



2nd Global Water Operators' Partnerships Congress

Summary Report

27–29 November 2013 – Sant Pau Art
Nouveau Site, Barcelona, Spain



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Acknowledgements

Principal Report Writer Sahana Singh

Rapporteurs Julie Perkins, Arie Istandar, Vincent-Merme, Mireia Luque, Carlos Velez, Panagiotis Georgiadis, David Boys, Hamanth Kasan, Tadashige Kawasaki

Review Faraj El-Awar, Taeko Yokota, Craig Laird, Julie Perkins

Design and layout Jared Farrell and Anke van Lenteren www.designi.se

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Peer-to-peer learning is the way to go

For a long time now, it has been recognised that in order to improve the world's water and sanitation services, partnerships are of vital importance. There are some water utilities that are performing well in the midst of thousands that are not. The situation shed light on the need for better-performing utilities to mentor the poorly-performing ones in order to replicate good practice. These partnerships help move towards the ideal of clean water and safe sanitation for all.

GWOPA or the Global Water Operators' Partnership Alliance is an alliance of water operators, international financial institutions, development organisations, regional development banks, educational institutes and many other entities, led by UN-Habitat, focussed on building and sustaining WOPs.

WOPs or Water Operators Partnerships as the name implies, are partnerships between two or more water/sanitation operators that aim to build the capacities of less-developed operators in a time-bound manner with no profit motive.

WOPs are low-cost and effective methods for bolstering the performance of public water service providers, which can help them to

provide better services to more people. They help water operators to transfer knowledge to their peers and are based on the premise that capacity building and retention are facilitated by mentoring and knowledge exchange. Much of the expertise and innovation to address water operators' challenges reside with operators themselves, and a growing number of capable operators are highly motivated to share their knowledge with others on a not-for-profit basis.

Over the years, GWOPA has analysed the key factors leading to the success of WOPs, developed guidance material and documented case studies. It has constantly focussed attention on empowering water operators who are the leading actors in the pressing global challenge of water management.

The Global WOPs Congresses are the place to take stock of WOPs practice and to push it forward. This report brings you a summary of the second global event held in Barcelona in November 2013, bringing together practitioners and supporters from around the globe to discuss WOPs' merits, challenges, innovations, and what is needed to make peer-to-peer learning a stronger force in solving our water issues.



Second Global WOPs Congress 2013

From November 27 to 29, 2013, the historical Sant Pau Art Nouveau site in Barcelona, Spain, was the venue for the Second Global WOPs Congress, organised by the Global Water Operators' Partnership (GWOPA)/UN-HABITAT. The first congress was held two years earlier in 2011 at Cape Town, South Africa.

2013 was designated by the United Nations as International Year for Water Cooperation. The Global WOPs Congress, which aimed to foster cooperation between water operators, was very much in keeping with the UN theme.

At the Barcelona Congress, 275 delegates were present and they came from 80 countries covering nearly every continent in the world.

OPENING CEREMONY

SIX THEMATIC DISCUSSIONS:

1. WOPs and Finance
2. WOPs Results
3. Learning Approaches in WOPs
4. Capacity Development for Non-Revenue Water Management
5. Water Workers and WOPs
6. Reducing Risks: Water and Sanitation Operators helping each other

REGIONAL DISCUSSIONS:

1. WOPs in Asia and the Pacific
2. WOPs in Latin America and the Caribbean
3. WOPs in Africa

CLOSING SESSION

At the closing session of the congress, rapporteurs from the plenary and parallel sessions reported back on their sessions' observations and outcomes, which was followed by a panel discussion.

In addition to these sessions, a networking fair was held over two hours on the last day, in which participants had a chance to interact with each other. A number of social activities were also arranged to facilitate informal interactions. Video interviews of participants were recorded in the WaterCube throughout the congress and uploaded on WaterCube.tv.



The Opening Ceremony and Panel Discussion

“Rapid urbanisation is one of the most significant trends of the 21st century,” stated Bert Diphorn, Senior Advisor to UN-Habitat Executive Director on Urban Basic Services. He was delivering the keynote address on behalf of Dr. Joan Clos, Executive Director, UN-Habitat, at the opening session of the Congress. He reminded the audience that cities are the “locus of significant challenges.”

An evocative picture of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil that Mr. Diphorn showed to the audience lingered in minds long after the session. The aerial shot showed densely packed slums extending endlessly on one side of a highway while on the other side were opulent high-rise buildings on a tidy network of streets. The picture starkly illustrated the divide between the haves and have-nots.

