

Capacity Building Workshop on Partnerships for Improving the Performance of Water Utilities in the African Region

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Table of Contents

Nairobi Statement	2
First Thematic Session: Managing Water and Sanitation Services in Urban Areas - Issues and Challenges in Africa	4
Second Thematic Session: Strengthening Institutional Governance and Accountability	8
Third Thematic Session: Financing Water and Sanitation Services.....	12
Fourth Thematic Session: Promoting Partnerships among Water Operators.....	16
Working Group 1: Capacity Building Needs of Public Water Utilities in Africa.....	19
Working Group 2: Benchmarking of Utilities for Performance Improvement	23
Working Group 3: Sharing Regional Experiences in Managing Water Utilities	25
Annex 1: Participants List	27
Annex 2: Workshop Agenda	44
Annex 3: List of Abbreviations	48

Nairobi Statement
Issued at the conclusion of the
Workshop for Water Utility Managers of the Africa Region

We, senior managers (regulators and operators) of water utilities of the Africa Region, participated in a Capacity Building Workshop organized jointly by UN-DESA and UN-HABITAT in Nairobi, Kenya, from 6-8 December 2006.

We consider this workshop an important step in following-up the implementation of CSD-13 decisions, especially those related to improving the performance and effectiveness of water utilities in provision of sustainable water and sanitation services.

We appreciate the political support African Minister's Council on Water (AMCOW) is providing to accelerate the implementation of water and sanitation agenda in the region, and request AMCOW to continue providing similar support to the water utilities.

In the workshop, we discussed issues and challenges facing water utilities and operators; mechanisms to strengthen institutional governance and accountability; financing needs for expanding water and sanitation services, especially for the poor; rationalization of tariffs and subsidies; role of partnerships in enhancing the efficiency of water utilities; and capacity building needs of water utilities.

We understand that the proceeding of the meeting will be compiled by the workshop organizers and shared with the participants in due course of time. Meantime, we endorse the following summary of conclusions and recommendations emerging from extensive discussions during the four thematic plenary and three working group sessions.

1. Public water utilities remain the leading players in the provision of water and sanitation services in the region. Since performance of these utilities can be constrained by limited technical, financial and institutional capacities, programs should be developed and implemented to overcome the capacity gaps. These programmes should be targeted at educational training, monitoring research and forecasting, legislation and regulation as well as sustainable financing of infrastructure.
2. Improving the performance of water utilities is a process, which needs commitment, support and participation of all stakeholders, especially the national and local governments. Towards this aim, the governments should consider providing due autonomy to public utilities in the design and implementation of strategies leading to efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, accountability, sustainability and combating corruption.
3. Financing has to be increased to improve and extend safe and adequate access to water and sanitation to all. For this purpose, all potential sources should be explored and tapped. In this regard, much can be achieved by blending, pooling and co-financing of ODA and local resources, credit worthiness of utilities, as well as better management of water utilities which is imperative to acquire additional funds. The need to look beyond traditional revenue generation mechanisms (such as tariffs and subsidies) was emphasized, and utilities were encouraged to explore innovative solutions to mobilize local resources. The government at both the local and national level should take a greater effort in financing water and sanitation.

4. Many countries in the region have utilities or organizations that carry out the dual functions of regulatory and operational activities. This could lead to a conflict of interest, and may give rise to lack of transparency, accountability and poor delivery of services. Therefore, separation of these functions was recommended to be a pre-requisite to improve the performance of public utilities in delivering water and sanitation services.
5. Benchmarking of utilities was recognized as an important management tool to enhance their performance and accountability. Towards this aim, it is essential to implement actions such as: criteria for customer satisfaction, evaluating the performance of utility managers, water quality evaluation, serving the poor as well as creating gender balance in the utilities etc.
6. The observed lag in the sanitation sector deserves special attention and needs to be tackled within the framework of integrated water resource management.
7. Developing partnerships among water operators was considered as an important mechanism through which less efficient utilities can learn from more competent utilities on a not-for-profit basis. Towards this end, participants supported the idea of developing and institutionalizing Water Operators Partnership (WOP) mechanism at the global level geared towards promoting the exchange of experiences and facilitating contact among utilities.
8. The meeting requested UN-HABITAT to take further necessary steps in collaboration with its partners to transform this concept into reality and establish a global WOP, while ensuring due participation of already existing international, regional and sub-regional networks and professional associations in the process.
9. It was recognized that existing network such as the Water Utilities Partnership (WUP) for the Africa region could play an important role in capacity building of utilities and connecting them with each other in the region, but it requires considerable support and strengthening both in terms of organization and operational activities. To explore how this could be done, the participants welcomed the proposal of IWA-ESAR (International Water Association, East and Southern African Region) and Rand Water to host a meeting in South Africa during April 2007.

We request the organizers of this workshop to take necessary steps in collaboration with the relevant partners to implement the above recommendations, and keep us informed of subsequent developments and progress on follow-up actions.

We appreciate UN-DESA and UN-HABITAT for organizing this workshop, as well as other international institutions such as WSP, SIWI, UN-ECA, UNU, African Union, WaterAid, UNESCO IHE, IWA, UNSGAB for their contributions to this workshop.

8 December 2006.
Nairobi, Kenya

First Thematic Session

Managing Water and Sanitation Services in Urban Areas - Issues and Challenges in Africa

A summary of each presentation is provided below, followed by the synopsis of the main points raised during the presentations and the discussion at the end of each session.

Meeting W&S Goals in Africa: Role of Public Water Utilities

M. Aslam Chaudhry, UN-DESA

Mr. Chaudhry highlighted the issues related to meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for water and sanitation in Africa and the role of public water utilities. He pointed out that in Africa approximately 335 million individuals lack access to water, of which 280 million live in rural areas. Drawing a direct relationship between poverty and lack of access to water and sanitation, he enumerated those poor consumers in countries like the Nepal, Bangladesh, Philippines, Ghana and Colombia, without access to the public network, pay up to 16 times more for water than people living in cities such as New York and London. Relating this situation to the attainment of the MDGs of halving those without water and sanitation by 2015, Mr. Chaudhry indicated that the current trends suggest that the target may not be possible to achieve, which may result in adverse impacts on health, education and poverty reduction. However, he stressed the need to aim to attain threshold targets. On public utilities, he acknowledged challenges, such as: population growth and urbanization; the sustainability of existing and new services; limited capacity and financing needs for expanding new systems; and the need to balance potentially conflicting social and economic objectives as well as clearly defining the role of operators and regulators.

Water for African Cities: Issues and Challenges in Urban and Peri-Urban Areas

Daniel Adom, UN-HABITAT

Mr. Adom pointed out that Africa's urban areas are the most rapidly expanding and that in 2003 35.7% of its population lived in towns and cities. He correlated the high percentage of city slums and low levels of human development and highlighted the importance of addressing basic needs such as lack of access to safe water. Mr. Adom explained the stagnation cycle typically found in urban areas where low revenue collection leads to weak fiscal situation which is further exasperated by deterioration of assets due to lack of maintenance. He explained that the UN-HABITAT water and sanitation trust fund has a strategic services component, which directly feeds into monitoring activities, and providing a feedback mechanism. He expanded on the UN-HABITAT Water for African cities (WAC) programme, which takes a holistic approach to ensure that implemented activities are scaled-up through partnerships. The presenter underscored the need to build capacity for local authorities and other stakeholders on water education and gender issues and to "give voice to the poor" by promoting their participation in all phases from planning to implementation of activities. He also highlighted the importance of establishing strategic partnerships, especially on financing, to assist utilities.

Monitoring Water Development for Urban Environments in Africa

Stephen M. Donkor, UNECA

Mr. Donkor addressed the issue of monitoring water development and the urban environments at the regional level and highlighted policy objectives adopted in Africa on urbanization, settlement, water supply and sanitation issues. He discussed Africa in the context of being the least urbanized continent; however, it is projected that by 2025, 50% of Africa's population would

be living in urban areas.. He observed that the concept of “adequate” urban water supply is dependent on individual country capacity and their respective level of development. He lamented that low-income consumers pay much more for inadequate water provision and added that governments are using financial resources to subsidize richer consumers. Mr. Donkor stressed the need to ensure sustainability as urbanization increases as well as to assess the impacts of lack of water and sanitation on the population’s health. On monitoring, he stressed the importance of indicators used to prepare the UNECA’s 2006 African Water Development Report, and cited some indicators being used in Africa, such as: actual and total water supply and sewerage coverage; incidence of water related diseases; water supply cost per litre; pollution generated from industry; and population exposure to water-related disasters. He underscored the need to establish a standardized monitoring system in the region including all interested stakeholders to ensure consistent reporting.

