addressed. Secondly, there is a need to build local capacities in order to ensure good water resource management¹.

Financing mechanisms that are based on the showing of solidarity between peoples contribute to meeting both these needs. We use the term "solidarity" in the sense of creating change through the common appreciation of the importance of access to water and sanitation. These financing mechanisms can complement Official Development Assistance, they are decentralised and non-governmental. Many examples of financing mechanisms based on solidarity between water users exist around the world, and contribute to improving access to water and sanitation for the poorest.

This session examined solidarity financing mechanisms, their advantages and how such practices could be developed with a view to improving access to water and sanitation. It was based on a study carried out among those people benefiting from such mechanisms in the South.

¹ See for instance the report from the Camdessus Panel, *Financing Water for All, and the first report of the Task Force on Financing Water for All Enhancing Access to Finance for Local Government*

RECOMMENDATIONS

To the Ministers

1. Put access to water and sanitation at the top of the political agenda.
2. Ensure the effective transfer of skills and resources in the water and sanitation sector.
3. Accompany the transfer of competence from the State to the communes, the transfer of financial and human resources (deployment of technical managers).
4. Recognise the complementary nature of decentralised non-governmental co-operation actions, particularly those targeting local authorities
5. Implement national policy and strategies in the water and sanitation sector in collaboration with local government representatives and field operators (NGOs, private companies etc.) to maximise this complementary role.
6. Communicate regularly with local authorities on national strategies, which provide the essential framework within which local policies must be shaped
7. Give priority to the development of local financing mechanisms so that the municipalities can implement safe water and sanitation services for all.
8. Municipalities (elected representatives and technical departments) must be able to count on the support of the central government departments to build the competences and know-how required to manage services locally.

To the Mayors

9. Local authorities must appropriate the national plans and draw up local development plans.
10. Mayors must draw up shared municipal strategies so that no stakeholders are overlooked and that the populations participate in all phases of implementing basic services, in particular in defining needs and formulating plans.
11. Mayors must develop local initiatives that generate local investment capable of attracting external financing.
12. Participation in existing networks or the creation of new networks of stakeholders including donors, financial structures (banks and micro-credit for instance) and private local actors should be encouraged.
13. Within these networks, their priority must be making local demand known, setting priorities and meeting needs in terms of investment and sustainability of installations

To regional organisations, in particular the Municipal Development Partnership

14. Capitalise on existing information and knowledge in terms of municipal development to avoid repeating tasks, analyse the impact of actions and disseminate the lessons learned from experience
15. Know and disseminate national and local development plans for services in line with requests by local authorities.
16. Highlight local actions that can mobilise local funds and attract external public or private investment.
17. Strengthen or create networks of local authorities at district and regional level and highlight within these networks the requests and needs of the municipalities
18. Lobby donors so that they consider solidarity financing mechanisms as a major tool for implementing certain project elements (capacity building etc.).

To development partners

19. Support local authorities in drawing up local development plans.
20. Increase communication on solidarity financing mechanisms among local authorities, water professionals, local partners and the general public.
21. Lobby for the channelling of 20% of Official Development Assistance to local authorities for the development of basic services.
22. Mobilise networks of local authorities, NGOs and the private sector to promote and support existing sub-sovereign financing mechanisms.
23. Encourage donors to develop financing mechanisms that are directly accessible to local authorities as the European Union Water Facility did.