However cities and urbanisation need not be viewed negatively; they could in fact be the vehicle for economic and social transformation. Urban authorities at city and local levels hold the keys to many global challenges.

Mr. Diphorn articulated UN-Habitat’s viewpoint about the need for transition from business-as-usual to sustainable urban development. He called for a move away from urban sprawl to compact settlements, from segregation to integration of urban areas and from congested to connected cities. He highlighted the Rio+20 Outcome Document (titled ‘The Future We Want’) which stated that water is at the core of sustainable development.

In recent times, Barcelona has been working to merge urban planning, ecology, and information

technology to ensure the benefits of technology reach every neighbourhood and improve the lives of citizens. Antoni Vives, Deputy Mayor of the City of Barcelona, who addressed the delegates of the WOPs Congress called for the establishment of “city operating standards.” He expressed support for the idea of a global protocol similar to what is being agreed upon for Internet, whereby a city, whether it be Barcelona, Quito, Johannesburg or any other, would aim for universal standards. The deputy mayor said that water, ‘the gold of the cities’, would form an essential part of the operating standards. The aim should be for a ‘social business model’ around water that could be applied globally.

Joseph Enric, Secretary of Environment and Sustainability of Catalunya, Spain, who had just returned from the Warsaw Climate Change Conference said it had been disappointing to see that the roadmap to reducing greenhouse gas emissions was not well defined. He said the scientists’ messages were clear but countries were not finding ways to solve the problem of greenhouse gases given their, “economic and development priorities”, which they perceived, short-sightedly, as being in conflict with the course needed to stop catastrophic climate change.

The World Water Council (WWC) was represented at the Congress by its Governor, Guy Fradin, who spoke from the Council’s experience of developing a new policy of sustainable infrastructure development, and efficient management of water resources for future generations. He said that the goal of sustainable development could not be achieved without a framework for cooperation.

A call for better delivery of water services worldwide was made by Uschi Eid, Vice-Chair, United Nations Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation (UNSGAB). Dr Eid said that water operators will play a 'pivotal role' in realizing and monitoring the sustainable development goals.

She also stressed the need to keep sanitation high on national and international agendas. Pointing out the critical role of operators, she said they would need to be supported to contribute fully to improve the sanitation situation. The Sanitation Drive to 2015 was introduced by UNSGAB to maintain focus on achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) sanitation target. The aim of the campaign is to advocate effectively for stakeholders to adopt a focused trajectory to achieve the target by the agreed deadline in 2015. The drive also called on member states to end open defecation, the first time this practice had been mentioned in an intergovernmental document.

OPENING PANEL

The Opening Panels at the Global WOPs Congress laid out the issues to be addressed over the coming days. The first panel, moderated by Piers Cross, looked at WOPs from a global development perspective while the second honed in on some of the key issues that the sessions should aim to address.

Faraj-El-Awar, GWOPA Programme Manager took the audience through the history of WOPs and GWOPA from the time the concept was introduced in 2006. GWOPA is ultimately contributing to the MDGs of halving the proportion of the world's population that remains unserved by adequate water and sanitation services. WOPs make the greatest contribution through capacity enhancement, while helping to catalyse the change required to increase access to the poor. Dr El-Awar referred to the Hashimoto Action Plan of 2006, which has provided the guiding principles to GWOPA and led to its foundation in 2009.

The GWOPA Secretariat is hosted by UN-Habitat at its office in Barcelona following relocation from its Nairobi headquarters in 2013. The Secretariat implements the Alliance work plan in accordance with its 5 year strategy. Broadly, its activities involve **guiding the global growth** of the WOPs practice, and providing **strategic operational support** for WOPs.

The Secretariat prepares and presents to the annual meeting of the GWOPA Steering Committee and bi-annual meeting of the General Assembly, the annual budget, progress report, and work plan.

As the MDGs are replaced by Sustainable Development Goals after 2015, the role of WOPs will become very significant given that operators are the medium through which water and sanitation will be delivered to people. Dr El-Awar pointed out that the three main challenges ahead for scaling up WOPs are:

Finance: Bringing adequate money to support more WOPs and better link with investments

Scale: Connecting more mentors to more mentees

Strengthening implementation capacity: Enabling better WOP design and delivery for better results

In the ensuing panel discussion, Blanca Elena Jimenez-Cisneros, Secretary, UNESCO – International Hydrological programme (IHP) told the audience that water is all about cooperation – between cities and rural areas, and between stakeholders. Mentorship is also about cooperation, she highlighted. Since its inception in 1975, IHP has evolved from an internationally coordinated hydrological research programme into a holistic programme to facilitate education and capacity building, and enhance water resources management and governance. Ms. Jimenez said it was important to not be too “water-centred” but to look at water challenges as part of a whole.