Providing Sustainable Water Services to Cities: Experiences from Nairobi

Francis Mugo, Nairobi Water and Sewerage Company (NWSC)

Mr. Mugo spoke on providing sustainable water services to cities and highlighted Nairobi’s experience. He explained that the company was incorporated under the provisions of Kenya’s Water Act 2002 to address the problems of inefficient service delivery and lack of customer confidence under the Nairobi City Council regime. Highlighting milestones, he mentioned rehabilitation of water mains and treatment works which resulted in an extra 60,000 cubic meters of water per day; improved water quality; modern and efficient billing system; and doubling monthly revenue collection. Regarding challenges, Mr. Mugo lamented the failure of old equipment and machinery; problems relating to collecting government arrears; obstruction and encroachment of water and sewerage facilities; illegal connections; and financial demands from riparian communities.

Policy Framework for Small Scale Private Service Providers (SPSPs) for Water in Africa

Roohi Abdullah, Consultant, UN-DESA

Ms. Abdullah addressed policy frameworks for small-scale private service providers (SPSPs) for water in Africa and highlighted their importance, definition, characteristics, typology, and prevalence. She explained that SPSPs are commonly known as water vendors, small-scale independent providers or small water enterprises, which provide water supply where no public service or unreliable service exists. She explained that SPSPs are usually informally run, unregulated and often operate as family businesses. She then elaborated on the water access situation in Africa, nationally approximately 30% of population have access to water, thereby making a case for large level prevalence for SPSPs. Ms. Abdullah noted that globally almost 40% countries show some form of prevalence of SPSPs and that, in Africa, almost 50% countries show SPSPs incidence. Moreover, in Africa they mostly operate as mobile distributors and point sources. She also provided global empirical evidence of the prices SPSPs charge consumers based on typology. She then highlighted some of the regulatory issues based on typology. She proposed, moving forward, the need to define relationships, responsibilities, accountability and prescription for each stakeholder; regulator, water utility, customers, SPSP and its Association, within a larger policy and regulatory framework. She concluded with a recommendation that water managers should work towards establishing a legal, institutional and monitoring arrangement with SPSPs in short and medium term, in view that MDG targets possibly may not be met by 2015 for Africa.

Summary of the First Session and Interactive Dialogue

1. There is a much stronger effort required to reach the MDG targets on water and sanitation in Africa and to ultimately achieve full coverage of access to freshwater and improved sanitation.
2. International agreements, plan, and monitoring initiatives are directly relevant and have strong implications for public utilities. The Public sector has a great potential to contribute to achieving the MDGs.
3. Strengthening governance within the local communities and on the national level is a key factor. Capacity Building must become an urgent priority at all levels to influence and manage operations of utilities.
4. Division of competencies and involvement of multiple actors can lead to competition and subsequently to improved services. Decentralization carries the risk that the responsibility is transferred without proper financial means.
5. Financing to the sector must increase and should come from all sources. Institutional and managerial reforms need to be carried out in accordance with financing needs. It is important to recognize that investments must be balanced between physical infrastructure and human capacity building.
6. It is important to consider water quality while increasing the efficiency of services.
7. Factors, such as: lack of political will, gap between policy and implementation, inadequate institutional framework, inadequate measures to engage citizens of all social strata, investment constraints, and poor urban land management, are although detrimental to extending and improving services are at the same time mutually reinforcing and a major obstacle to improving access to water and sanitation.
8. Strong need exists to have a thorough understanding of the realities within each country in order to determine the poor to appropriately target interventions. There is a need to mobilize resources in new, creative ways to overcome lack of political will.
9. Establishment of strategic partnerships is an essential factor to find solutions to the most pressing problems. There exists a consensus to support change strategies that are locally fostered and endorsed.
10. There is a need for better cooperation and enhancement of existing monitoring mechanisms. The African Water Development Report is an existing, successful mechanism to monitor progress.
11. Small Scale Private Service Providers (SPSPs) are a market response to deficient and unreliable water supply, which fill the gaps where no coverage or poor coverage persists.
12. Proposals to make the major stakeholders, who influence the performance of water utilities, work together more effectively:
 - Understanding the interrelationship of stakeholders: Regulators, Utility, SPSPs, Associations, households/customers;
 - One size fits all approach cannot be adopted;

- The policy framework approach has to be formulated individually based on national and local context, type of provider etc.;
- Relationships, responsibilities, and level of accountability of different stakeholders need to be defined; and
- A strong need for establishing an open dialogue between the water utilities and governments to limit political interference and develop tangible actions.

Second Thematic Session

Strengthening Institutional Governance and Accountability

A summary of each presentation is provided below, followed by the synopsis of the main points raised during the presentations and discussion at the end of each session.

Current Trends in Regulating Public Water Utilities in Africa

Symerre Grey-Johnson, African Forum for Utilities Regulators (AFUR)

Mr. Grey-Johnson presented on current trends in regulating public water utilities in Africa. He explained that issues such as: inappropriate pricing, managerial and technical difficulties; subsidies for rural and peri-urban dwellers and low levels of access, had led to the formation of AFUR, which derives its membership and existence from the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). In addition, AFUR provides a multi-sector forum for the regulation of energy, telecommunications, transport, and water and sanitation sectors. He noted that most water regulators are embedded in government ministries with no clear separation between policy-making and implementation. He underscored AFUR's commitment to facilitating a consistent system of regulation in Africa based on "the three 'As'" of availability, accessibility, and affordability, and emphasized the need to encourage investments, stimulate competition and limit barriers to trade.

Institutional Framework for Improving the Performance of Water Operators

Antonio Miranda, Member of the UN Secretary General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation

Mr. Miranda gave an overview of the institutional framework for improving the performance of water operators, supported with an example from Brazil. According to him good performance of water operators is a result of efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and accountability when integrated and managed in a sustainable manner. He maintained that public operator performance issues are often due to the absence of clear goals, budgetary constraints, and inadequate human resource policies. He outlined a six step process to improve performance of water operators ensuring sustainability, which include: accurate diagnosis of the relevant issues; adopt a demand side perspective; set up clear goals; define alternative for implementing the set goals; choose the most appropriate option; and set the framework to ensure sustainability. In addition, he highlighted the water operators need to be: open to criticism; they should avoid a purely profit-driven approach; should improve participatory practices; facilitate tariff reforms, where higher charges could be levied for increased consumption; help enhance public awareness and political support; and the need for an external monitoring mechanism to ensure transparency. Mr. Miranda highlighted that reform is only possible with government support, knowledge of similar processes, democratization of the discussion and internal willingness and commitment.

Contractualisation - Making Public Utilities more Accountable

Alain Morel, World Bank, Water and Sanitation Program (WSP)

Mr. Morel discussed contractualization as a mechanism for making public utilities more accountable. His presentation focused on why contractualize and what should be the nature of this contractual arrangement. Pointing out that public utilities often have contradicting objectives and lack financial viability, he encapsulated contractualization as a process of creating and implementing a chain of contracts by linking consecutive stakeholders within complex social systems. He explained that the process is facilitated by asking the right questions, being realistic

in terms of objectives, identifying resources required as well as hidden environmental and social costs, instilling a customer-centred approach and providing an incentive-based financial transfer fund by channelling to those who can use funds more efficiently. Mr. Morel concluded by highlighting contractualization as a tool for promoting change management and achieving service delivery by promoting good governance and access to services.

