



WORLD WATER COUNCIL

AFRICITIES – Special session

Facilitate the strengthening of local authorities for meeting the water challenges

Wednesday, September 20th

Session Conveners :

World Water Council (WWC)
UN-Habitat
United Cities and Local Governments – Africa (UCLG-A)

Background:

Decentralisation is becoming a key word in the political water agenda of the next coming years. The role of local authorities is therefore essential in achieving the water related MDGs and in facing the challenges beyond 2015 as the management of water resources and services has to be as close as possible to the users. Local authorities cover several entities such as elected representatives, permanent municipal staff, utilities and operators, regulators, users associations.

The new and more intensive water management tasks and responsibilities requires adequate institutional, financial, technical and professional capacities that need to be clearly defined, developed and strengthened. These capacities are not only expressed in knowledge and skills of individuals to develop and manage water services but also in terms of empowerment and facilitation in decentralisation processes and the development of accountable and transparent governance systems. The lack of this capacity is in many cases considered as one of the main constraints for development and the need for strengthening and empowerment of local stakeholders has been a main message for quite some years.

The World Water Council is committed to stimulate the process of strengthening of local authorities to meet the water challenges by (i) identifying main constraints (ii) defining actions to be implemented by local and international actors (iii) bringing these actions to the appropriate political level to trigger their implementation.

The ultimate scope of the work will cover the capacity to manage water resources (surface, groundwater, rainwater availability, quality) and water services (water supply and sanitation, urban drainage, water for agriculture, and risks related floods and droughts) that are within the jurisdiction of the local governments.

Several activities in terms of strengthening processes and support tools have already been developed and implemented but these are often formulated from a supply orientation. As a first step towards the development of a next generation of strengthening actions, the needs and requirements from the perspective of local authorities themselves and the main constraining factors to really empower and strengthen their capacity need to be identified.

Objective of the session

The objective of this session is for local authorities to identify priority actions to be taken by local, national and international actors that will enable and facilitate the strengthening of local authorities to develop and manage water resources and services. These proposals will help to build a programme to facilitate the strengthening of local authorities.

Participants of the sessions (local authorities and local government associations, development banks, UN Agencies practitioners, water utilities, water users associations...) will, through their concrete experiences, discuss the following questions:

- What are the challenges that local authorities face in strengthening their capacity to manage water resources and services at present and in the coming 20 years?
- What are the powers, means and tools that should be at their disposition to face these challenges?
- What are their main constraints and what actions are necessary to be taken by local, national and international actors to facilitate the strengthening of local capacities?

Two keynote speakers will make a short presentation of the challenges and requirements met at local level (from a Regional point of view and from a Municipal point of view) in order to launch the debate and allow participants to contribute to the brainstorming from their own experiences.

NB: Preparation by the participants of a short list of bullet points addressing the 3 main points of the session based on their case study would be welcome and would make the brainstorming rounds very efficient.

Outcomes of the session will be used to build a programme that aims at defining priorities for actions to facilitate the strengthening of local authorities. The focus area of this programme will be on development of partnerships and triggering action.

Agenda for the session (3 hours)
AFRICITIES, September 20th 2006, 14:00 – 17:00

Title of the session: Facilitate the strengthening of local authorities for meeting the water challenges

Chairperson: Leonard BIHONDO, Maire de Mwanza

Facilitator: Paul van Hofwegen, WWC

Rapporteur: CGLU-A (à préciser)

Venue : Kenyatta International Congress Centre

Programme :

1. Introduction to the meeting: background, purpose and approach	(10 min.)
2. Presentation of preliminary framework for facilitation of strengthening processes	(10 min.)
3. The Capacity challenge for service development and delivery in South Africa: Mr. Siphosiso Mosai Director Water service City of Cape Town	(15 min.)
4. Key issues for strengthening management capacity for service delivery in African towns and Cities: Ms. Mariam Yunusa Manager World Urban Forum UN-Habitat	(15 min.)
5. <i>Brainstorm 1: What are the challenges and requirements ?</i>	(30 min.)
6. Synthesis and discussion	(10 min.)
7. <i>Brainstorm 2: What are the constraints ?</i>	(30 min.)
8. Synthesis and discussion	(10 min.)
9. <i>Brainstorm 3: What actions should be undertaken and by whom?</i>	(30 min.)
10. Conclusions and discussion	(10 min.)