Cassilde Breniere of the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) commented on the growing number of participants in the congress

compared to the first edition held in Cape Town, South Africa. Regarding the concrete progress made towards achieving the MDGs on Water and Sanitation, she underlined that the final goal for operators continues beyond this process as they are faced with the challenge of ensuring not only initial access but also the continuity of supply.

Ms. Breniere spoke of developing the capacities of Operators as a key area of work for the AFD and commended the WOPs approach as "inspirational." Ownership, vision and management are the issues that must be addressed in the ongoing work on WOPs, and she further expressed her hope that the Congress would give space to these topics.

Capacity building entails developing the ability to self-renew in an unpredictable environment, as put forth by Heather Skilling, Senior Water and Sanitation Advisor of the United States Agency for International Development. She said it was "more than the ability to achieve performance results" because it involved the "ability to consistently adapt and deliver results in a changing environment." She called for WOP evaluation frameworks that could capture WOPs' power to develop capacity for continual improvement, and not only measure changes in performance directly. She also emphasised that finance was an important issue and therefore "we have to tap into every available pocket to keep pace with challenges."

Arjun Thapan, Chairman of WaterLinks pointed out the challenges of urbanisation in Asia in the context of stiff competition for water resources between cities, agriculture and industry. In 2010, out of the 21 major cities in the world, 12 were in Asia. But in 2020, out of 37 major cities, 21 will be in Asia. Asia's share of megacities is growing, with the continent claiming 21 of 37 of the world's major cities by 2020. Meanwhile, 60% of expansion of water-hungry thermal power capacity in China will be in water-stressed provinces.

Mr. Thapan outlined three main challenges being faced by the Asian water sector: a) Inefficiency – About US\$10 billion of treated water is lost every year to NRW; b) Lack of wastewater infrastructure – less than 20% of Asia is sewered. The untreated wastewater goes to pollute both surface water and groundwater and makes it harder for operators to access freshwater; c) Climate change, which impacts availability of raw water. Also, extreme events caused by climate change lead to damage of infrastructure.

WaterLinks has executed 40 WOPs in Asia. According to its chairman, WOPs can bring about positive change by focusing on three operational areas: firstly solving specific problems, secondly transfer of technology, and lastly catalysing investment. Drawing on long experience implementing loan and grant funded projects with the Asian Development, he spoke of the millions of dollars spent on an 'army of consultants' hired to write manuals and do workshops thinking that 'utilities were trained.' Instead, Mr. Thapan asserted, "WOPs is the way to go." The strength of WOPs lies in the fact they are "led by practitioners," have no "hidden agenda" and are small scale. He said he had a long list of potential WOPs but no money to implement them.

At the second panel discussion on 'Priorities, Strategies and Messages' Maarten Blokland, Associate Professor at UNESCO-IHE spoke about ongoing efforts to better understand how WOPs work and how they can be designed for greater effectiveness. His organisation is working with GWOPA on the 'Boosting Effectiveness of WOPs' project to address a potential paradox of the WOPs approach: operators are uniquely placed to share their experience and technical expertise with their peers, however they sometimes lack the capacity to effectively transfer their knowledge and the ability to manage the partnership process. The BEWOP collaboration aims to strengthen knowledge transfer and change processes in WOPs, in order to maximise the potential for operational improvements.

Sylvain Usher, Secretary General of the African Water Association, said the association had more than 150 water utilities among its members. At a two-day workshop held before the Congress, discussions were held on how to scale up WOPs in Africa and on putting performance improvement plans in place. One of the biggest challenges is to identify good mentors. Mr. Usher also pointed out that “sanitation is way behind” water services.

Daniel Markovitch of SIAAP in Paris highlighted mutual trust, voluntary exchange and solidarity as essential WOP features that allow the practice to effectively support utilities’ improvement process.

Satoko Kishimoto from the Transnational Institute spoke about an open letter written to the EU Commissioner for Development. The letter hailed the support for not-for-profit water partnership projects in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries that was provided by the ACP-EU Water Facility under the 10th European Development Fund and made a strong call to extend and upscale this European support for not-for-profit partnerships in the 11th EDF. Through the letter she reminded the EU Commissioner of the fact that European citizens expressed strong commitment to water as a human right by supporting the first successful European Citizens’ Initiative (ECI) with 1.9 million signatures across all 28 Member States. This ECI includes the demand that the EU must increase its efforts to achieve universal access to water and sanitation.