Water and Sanitation Utilities in Small Urban Centres

Graham Alabaster, UN-HABITAT

Mr. Alabaster focused on water and sanitation utilities in small urban centres, noting that currently 20 to 50% of the world's low and middle income population lives in small towns and villages. He identified the absence of an integrated approach and the difficulty of implementing activities in the "grey area," comprising neither rural nor urban settlements, as main challenges faced by small towns. Mr. Alabaster underscored the need to identify technology that will work in such areas and acknowledged the lack of technical capacity. He explained that UN-HABITAT has developed an assessment tool to monitor the quality and reliability of water and sanitation in low-income areas. He reported that UN-HABITAT has proposed a water and sanitation governance framework that includes pro-poor legislation and policies, institutional arrangements, and decisions on technical choices. He said small centres need capacity building on utility and urban watershed management, advocacy and communication, and pro-poor governance systems with special attention to gender and marginalized groups. He outlined the Lake Victoria project, an East African initiative in collaboration with UN-HABITAT designed to promote water and sanitation in 15 urban centres around Lake Victoria. In conclusion, he highlighted that strategy for service delivery in small urban centres is contingent on: good baseline data, astute technical knowledge, constructing internal capacity for sustainability, utilizing innovative financing and imbedding participatory mechanisms.

Issues and Challenges in Combating Corruption in the Water Sector

Hakan Tropp, Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) / Water Integrity Network (WIN)

Mr. Hakan Tropp addressed issues and challenges relating to combating corruption in the water sector. He said that the water crisis is essentially a governance problem, which is about how individuals and society manage common resources and services, stressing that corruption has negative impacts on development and increases the cost of attaining the MDGs on water and sanitation. He acknowledged the difficulty in defining corruption and disparities relating to strategies for minimizing it. Mr. Tropp highlighted examples of corruption in the water sector, consisting of: interactions regarding bribery, distortions concerning site selection; lack of transparency regarding appointments and promotions; payments of "kick-backs" to sign contracts; manipulation of documents and reports; tampering with water meter readings; establishing illegal connections; and preferential treatment for repairs and installations. He stressed that corruption reduces the amount of funds available for providing, improving and expanding water services. On minimizing corruption, he underscored the need to: involve all stakeholders in monitoring activities; mobilize political support; link water sector reform with governance reform; establish budget tracking systems; consumer complaint and redress mechanisms; identify and implement needed capacities; and continue to develop infrastructure. The Water Integrity Network (WIN), officially launched in 2005 by SIWI and other partners, aims to mobilize actors to prevent corruption from impacting development by committing to accountability, transparency and knowledge sharing.

Workers in Partnerships and the Reform of Public Water Operations

Emanuele Lobina, PSIRU, University of Greenwich

Mr. Lobina gave an overview of workers in partnerships in the context of reform of public water operations. He said international policy concerning water management during the last 20 years typically focused on reducing staffing levels, an approach which is now changing due to the new perspective on the beneficial role that labour can play in reforming and promoting development in the water sector. Citing successful examples, he emphasized how workers react positively to recognition, incentives, supportive and positive interactions rather than confrontational approaches, which views labour as being inherently inefficient and corrupt. Regarding training programmes, Mr. Lobina said that the objective should be to empower workers to commit to goals, entrench knowledge and build capacity and stressed the need for training of trainers. He concluded by calling for governments and stakeholders involved in reform of urban water systems to engage the workers as a positive partner in the process and noted the need to retain workers in numbers commensurate with development objectives.

Improving Performance – An Example from a Public Utility

William Muhairwe, National Water and Sewerage Corporation, Uganda

Mr. Muhairwe shared experiences relating to improving the performance of the water public utility from 1998 to 2006. He highlighted how the utility had turned around its operations by establishing: a sound operational framework; voluntary retirement schemes; and an incentive mechanism based on performance. Underscoring the necessity of controlling costs, he explained that the utility had returned to profitability mainly due to simplifying and rationalizing the index-linked tariff system, and as a result, now enjoyed a surplus of US\$ 4 million per month. He outlined the situation before changes were implemented, when the monthly operational deficit was US\$300,000, collection efficiency was at 60 %, unaccounted water supply amounted to 65% and connection grew by only 3,000 per year. On contractualization, he said that the utility had entered into a contract with the government to define their respective roles and request that the utility's debts be written off. As a result, in 2006, the utility increased operational profit to US\$400,000, unaccounted water reduced to 27%, staff productivity increased from 36 to 7 staff/1000 connections, service coverage increased to 70% from 48%, and number of new connections increased to 28,000 per annum. Finally, he elaborated on NWSC's external services for facilitating partnerships and sharing experiences with neighbouring African countries.

Harnessing Water Losses in Urban Water Supply Systems

Migemi Abraham, Mekorot Water Co. Ltd., Tel Aviv

Mr. Abraham spoke about harnessing water losses in urban water supply systems. He noted the need to meter both input and output in order to identify water loss and underscored the economic and environmental harm of water loss from collection to consumer supply perspectives. He pointed out that leakages can result in a water quality crisis that can reduce the company's credibility. To avoid water losses, he stressed the need to conduct engineering planning and maintenance, select appropriate material, meter "every drop of water," control water pressure and identify ways for recognizing water leakage and losses.

Monitoring the Global Water Policy: the Contribution of Utilities

Umberto Triulzi, Institute for Relations between Italy and Africa, Latin America, and the Middle and Far East (IPALMO)

Mr. Triulzi addressed the contribution of utilities in monitoring global water policy. He said monitoring encompasses the establishment and management of an information system dedicated

to the collection, treatment and transmission of information on realized activities. He underscored monitoring as a useful tool to: support implementation of activities; update strategic planning for improving design; enhance transparency and accountability; leverage additional resources; and incorporate stakeholders' views. He outlined the global water policy model developed by IPALMO and submitted in a monitoring proposal for the CSD-13 Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting (IPM).

Summary of the Second Session and Interactive Dialogue

The discussion addressed issues such as: barriers to improving performance of water services; local authorities' responsibility for providing water and sanitation; the importance of promoting efficiency; the obstacles in choosing indicators; the need to concentrate on effectiveness rather than cost-efficiency; and nature and benefit of outsourcing.

1. It was noted that based on the Uganda experience the barrier for the turnaround from an inefficient and ineffective utility to an efficient and well performing utility is: limited political interference and strong partnership with the unions/work force.
2. It was clarified during the discussion that staff/1000 connection indicator, as noted during presentations, may not necessarily be a good indicator for the assessment of effectiveness and efficiency of utilities. For example, when utilities outsource services, this ratio may be relatively low, and may therefore not serve as a good indicator for gauging the performance of the utility.
3. Attention was drawn to the role of municipality involved in service delivery in the context of decentralization, as it is a fallacy to put all hope in such utilities because sometime it only implies decentralization at the institutional level and not at the fiscal level. Therefore, decentralization should not be seen as a miracle solution, utilities operation and service delivery may not, necessarily, improve, as a result.
4. It was duly noted that fighting corruption in water utilities at all level can be paramount problem, especially in the case of Africa. Therefore, it was recommended that a similar study about nature corruption in the water sector should be conducted as reported during the presentation for South Asia to provide empirical basis to advance the discussion on corruption.
5. There was consensus, moving forward, on:
 - The need for monitoring and policy planning to move hand in hand for utilities to improve performance;
 - Sustainability of utility performance largely depends upon limited political interference in the absence of adequate transparency and accountability;
 - Competition is a necessary ingredient for better service delivery;
 - Relationships with integrated water resource management across sectors should be expanded;
 - Water quality issue in the context of African utilities should be assertively tackled; and
 - Water institutions should develop micro goals at the local level, which tie with the MDGs at the regional/global level.

Third Thematic Session Financing Water and Sanitation Services

A summary of each presentation is provided below, followed by the synopsis of the main points raised at the conclusion of the presentations and during discussion at the end of each session.

Enhancing Access to Finance for Local Governments

Gerard Payen, Member of the “Gurría Task Force” on Water Financing

Mr. Payen focused his presentation on main financing flows, demand and supply side, to the water and sanitation sector and enhancing local government access to finance and gave key recommendations for future action. He also highlighted the need for a major political move to enhance access to finance for the sector using three high-level reports on financing water: the 2003 World Water Forum Camdessus report; the 2006 Gurría Report that underscores the financing needs of local governments and operators; and the 2006 report of the UN Secretary General’s Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation which is an action plan that encompasses financing. Based on interactions between the international water community, country governments, local water authorities and operators, and the consumers, he referred to the recommendations of Camdessus Panel report and noted the importance of doubling financing flows, including aid, public subsidies, private equity, and consumer and tax payments, however, he reported that no substantial change was observed in financing flows, as well as in multilateral financing schemes, since 2003, a conclusion also asserted in the 2006 Human Development Report. He further reiterated the concept of sustainable cost-recovery as defined by the Camdessus report, and the absolute necessity for someone, users, taxpayers, or government, to pick up the investment and operational cost and ensure that services are provided. He referred back to the Gurría report that local governments are not sub sovereign and thus, it would be better to build financial products that suit the needs of water service providers rather than the other way around. In conclusion, Payen underscored the importance of: developing the “local” nature of water management; national and local governments elaborating water action plans to promote improved performance of water utilities; decentralizing central government activities to facilitate access to finance for local actors; and organizing “pooling” mechanisms that allow access to finance with lower interest rates; and putting mechanisms in place to protect against exchange risks.

Experiences and Lessons Learned in Financing Municipal Water Service

Sven-Erick Skogsfors, Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI)

Mr. Skogsfors presentation focussed on experiences and lessons learned in financing municipal water services. He began his presentation by touching on the importance of water as a basic necessity for life; he underscored the need for affordable water for all consumers and for utility operators to be as effective as possible to guarantee low prices and good water quality due to natural monopolistic nature of water utility services. Mr. Skogsfors outline the Swedish legislation and practices on water and sanitation, and shared experiences and lessons learnt in financing municipal water services in this context, elaborating with example of successful twinning arrangement between Stockholm Water Company and utilities in Riga (Latvia) and Kaunas (Lithuania). In this context, he particularly underscored the importance of building “trust” and engaging low-income communities in such arrangements. Mr. Skogsfors, also described the replication of water education programmes implemented by SIWI and the Stockholm Water Company in partnership with UN-HABITAT, IWA and national governments in Africa. He concluded his presentation with the following thoughts on the way forward: the

need to establish networks between public utilities (south/south and north/south), municipalities and their water utilities and encourage development of practical projects that develop best practices; develop a forum for dialogue between public and private water companies (north/south) in order to find ways to support provision of services in developing countries; industry must develop more affordable, cost-effective, locally tailored sustainable technical solutions for water in developing countries with a longer term economic view; aid organisations and other financial institutions must, aside of institutional development, also support practical projects with investments, operation and maintenance components so that people can see real improvements in water quality, quantity and how this influences health and environment; and finally in all projects understanding and respecting local competence and devotion in addition to local traditions, religions, and cultures are vital for good cooperation and progress.

Innovative Financing Mechanisms and Reforms to Leverage Local Resources

Meera Mehta and Thomas Fugelsnes, World Bank Water and Sanitation Program (WSP)

Ms. Mehta and Mr. Fugelsnes, focused their presentation on the following three areas: the nature of financing challenge and case for leveraging; micro-finance for small water projects – Kenya experience; and leveraging market resources for water utilities. Ms. Mehta noted that leveraging market based financial resources for the water sector is important for a number of reasons including: to achieve economically feasible levels of sector expenditure of the GDP; improve provision of water with a focus on basic need and the poor; to ensure rehabilitation and augmentation of existing services; increase sustainability; and contribute to the development of the financial sector. She then shared the key innovations of the Kenya experience based on microfinance for rural community-managed water projects (CWPs) with the participants, which included: use of technical assistance to meet high transaction costs and build local capacity; use of Output Based Aid (OBA) to address affordability concerns; and business development services for community water projects. Looking beyond the experience of Kenya, Ms. Mehta highlighted the need to explore micro-finance options in other countries, in addition to a conducive policy environment that gives space and does not crowd out private market finance; supports a gradual move towards cost recovery tariffs; reasonably well developed domestic financial institutions; a regulatory framework that gives legitimacy to small scale service providers; and a viable demand from a sizable 'market.' Mr. Fugelsnes, highlighted outputs from a regional workshop on mobilizing market finance for utilities held in South Africa, which illustrates that investments made in the water and sanitation sector result in the sustainable delivery of services. He highlighted the key messages from the workshop being: market finance and utility reform are interrelated; need to demonstrate and create room for market finance transactions; and need to strengthen the niche for water in the many instruments and support facilities that are available to facilitate access to market finance. He noted that the availability of market finance is an incentive to reform and cautioned on the "crowding out" effect that official development assistance (ODA) can have on the potential development of market finance mechanisms. In conclusion, to enhance utility finance in Africa that target increased revenues and improved performance, he highlighted the need to: getting the basics right within utilities and at government / ODA level; initiate country processes for reforms and transactions; and initiate regional processes for benchmarking, "credit rating," and capacity building, and experience sharing.

Water Tariffs and Subsidies in Africa: Impact on Poverty, Expansion of Water Services and Sustainability of Utilities

David Le-Blanc, UN DESA

Mr. Le-Blanc spoke about water tariff and subsidies in Africa, noted the social benefits of improving access to safe water. He identified financing problems associated with subsidies, in addition to highlighting the constraints of subsidies to effectively target the poor, thereby leading to poor coverage levels. He explained the need of delivering subsidies to consumers rather than to utilities and suggested that subsidies should target areas where the majority of poor households are located to avoid distortions. He outlined a case study on subsidies used in Cape Verde, concluding that, for each US\$1.00 of subsidy available, poor households only benefited US\$0.25. He also suggested the need to explore alternative subsidy targeting mechanisms such as: differentiated service, administrative targeting, and a combination of administrative, quantity and quality targeting. Mr. Le-Blanc concluded that in situations of limited coverage water subsidies through utilities is not a good way to redistribute income and target the poor. However, there is a strong potential need for targeted consumption subsidies (with improved network coverage) in Africa, and that although connection subsidies are rare their social return could be higher. He gave the following points for consideration for reform utility subsidies: know your customers and identify who needs subsidies; separate subsidies from utility finance by assigning responsibilities of subsidies to government; and establish output based aid (OBA) mechanisms for leveraging finance.

Community Financing Schemes and Instruments to Facilitate Access to WATSAN Services for Urban Poor

Timeyin Uwejamomere, WaterAid, UK

Mr. Uwejamomere presentation focussed on WaterAid's ongoing work in Bangladesh and Pakistan which focuses on community financing schemes used as instruments to facilitate access to water and sanitation services for the urban poor. He noted that in view of WaterAid's policy objective that water sector and reforms will benefit the poor and result in universal access they have been working towards making the water sector investments more effective. He presented the case study of Bangladesh where WaterAid is providing support to local NGOs in Dhaka and Chittagong for water and sanitation services and comprises of: an integrated approach incorporating WSS components within overall urban improvement initiatives; advancing initial deposit for community connection; advocacy for the recognition of the community right to service despite not having a legal right to tenure; and social mediation between the urban poor and the utility. He also highlighted the case study on Pakistan, including Karachi and Faisalabad, a community project based on a component sharing approach, where the community funds internal infrastructure development while the state and donors fund external infrastructure development. The community's role comprises of fund raising, fund management and expenditures, whereas the national agencies is responsible for motivation, technical inputs, loan for construction, and technical inputs. According to him the projects demonstrated that pro-poor involvement as investors in asset creation strengthens the provision of sustainable access to services, and that an integrated approach, which views water and sanitation as an essential part of urban development, is in application effective. On lessons learned, he observed that informal communities are capable of managing financial resources, service delivered to the poor is politically important, and cross subsidies, which facilitate water and sanitation access for poorer communities, are desirable. In conclusion, he called for up-scaling successful projects, adding that small-scale financing should ideally be interest free.

Summary of the Third Session and Interactive Dialogue

The ensuing discussion addressed issues on: increasing investments in the water sector; available financial mechanisms; managing existing budgets more effectively; practical ways to improve infrastructure; responsibility of States for water management; enhancing private sector performance; and obstacles to setting market prices for water.