From David Boys of Public Services International came the message that capacity building did not happen through workshops, nor through consultants and did not come in a box. He said it has to come from participatory processes and from a desire to get trained. Mr. Boys also challenged the claim that there are not enough resources for water and sanitation services, given the extreme wealth of corporations. Fair taxation and redistribution needs to be part of improved

global water governance. He congratulated GWOPA on tackling the huge task of capacity building in the right way through WOPs.

Victor Poyotte, Executive Director of the Caribbean Water and Sewerage Association spoke about the problems of low tariffs which cover just a fraction of the cost of water production. He also spoke about the complexity of improving public utilities when governments who hold responsibility for regulation are not on board.

Gerard Payen of Aquafed said that private operators can also have a role in the improvement of public operators by supporting them according to WOP principles

The opening plenary and panel discussions gave a good introduction to the topics that were taken up in more detail by the Congress in the days to come.

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- Years of costly technical assistance programs have led to often disappointing results. WOPs should be considered more seriously in rethinking of technical assistance programs. However, there is a need to replicate WOPs over entire regions and to scale them up for maximum impact.
- WOPs are more than a one-way transfer of knowledge from mentor to mentee. WOPs benefits arise from ownership, relationships and long term cooperation, and these qualities need to be emphasized.
- Focus on organisational, commercial and technical capacities to improve efficiency and adaptability.
- WOPs should be linked more systematically to follow-up investments to increase impact.
- Increase funding for WOPs by tapping a variety of sources. Look for finance from non-traditional sources.

Theme 1: WOPs and Finance

How do we finance more WOPs while being smarter in financing, and how can WOPs help utilities themselves become more financially viable? This was the fundamental question that formed the leitmotif of the 'WOPs and Finance' session chaired by GWOPA consultant, Piers Cross.

The session surveyed some of the main mechanisms currently used for funding WOPs and examined their relative strengths and weaknesses in enabling effective WOPs that lead to sustainable results.

LESSONS FROM ACP-EU WATER FACILITY PARTNERSHIPS INITIATIVE

In 2010 the European Commission earmarked €40 million of the ACP-EU Water Facility to support water partnership projects in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. The aim of this programme – the ACP-EU Water Partnerships initiative – is to contribute to improving water governance and management of water resources and to the sustainable development and maintenance of water infrastructure. It does this by funding not-for-profit partnerships for capacity development between ACP and EU water and sanitation utilities, local authorities and other water sector organisations.

Emanuele Lobina, Principal Lecturer at the Public Services International Research Unit (PSIRU), University of Greenwich, informed the audience that grants awarded by the ACP-EU Water Facility range from €250,000 to €1 million, and do not exceed 75% of the total eligible cost of the supported partnership. The duration of partnerships funded is between

24 and 60 months. The Restricted Call for Proposals provided for the competitive selection of applications. The evaluation criteria requested applicants to: show how they intended to achieve mandatory results that would be maintained as permanent assets of the beneficiary partners and to show how their proposal would contribute to implementing national water and sanitation strategies and programmes.

Applicants were encouraged to actively involve local non-state actors as supporting partners. Consideration was given for establishing synergies with other capacity development initiatives and avoiding duplication. Applicants were also expected to generate a multiplier effect as a result of replication and/or scaling-up within the country/region. To guarantee the realisation of expected impact, applicants were requested to accurately describe the procedures for internal/external evaluation during execution of the partnership projects.

At the end of 2011, the ACP-EU Water Facility awarded grants totalling €23million to 32 projects, which mobilised additional €31.9 million. The expected impact of ACP-EU Water Partnerships is significant as it consists in millions of people benefitting from capacity development and improvements in key areas of sustainable water development.

Comparing with the regional platforms for WOPs such as WOP-Africa; WOP-LAC (Latin America and the Caribbean); WaterLinks (Asia); and, WOP-SEE (South-East Europe), it was pointed out that the ACP-EU Water Partnerships addressed a higher percentage of themes related to water governance and sustainable development

and mobilised financial resources. Mr. Lobina believes that the ACP-EU Water Partnerships aim more systematically at achieving mandatory and permanent results, and at replicating and upscaling project results. “The extent of non-state actor involvement in ACP-EU Water Partnerships finds no equal in regional WOPs,” he said. On the other hand, he said the South-South component of the initiative is inferior to that of regional WOPs.