1. There is an urgent need to share experiences on increasing investments into the WATSAN sector from all sources, including availability and structure of financial mechanisms (e.g. municipal bonds, equities, pension funds, local and national financial markets and their structuring to mobilize cash, effective tariff structures to cover O&M and future investments etc.).
2. A prerequisite to improving financing situation is to manage existing budgets more effectively.
3. The poor need to be targeted more effectively with the subsidy mechanisms, by making it a state responsibility for equitable resources allocation.
4. It was observed that there is an overemphasis on organizational improvement versus the need to find practical ways to improve physical infrastructure and increase coverage; as poor are often paying more per unit of water.
5. It was pointed out that official development assistance (ODA), although important, but cannot undermine internal resources generated from consumers and taxpayers for the sector.
6. It is important to acknowledge that tariff setting is a political issue, and thus there are obstacles to setting cost recovery price for water. Therefore, there is a need to deal with legislation and regulation aspects for fair and effective pricing and enforcement.
7. Need to open a channel of communication between utility managers and politicians, particularly in relation to setting cost-recovery tariffs and facilitating understanding of the issues for decision making purposes.
8. Utility managers noted that the issue of reaching the poor cannot be solved using market based approaches, and, therefore, needs active engagements of respective governments.
9. There are no magic bullets for improving the financing of water sector. There is a need to attract multiple sources of funding for the sector.
9. The road to improved water and sanitation services is a gradual process which is coupled with improvement in cost recovery, financing and technological choices.
10. There is a need for an inventory of investment modalities for the water and sanitation sector, including concrete examples of attracting and managing finances.

Fourth Thematic Session Promoting Partnerships among Water Operators

A summary of each presentation is provided below, followed by the synopsis of the main points raised at the conclusion of the presentations and during discussion at the end of each session.

Water Operators Partnerships (WOPs) Framework

Antonio Miranda, Member of the UN Secretary General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation

Mr. Miranda gave an overview of the Water Operators Partnerships (WOPs), a proposed "not-for-profit" internet-based platform for water operators to exchange information on good practices and facilitate partnering between operators, as well as relevant institutions. He said WOP could help to fill an existing void and would be cost effective. He explained that WOP users would include public and private entities, civil society organizations, NGOs, and academic institutions and suggested that UN-HABITAT could act as the host institution. WOPs would operate simultaneously at the in country, regional and global level, as a result information exchange could happen either or at all levels. He also expanded on the structure and financing of the Management Unit (MU) of the WOPs. Underscoring the necessity of internet access for all water operators, Mr. Miranda demonstrated how the tool would work by matching requests for assistance with offers, thereby allowing partnering to occur. He added that participants will be encouraged to provide feedback to the system.

Role of the International Water Association (IWA) in Supporting WOPs

Keith Robertson, IWA

Mr. Robertson presentation focussed on introducing IWA's history, membership, approach and guiding principle, ongoing activities, and training offered to the participants, and how, moving forward it can facilitate the formation of WOPs. The International Water Association (IWA), is a global network for water professionals, has the capacity to bring together individuals to broker expertise, synthesize network learning and partner with other existing associations. Elaborating on IWA technical groups, Mr. Robertson said IWA focuses on specific issues like institutional governance, regulation and strategic asset management. Regarding performance indicators for water services, which have also been developed, he expanded on how they could be useful for benchmarking and making service delivery improvements. He discussed activities with the World Health Organization (WHO) concerning both the development of a charter on safe drinking water and the implementation of water safety plans. He concluded his presentation highlighting ways it can help during the formation of WOPs which include: development of WOP's database, mobilize IWA and East and Southern Africa (ESAR) - IWA network, and coordinate action and interest in the North via workshops in Europe. All these activities would facilitate WOPs to gain momentum and recognition.

Role of WSP/World Bank in Supporting the WOPs

Ede Jorge Ijjasz-Vasquez, World Bank, Water and Sanitation Program (WSP)

Mr. Ijjasz-Vasquez addressed the role of the WSP and World Bank in supporting WOPs, and highlighted the importance of working with utility operators from various countries to promote capacity building in the region and achieve the MDGs on water and sanitation. He acknowledged World Bank support, especially on actions to implement WOPs. Mr. Ijjasz-Vasquez stressed that WOPs should complement regional and local activities rather than trying to substitute them. He noted the importance of elaborating a memorandum of understanding for defining the assistance

needed to enhance utilities' performance and accountability. Mr. Ijjasz-Vasquez underscored the importance of promoting regional and cross-regional South-South cooperation and elaborating a business plan to raise funds and further partnerships' initiatives.

Regional Experiences in Implementing WOPs

Water Operators Partnerships (WOPs) - Rand Water Experience

Hamanth Kasan, Rand Water Company / IWA Eastern and Southern African Region (ESAR)

Mr. Kasan noted that the IWA model is regionally based and ESAR-IWA includes 40 countries as members in Africa. The presentation was dedicated to the experience of Rand Water Company, a public South African utility, focused on bulk water supply. In addition, the company provides technical assistance, training and other services to water operators (utilities and municipalities). He elaborated on the elements needed for a water company to engage successfully with the public sector to promote sustainable development and enhance local community livelihoods. Mr. Kasan discussed technical contributions emerging from partnerships, including assisting utilities in using the balance performance management framework.

Regional Experiences in Implementing WOPs

The Role of the Regulator in Bridging the Water Access-Gap

Symerre Grey-Johnson, African Forum for Utility Regulators (AFUR)

Mr. Grey-Johnson discussed current trends in regulating public water utilities in Africa. He said that utility regulators should facilitate service delivery by researching the market, examining subsidies and reviewing tariff structures, while also sensitizing citizens on the regulatory process. Regarding operators, he advised them to concentrate on implementing government policy and expanding services to enable consumers to receive affordable access. Emphasizing the importance of collaborating with legislators and other relevant stakeholders, he also highlighted the role of regulators in facilitating investment by creating an enabling environment and maintaining autonomy and transparency. Citing the Zambian experience, he explained how the Devolution Trust Fund had been created by the water regulator, National Water Supply and Sanitation Council, to improve water and sanitation service provision to the urban poor by assisting commercial utilities to extend their water supply and sanitation service to the low-income population in the peri-urban and urban areas. Small private companies are also able to use the fund to participate in the provision of water services. Mr. Grey-Johnson concluded by underscoring the importance of utility regulators, in countries where they did not exist, in order to complete the stakeholder relationship.

Regional Experiences in Implementing WOPs

African Water Association (AfWA)

Kpandja Ismaël Binguitcha-Fare, Société Togolaise / African Water Association (AfWA)

AfWA operates in drinking water and sanitation sectors. Its objectives include knowledge and experience sharing among professionals and practitioners from more than 30 governments and a variety of private companies in Africa. Mr. Binguitcha-Fare said AfWA established the water utility partnership (WUP) to manage programs and develop an information network to respond to utility managers' needs. He further explained AfWA work on advocacy with governments to promote institutional reforms in the sector.

Summary of the Fourth Session and Interactive Dialogue

The discussion addressed issues on: existing networks; the importance of linking existing networks and avoiding the duplication of efforts concerning partnerships between utilities and

operators; the scope of information sharing; the nature and extent of support required by the networks; the need to increase the number of partnerships; and WOPs experiences in East Asia.

1. WOPs should take advantage of existing efforts and partnerships, and draw lessons from past experiences. Past difficulties of twinning arrangements were linked to transparency and conditionality. On the other hand, there were positive experiences and examples in institutional change and capacity building.
2. The goal of WOPs should be to bring together and reinforce existing networks. There is a need to use and build upon existing networks and knowledge (e.g AfWA, AFUR, ESAR-IWA).
3. There is a need to be flexible and pragmatic. The goal of WOPs should be to add momentum and scale up existing twinning arrangements.
4. WOPs should aim to provide a strong voice for operators, in order to improve dialogue with politicians.
5. The foundation of WOPs should be based on basic principles among which are universal access; the not-for-profit character of the partnership; transparency and accountability; and based on clear rules and criteria.
6. The funding for WOPs could come from donors; and by dedicating a given percentage of investments by international financial institutions (IFI) in water and sanitation to finance the partnerships.
7. There is a need for a strong leadership and communication. WOPs need to help municipalities and utilities, many of which are struggling with day-to-day realities, to access information and experience.
8. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will start a WOPs building in collaboration with SEAWUN. This initiative is based on UN-DESA efforts in South East Asia.
9. In reply to the comments made by the participants, Antonio Miranda and Bert Diphorn made the following comments. Antonio Miranda mentioned that the idea of WOPs came from the UN Water Advisory Board. There is no ready-made formula for the implementation of WOPs; on the contrary, many concrete ideas have to come from this meeting.
10. Bert Diphorn, UN HABITAT, acknowledged the support from the World Bank. He mentioned the need for support from Northern countries (e.g. Sweden, Netherlands). In that regard, there should be a meeting in the North to raise awareness and mobilize support from developed countries. Help from donors has to be sought all across the board. Consequently, WOPs will need to define an adequate governance structure.

Working Group 1

Capacity Building Needs of Public Water Utilities in Africa

Participants listened to presentations delivered by Colin Mayfield, United Nations University, and Maarten Blokland, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO's) Institute for Water Education which was followed by interactive discussion by the participants.

Capacity Development

Colin Mayfield, United Nations University

Mr. Mayfield laid out a framework for capacity development. He started with the four stakeholders involved in the capacity development process, mainly: community, public, private and academic sector. Subsequently he elaborated on the cumulative impact of four stakeholder's attitudes and actions which ultimately determines whether or not sustainability is achieved. He expanded that sustainability of capacity building of the water systems rests on four basic requirements: the commitment of the citizens; the human resource availability to be trained; the financial resource needed; and lastly, the commitment of the political system to achieve the goal. After laying down the prerequisite he identified the four pillars of capacity development which should be dealt with at the individual, institutional and societal level: training/education, monitoring and applied research/decision making, standards/compliance and products /services. He elaborated that thinking of capacity development as a simplistic concept would be folly; capacity development is not only about training but also about retention of the training over time. In addition, capacity development does not exist in a vacuum but is equally affected by many of the challenges that face any development efforts.

Capacity Building Experiences in the Water for African Cities Programme

Maarten Blokland, UNESCO-IHE

Mr. Blokland presentation focused on capacity building experience in the Water for African Cities (WAC) programme. He began with an introduction to UNESCO-IHE core activities, staff, alumni, and the nature of their presence in Africa, mainly, Water for African Cities, Water-Net and NBCBN-RE. He then laid out the objectives of the WAC program, which focuses on operationalizing demand management strategy in six demonstration cities, building capacity to monitor and assess pollution loads, and region wide information dissemination of water conservation in the African cities. He then elaborated on the capacity development component of WAC, which essentially is composed of two distinct parts. The first component enables the dissemination of knowledge and experience to the utilities with the aim to mainstream water demand management and pollution control in the organizations. The second component enable local training and regional resource centres to develop their capacities in designing and implementing training programmes and thus contribute to the development of sustainable training capacity at regional and national level. He then schematically illustrated UNESCO-IHE's role, contractual arrangement, agencies involved, and players and activities for this program. UNESCO-IHE has adopted an action planning approach to identify target groups for training at top, senior and middle level management within a water utility and, as a result, the project cycle adapts and improvises training based on inputs received during the first phase. He concluded his presentation on an optimistic note based on the brief evaluation of the first phase WAC for which although long term impacts are not yet known, however, training has been practical, multi-disciplinary skills have been used to set targets for performance contracts and work plans, and action planning approach has proved to be useful. Moreover the lessons learnt have served as good basis for follow-up.

The following points were raised by participants on the presentations:

- It was noted by the participants that capacity development cannot be external driven. In the short-term, however, capacity needs can be sought from outside the region. Although in the long-run capacity needs to be developed in the region, based at the country or the regional level. The end objective being capturing local/regional knowledge and disseminating. It was brought to the attention of the panel that conventional class room style education does not serve the purpose in this context and more unconventional method of training and dissemination need to be designed adopted.
- There was consensus on the need to broaden the definition of “capacity development and retention.” It was noted, based on previous experience, that when people are trained outside the region the knowledge they acquire is not contextually feasible when they return. Imbedded in this discussion was the incentive to use and develop capacity and retain the people trained. Therefore, knowledge and training, needs to be applicable to the environment and the context, only then would the nature of the capacity acquired be appropriately utilized. It was also suggested that capacity development needs to be coupled with appropriate financial incentive for staff retention.
- On the issues of attempting to train people, in order to build institutional capacity it was suggested that training needs to be supply driven as the effectiveness of the training is very difficult to measure.
- Other concerns were raised about practical hands on approaches towards capacity building; lack of structural capacity of financing infrastructure; and the need for technical capacity of water generation and distribution etc.

After the presentation and subsequent discussion, an action planning and consultative process was undertaken with the participant of identifying and responding to, “In my organization the most important issue to address for building capacities is in my view?” All responses were organized around five larger themes which were, mainly, an outcome of the responses received and were not pre-defined:

1. Human Resource Development and Management
2. Financing
3. Commercial Operations
4. Technical Management Skills; and
5. Governance – External Institutional Aspects

Under these larger categories, aspects which were covered during the discussion are listed below:

Human Resource Development and Management includes:

- Building human resource capacity – right staff recruitment
- Human resource development - middle management training
- Making training relevant to our needs
- Proper Training Programs
- Retaining trained staff

Financing includes:

- Financial management
- Strengthening financial capacity
- Limited training budget
- Capacity to access finance

Commercial Operations include:

- Project management training
- Transparent Procurement – Procurement capacity are weak – so training is needed
- Billing and Management
- Information dissemination – intra agency communication – part of management and part of utilization
- Customer relations

Technical Management Skills include:

- Maintenance management training with a focus on preventive maintenance
- Wise use of water – demand management
- Infrastructure planning and development
- Facilities management
- Hands on training

Governance – External Institutional Aspects include:

- Communication
- Leadership training

At the conclusion of the working group the panel made some substantive recommendations and how the participants/utility managers felt that Water Operators Partnerships (WOPs) would help them substantially. These recommendations are noted below.

Recommendations

- Capacity development programs should relate and respond to the specific needs of the utilities
- Capacity development should appropriately respond to the four pillars for sustainable water use as noted in the presentation mainly and should be dealt with at individual, institutional and societal level:
- Training/Education: the capacity to educate and train, including community awareness building, adult training and formal education, so as to provide sufficient numbers of competent human resources to develop and apply enabling systems;
- Monitoring and Applied Research/Decision Making: the capacity to measure and understand systems, through monitoring, applied research, technology development and forecasting, so that reliable data is used for analysis and decision making.
- Standards/Compliance: the capacity to legislate, regulate and achieve compliance through effective governmental, non-governmental and private sector institutions and through efficient enforcement and community acceptance.
- Products/Services: the capacity to provide appropriate, affordable water infrastructure, services and products through sustained investment and management.
- Capacity building is needed for utilities to mobilize and manage finances more efficiently
- WOP can act as basis for cross fertilization of technical and commercial knowledge

Use and support for Water Operators Partnerships (WOPs)

There was overwhelming support for WOPs among the participants representing the public utilities in Africa. According to them WOPs would be able to facilitate at the local and regional level:

- Training and capacity development;

- Forum might be beneficial electronic blackboard in real time for knowledge exchange, in addition to serving as learning tool box and a resource;
- Cross fertilization of technical knowledge, partnership with those utilities that have made strides, benchmarking operations, and sharing information and experiences would be very useful. As there is a lot to share, the participants felt that African utilities are still lagging behind;
- The participants also felt that WOPs would serve as a good resource for training for leadership in utility management, and training on commercial and financial aspects for capacity building within the organization;
- Coordinate findings and mentoring on policy and regulation front;
- Availability to download and modify terms of reference (TOR) to the local context
- Available appropriate fee structure for local and international consultants;
- Exchange experiences, making use of the international/regional exposure to implement change in their own utilities;
- Support institutional reform process for utilities;
- Another major issue that confronts African utilities is the outstanding unpaid Government bills which results in huge deficits annually for the utility. It was felt that through this partnership, in addition to sharing successful experiences, the partnership could send missionaries to challenge the politicians on this subject. It was felt that this form of professional leverage would be beneficial for the utilities and would advance government and utility communication

Working Group 2

Benchmarking of Utilities for Performance Improvement

Benchmarking of Utilities for Performance Improvement

Dennis Mwanza, World Bank, Water and Sanitation Program (WSP)

Mr. Mwanza introduced the discussion topic by noting that most public utilities in Africa are characterized by high unaccounted for water; low cost recovery; low tariff levels and high staff per 1000 connections. He observed that despite decades of public investment utilities have limited capacity to deliver services. He attributed this lack of service delivery to poor sector and institutional arrangements as well as many public sector management issues such as problems of financial viability, accountability, autonomy, lack of a regulatory framework and institutional organization of water services.