A SWOT analysis (strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) of the ACP-EU Water Partnerships initiative was presented. Mr. Lobina recommended that significant financial resources should be made available to international programmes supporting not-for-profit partnerships for capacity development. These financial resources should be commensurate to the scale of the need across countries, and made available for the time required to meet such a challenging goal as attaining a critical mass of capacity. Strategies should be devised for the effective deployment of the financial resources made available through budget lines, so that concrete actions can be undertaken for capacity development. Finally, international programmes supporting not-for-profit partnerships for capacity development should be designed as open and continued opportunities for learning on developing capacity for sustainable water development. Adequately resourced mechanisms should be adopted for sharing lessons on the merits of the institutional features of different programmes, as well as the intervention strategies adopted by different not-for-profit partnerships.

EFFECTIVE WOPs CAN COST NEXT TO NOTHING

Cléo Lossouarn, the Project Manager from Paris’s sanitation utility, SIAAP, began by describing the special legal framework that supports the self-financing of WOPs in France. Under the *Loi Oudin-Santini*, 1% of income from water and sanitation service providers can be used for solidarity efforts or projects. Project ideas are collected through a call for proposals to associations or NGOs. It is possible to do WOPs with this funding and Ms. Lossouarn

highlighted the potential of this 1% to create new partnerships. She highlighted four distinct cases in which SIAAP have played a mentor role.

In the first WOP, between SIAAP and ONEE of Morocco, the cost of exchange visits was covered entirely by the respective institutions. In a WOP with ONEA of Burkina Faso, the mentee costs were covered by the Agence Française de Développement while SIAAP covered the cost of its own staff. In a WOP with INRH of Cuba: exchange visit costs were covered by SIAAP and support was provided in acquiring material. Finally, in a WOP with ONAS of Tunisia, the training was paid for with multi-lateral funds and ONAS had its own fund available to cover SIAAP’s staff travel.

These four cases illustrate that WOPs can be undertaken with a diversity of funding models, according to the resources available and the partners involved. Ms. Lossouarn lastly highlighted that WOPs offer substantial return for relatively low cost.

Christiane Franck, Managing Director of Brussels’ utility, Vivaqua, the only operator in Belgium to work on the full water cycle: production, stockage, reservoirs, distribution, sanitation and purification, recalled that her utility was a founding member of Aqua Publica, a European network of public operators. The operator has cooperation experience in Morocco, Algeria, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Ms. Franck summarized some lessons learnt, most notably the need to ensure that knowledge exchange is contributing to long-term development of capacity. She stressed that the WOP approach should be flexible and adapted to local needs and that local operators and communities must be real actors in the project. By way of recommendations for more funds to enable WOPs, she called for increased financial support on three levels: locally by citizens contributions, nationally through solidarity action and at European level by the EU Water Facility.

WOPs CAN HELP OPERATORS MAKE THE BEST USE OF FINANCE

It has been estimated that an amount of US\$103 billion would be needed per year for water supply, sanitation and wastewater infrastructure in developing countries through 2015 [Yepes, 2008]. A major dilemma caused by the 2008 global financial crisis is the slower growth and lower tax revenues which imply that donor commitments and public budgets are at risk of diminishing. Credit for developing countries has dried up to a great extent and current private participation in water is only about a third the size of development assistance to the sector.

In her presentation, Anna Cestari, Senior Water Resources Specialist at The World Bank, was positive about the fact that the growing water demand in large cities would lead to developing countries becoming the next growth market for international investors. She said that utilities could attract private funds if they could create a sturdy public sector that promotes efficiency and equity.

Ms. Cestari presented on the advantages and disadvantages of each of the 3Ts (Taxes, Transfers and Tariffs) for financing water services, concluding that utilities should progressively move towards full cost recovery through tariffs. She said that the performance of public sector funds needs to be strengthened through improved efficiency and called for a reduction in NRW, improvement in billing and collection rates, metering, selecting the right technology and using management contracts to leverage private sector efficiencies. She also dwelt on the importance of sound sector governance in order to attract private finance while protecting public interests. Utilities must be helped to attract new financing by reducing the perceived risks of private investment in water and eliminating information asymmetries.

Expanding on the connection between WOPs and water sector reform, the speaker said that WOPs helped to secure more donor funding. This could be used to help utilities get a jumpstart on delivering services more efficiently.