Mr. Mwanza defined benchmarking as the process for identification, understanding and adaptation of remarkable practices and processes of other organizations to help the improvement of its own performance. He noted that benchmarking has been used as a tool by the water sector industry over the last twenty years. Benchmarking concepts for utilities include: Better service quality; higher resources productivity; higher satisfaction by consumers; higher general return for the company; improvements for the environment and higher operational efficiency. He outlined key global and regional benchmarking initiatives such as the International Water Association, the International Benchmarking Network (IBNET), South Asia Utility data book, Benchmarking of utilities in Brazil and Water Utility Partnership –Performance Indicators and Benchmarking Project.

On the establishment of WOPs, key issues to consider include:

- **Sustainability** - Funding is a key issue to motivate utilities
- **Ownership** - How can we create a sense of ownership?
- **Publication of data** - How to ensure publication of data? Public accountability could create difficulties to utilities, which could lead to a loss of enthusiasm. Is it acceptable for outputs to be made publicly available on the Internet? Can we compare operations between utilities of similar nature i.e. size, ownership structure?
- **Frequency of provision of information**
- **Capacity building** - What kind of capacity building elements should be established (training, performance competition) – Sub-regional exchange of information.

Group Discussions

The Group focused on the objectives, incentives and key elements in benchmarking of utilities for performance improvement. The following key issues were identified:

- Benchmarking of utilities should be based on in-house interest motivated by the need to improve performance and satisfy customers.
- Data collection and analysis should translate into enhanced performance by utilities contributing the data.
- Benchmarking is a managerial tool.
- A process of learning from others – emphasis should be placed on exchange of knowledge experiences.
- Should be linked to a particular project - motivated by ISO certification.
- How is the data going to be used – blind data is another option.
- What value does benchmarking add to utility performance? Standardization and validation of data.

On categorization of utilities, the Group noted the following:

- The need to put the information received from utilities in context.
- Capture unique characteristics and situations of different utilities.
- Benchmarking is a process on an issue by issue- bulk supply, distribution, customer care, -to put information received from utilities in context.
- Benchmarking should not be constrained by differences in utilities.

Key elements to consider

Priority No. 1:

Identify and set customer service levels and quality

- Response time to customer complaints
- Time taken to connect new customers, etc.
- Time frame of service – dealing with problems.
- Citizens’ report card – consumer perception on services – score sheet
- Citizens Action – Lobby and advocacy with the utility managers
- Gauge customer satisfaction then work backwards to benchmark- indicators related to customer satisfaction – dynamic from 15 to 24 hours of service.
- Servicing the poor – how many of the new customers are from poor neighborhoods.
- Gender in utility performance.

Benchmarking of individual managers

- Efficient and effective use of resources
- Capability to achieve performance targets

Priority No. 2:

i). Linkages between and obligations of Government, Regulators and Operators

- Institutional setup varies from one country to another.
- Utilities are required to submit their performance indicators when applying for tariff adjustments.
- Need to facilitate exchanges between utilities.

ii). Financial viability of utilities – financial markets require credit rating of utilities

- Possibility of bankability of utilities by local financial institutions
- Commercial/financial institutions require credit rating of utilities.
- Benchmarking/financial indicators to establish credit-worthiness of utilities.

Working Group 3

Sharing Regional Experiences in Managing Water Utilities

A. Presentation

Managing a water utility – South African experiences

Neil Macleod, Durban, South Africa

The presentation focussed on the experience in Durban and Johannesburg. The main topics were:

- Some key issues and difficulties in running water business (water as a political issue; the lack of attraction of sanitation; the impossibility to choose customers; many customers are poor; communication gaps)
- Staff attraction and management (experienced engineering staff strategy; better organisation of their inputs regarding the kind of costumers to be served; training budget and incentive considerations)
- Strategic planning and risk management (five year budget planning; move from SWOT to risk management)
- Support to municipalities in running the utility (capacity building requirements, use of experienced engineers and partners as well as private sector operators)
- Global strategic management issues (maintenance of existing assets, customer-friendly management policy, new infrastructure development, financial management including pricing and account auditing, GIS as a support tool for network management)

In conclusion, utilities should be run as dynamic businesses by prospecting innovation, ensuring good communication (internal and external) and mobilizing support from political leaders

Sharing experiences in Public – Public partnership

Samir Bensaïd, ONEP, Morocco

The presentation briefly described the general context of the water and sanitation sector in Africa

- Constraints for partnership development
- Lack of strategic partnership,
- Lack of external financial resources,
- Limited capacity for sustainable actions

This context, however, has been changing, and new strategic directions are emerging:

- Emergence of new utilities,
- Changes in the international context,
- Adoption of the ‘Capitalize- Rationalise – Act’ principle,
- Development of North – South – South tripartite partnerships

Three suggested missions for WOPs:

- Support to long-term partnerships,
- One-stop orientation platform to existing programs,
- “Traditional” network functions

B. Discussion on Water Operator Partnerships (WOPs)

The group adopted the following method for discussion:

- Identifying a list of topics that WOPs should address;
- Prioritizing three topics;
- Elaborate on the three topics identified, and
- How WOPs can provide value added.

C. Identification of Topics of Interest

The three main topics selected by the group were:

1. Institutional reforms
2. Tariff structure and subsidies
3. How to serve the poor

D. Elaboration by Topic

1. Institutional reforms
 - Engagement from politicians and support from trade unions
 - Transparency and accountability
 - Participation of civil society
 - Cultural changes within utilities
 - Innovativeness in utility management
2. Tariff structure, cross-subsidies and other subsidies
 - Getting data on current and potential customers
 - Transparency of subsidies at the government level (financing and allocation)
 - Monitoring and evaluation of subsidies
 - Proper accounting of subsidies at the utility level
 - Tariff regulation
 - Tools for tariff setting for collaboration between government and utilities
 - Subsidies for sanitation (cross-subsidies? From external sources?)
3. How to serve the poor
 - Adequate policies
 - Identification of poor households; how to reach them
 - Adequate tariff structures and financing
 - Differentiated services
 - Gradual extension of piped water and sanitation facilities
 - Strategic and technical tools
 - Involving of civil society and benefiting communities on planning and processes

E. Recommendations of the Group

The group formulated seven key recommendations for WOPs:

1. Draw lessons from past and existing partnerships
2. Promote regional exchange of experience through workshops
3. Provide a platform for networking
4. Provide a platform for direct communication between utilities
5. Facilitating the exchange of information (financing, coordination)
6. Need for an external assessment of the performance of the WOP
7. Capacity building
8. Exchange of experience and knowledge through
 - Training
 - Workshops
 - Visits

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Annex 2 Workshop Agenda

Day 1: 6 December 2006 (Wednesday)

08:00 - 09:00	Registration
	Opening Session
09:00 - 09:10	Welcome Remarks by Mrs. Anna Tibaijuka (Executive Director, UN-HABITAT)
09:10 - 09:15	Opening Remarks (M. Aslam Chaudhry, DSD/UN DESA)
09:15 - 09:25	Keynote Speech by Hon. Jenipher Namuyangu, AMCOW Representative, Minister of State for Water, Ministry of Water Lands and Environment, Uganda
09:25- 09:35	Workshop's Background and Objectives (Bert Diphorn, UN-HABITAT)
09:35 - 09:50	Coffee/Tea Break
	First Session: Managing Water and Sanitation Services in Urban Areas - Issues and Challenges in Africa Chair: Bert Diphorn, UN-HABITAT Rapporteur: Frederik Pischke, UN-DESA
9:50 - 10:05	Meeting W&S Goals in Africa: Role of Public Water Utilities (M. Aslam Chaudhry, UN-DESA)
10:05 - 10:20	Water for African Cities: Issues and Challenges in Urban and Peri-Urban Areas (Daniel Adom, UN-HABITAT)
10:20 - 10:35	Monitoring Water Development for Urban Environments in Africa (Stephen M. Donkor, UNECA)
10:35- 10:50	Providing Sustainable Water Services to Cities: Experiences from Nairobi (Francis Mugo, Nairobi Water and Sewerage Company)
10:50 – 11:05	Policy Framework for Small Scale Water Providers in Africa (Roohi Abdullah, Consultant, UN-DESA)
11:05 – 12:00	Interactive Dialogue (Moderator: Dennis Mwanza, WSP)
12:00– 13:45	Lunch
	Second Session: Strengthening Institutional Governance and Accountability Chair: M. Aslam Chaudhry, UN-DESA Rapporteur: Roohi Abdullah, Consultant, UN-DESA
13:45 – 14:00	Current Trends in Regulating Public Water Utilities in Africa (Symerre Grey-Johnson, African Forum for Utilities Regulators, AFUR)
14:00 - 14:15	Institutional Framework for Improving the Performance of Water Operators (Antonio Miranda, Member UNSG Advisory Board on WATSAN)
14:15 - 14:30	Contractualisation – Making Public Utilities more Accountable (Alain Morel, WSP)

14:30 - 14:45	Water and Sanitation Utilities in Small Urban Centres (Graham Alabaster, UN-HABITAT)
14:45 - 15:00	Issues and Challenges in Combating Corruption in the Water Sector (Hakan Tropp, SIWI/Water Integrity Network)
15:00 – 15:15	Coffee/Tea Break
15:15 - 15:30	Workers in Partnerships and the Reform of Public Water Operations (Emanuele Lobina, PSIRU, University of Greenwich)
15:30 - 15:45	Improving Performance – An Example from a Public Utility (William Muhairwe, NWSC, Uganda)
15:45 – 16:00	Harnessing Water Losses in Urban Water Supply Systems (Migemi Abraham, Mekorot Water Co. Ltd., Tel Aviv)
16:00 – 16:15	Monitoring the Global Water Policy: the Contribution of Utilities (Umberto Triulzi, IPALMO)
16:15 - 17:00	Interactive Dialogue (Moderator: Keith Robertson, IWA)
17:00	Closing – Day 1
18:30	Cocktail Reception at the Safari Club Hotel (Lilian Towers)

Day 2: 7 December 2006 (Thursday

	<p>Third Session: Financing Water and Sanitation Services Chair: Bert Diphhoorn, UN-HABITAT Rapporteur: Daniel Adom, UN-HABITAT</p>
9:00 – 9:15	Financing Water for All: Enhancing Access to Finance for Local Governments (Gerard Payen, Member of the “Gurria Task Force” on Water Financing)
9:15 – 9:30	Experiences and Lessons Learned in Financing Municipal Water Services (Sven-Erik Skogsfors, SIWI)
9:30: - 9:50	Innovative Financing Mechanism and Reforms to Leverage Local Resources (Meera Mehta and Thomas Fugelsnes, World Bank W&S Program)
09:50 – 10:05	Water Tariffs and Subsidies in Africa: Impact on Poverty, Expansion of Water Services and Sustainability of Utilities, David Le-Blanc, UN-DESA
10:05 – 10:20	Coffee/Tea Break
10:20 -10:35	Community Financing Schemes as Instruments to Facilitate Access to WATSAN Services for the Urban Poor (Timeyin Uwejamomere, WaterAid UK)
10:35 - 11:35	Interactive Dialogue (Moderator: Hakan Tropp, SIWI)
11:35 – 12:45	Follow up Discussion from Proceedings of First Day
12:45 – 14:00	Lunch
	<p>Fourth Session: Promoting Partnerships Among Water Operators Chair: M. Aslam Chaudhry, UN DESA Rapporteur: David Le-Blanc, UN-DESA</p>
14:00 – 14:15	Water Operators Partnerships (WOPs) Framework (Antonio Miranda)
14:15 - 14:30	Role of International Water Association in Supporting WOPs (Keith Robertson, IWA)
14:30 – 15:00	Regional Experiences in Implementing WOPs
	- IWA Eastern and Southern African Region (ESAR) (Hamanth Kasan)
	- African Forum for Utility Regulators (AFUR) (Symerre Grey-Johnson)
	- African Water Association (AfWA) (Kpandja Ismaël Binguitcha-Fare, Société Togolaise)
15:00 – 15:45	General Discussion on WOPs
15:45 – 15:50	Role of WSP/ World Bank in Supporting the WOPs (Ede Jorge Ijjasz-Vasquez, WSP/ World Bank)
15:50 – 16:00	Coffee/Tea Break
16:00 - 17:00	Moderated Discussion on Elements of WOPs Framework (Moderator: Antonio Miranda) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What type of Network? - Scope of information sharing - Nature and extent of support required by the Network
17:00 – 17:15	Briefing about Working Group Sessions and Expected Outcomes (M. Aslam Chaudhry, UN-DESA)

Day 3: 8 December 2006 (Friday)

	Working Groups Sessions	
09:00 – 10:30	Parallel Working Group Sessions	
	<p>Working Group 1 Capacity Building Needs of Public Water Utilities in Africa <u>Lead Speaker:</u> Colin Mayfield, UNU Maarten Blokland, UNESCO-IHE <u>Moderator:</u> Stephen Donkor, ECA <u>Rapporteur:</u> Roohi Abdullah, Consultant, UN DESA</p>	<p>Working Group 2 Benchmarking of Utilities for Performance Improvement <u>Lead Speaker:</u> Dennis Mwanza, WSP <u>Moderator:</u> Umberto Triulzi, IPALMO <u>Rapporteur:</u> Pireh Otieno, UN-HABITAT</p>
	<p>Working Group 3 Sharing Regional Experiences in Managing Water Utilities <u>Lead Speaker:</u> Neil Macleod, Durban, South Africa Samir Bensaid, ONEP <u>Moderator:</u> David Le-Blanc, UN-DESA <u>Rapporteur:</u> Eric Moukoro, UN-HABITAT</p>	
10:30 – 10:45	Coffee Break	
10:45 – 12:00	Continuation of Parallel Working Group Sessions	
12:00 – 13:00	Preparation of Working Group Reports	
13:00 – 14:30	Lunch	
	Closing Session Co-Chairs: M. Aslam Chaudhry (UN-DESA) and Bert Diphooorn (UN-HABITAT)	
14:30 – 15:00	Report of Working Group 1: Capacity Building Needs of Public Water Utilities in Africa Report of Working Group 2: Benchmarking of Utilities for Performance Improvement Report of Working Group 3: Sharing Regional Experiences in Managing Water Utilities	
15:00 - 15:10	Nairobi Statement on Workshop for Water Utilities in Africa	
15:10 -16:00	Discussion on the Statement	
16:00 -16:15	Coffee/Tea Break	
16:15 – 16:20	Closing Statement by AMCOW (Hon. Jenipher Namuyangu, AMCOW Representative)	
16:20 – 17:00	Next Steps and Closing Remarks (UN-DESA and UN-HABITAT)	

Annex 3 List of Abbreviations

AFUR	-	African Forum for Utilities Regulators
AfWA	-	African Water Association
AMCOW	-	African Ministerial Council on Water
CSD	-	Commission on Sustainable Development
CWP	-	Community-managed Water Projects
IPALMO	-	Institute for Relations between Italy and Africa, Latin America, and the Middle and Far East
IPM	-	Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting for CSD
ISO	-	International Organization for Standardization
IWA	-	International Water Association
IWRM	-	Integrated water resources management
JPOI	-	Johannesburg Plan of Implementation adopted at WSSD
MDGs	-	Millennium Development Goals
NEPAD	-	New Partnership for Africa's Development
ODA	-	Official Development Assistance
SIWI	-	Stockholm International Water Institute
SPSPs	-	Small-Scale Private Service Providers of Water Supply
UN-DESA	-	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNECA	-	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UN-HABITAT	-	United Nations Human Settlement Programme
WOPs	-	Water Operators Partnerships
WSP	-	Water and Sanitation Program
WSSD	-	World Summit on Sustainable Development