DISCUSSION

- Utilities with access to some funds can do creative mixing with various sources (mentee+mentor + donor + other funds). Cost-sharing should also be explored in financing WOPs. Many mentee utilities have access to their own funds.
- Potential of WOPs: Small money and good chemistry goes far
- Why are WOPs not being funded by donors on a much bigger scale? Why does funding to WOPs pale in comparison with funding for private sector partnerships and others?
- Perhaps procurement rules form a barrier? Donors find it not cost-effective to manage small funds under US\$1 million.
- WOPs require more flexibility (in project design) than donors are willing to accept?

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- More finance should be made available for WOPs and existing mechanisms need to be scaled up
- Involving non-state actors should be an important component of non-profit water partnerships
- Donors must find ways to overcome impediments and develop result-oriented models that do not compromise WOPs' added value (relationships, time, beneficiary lead)
- There is an intimate connection between WOPs and water sector reform and GWOPA must continue to promote WOPs to donors
- International programmes supporting not-for-profit partnerships for capacity development should be designed as open and continued opportunities for learning on developing capacity for sustainable water development
- When promoting WOPs to donors, it is important to not project them as another word for an old technique. WOPs work well because of the relationship between partners, the not-for-profit principle, the local ownership that is developed and the flexibility. Advocacy efforts should raise these unique aspects.



Theme 2: WOPs' Results

Without monitoring and analysing the results that are ensuing from the WOPs being implemented around the world, there is no way to build on its successes or learn from its failures. An entire session was devoted at the Congress to answering questions such as:

- What kind of results are we getting and should be expect from WOPs?
- How can WOPs bring the types of results that matter?
- Are we capturing these results in our monitoring efforts or do they need to be improved?

The WOPs results' session was chaired by Uta Wehn de Montalvo, Senior Lecturer/Researcher Capacity Development and Innovation at UNESCO-IHE. A number of WOPs that led to improvements in water and sanitation service provision were showcased and it was examined how those results were achieved. The topic of what standards and what timeframes should be used to evaluate results in WOPs was explored.

Mr. Samir Bensaid shared the story of the WOP between the Parisian sanitation utility, SIAAP, and his utility in Morocco, ONEE, which began in 2000 when the Moroccan water and energy provider was given a new mission to provide sanitation services. An initial cooperation agreement was signed in 2002 followed by a second, scaled-up agreement in 2009 and an amendment in 2013 to integrate new themes of hygiene and security.

To date, the outcomes of the project include capacity development for staff on topics including sludge management, waste water treatment, hygiene and security.

In the current phase, on the theme of Hygiene and Security, the WOP aims to foster knowledge, propose improvement measures and outline steps to achieve ownership. The theme of Quality Control will entail an in-depth analysis of water and equipment management and training sessions among others.

Mr. Bensaid ended by speaking of ONEE's efforts to engage in future partnerships in developing countries with the support of SIAAP using a triangular "North-South-South" partnership model that have applied elsewhere.

COOPERATION, CAPACITY AND CAPITAL

GWOPA has been engaged in disseminating the results achieved from various WOPs being implemented around the world and presenting case studies. The intention is to share the experiences gained and enable lessons to be learned among practitioners. Readable, accessible and forward-looking reports help to underscore the importance of WOPs, thereby promoting them globally

Digby Davies, GWOPA Advisor who has been involved in preparing case studies of WOPs since 2011, made a presentation outlining his work. He explained that the case-study themes focussed on the process, results and impacts. The methodology involved reporting on the views and experiences of the key actors who were the mentors, recipients and facilitators. Most of the information was gathered via interviews and documents.

Mr. Davies presented three case studies from Asia from the timeframe 2011-2012 and four from Africa in 2013.

Proper matching of mentor and recipient was pointed out as being extremely important in achieving the desired results in WOPs. No less is the importance of formulating jointly agreed objectives during the inception phase of the WOP. The clearer and more realistic the objectives are at the beginning, the better they will translate into actual results. Together with a collaborative process in the design of the partnership, a set of criteria identified and measured before the implementation of the WOP would help to evaluate the achievement of expected results. This process is key for both the partners and third parties in terms of visibility, accountability and motivation. The need for 'quick wins' to motivate partners and for improved visibility to donors and customers was also highlighted.

Results must be sustained over the long-term to ensure an actual improvement in the provision of water and sanitation services. As WOPs mostly focus on building and reinforcing the capacity of the recipient utility, the willingness to share the acquired knowledge with other utilities or within the utility is central to improving the sustainability of the achieved results. This comes also with the notion of replicability. Besides, the communication and promotion of achieved results can help to sustain results over time by drawing in new funding sources.

THE SENEGAL-BURKINA FASO COOPERATION

Water supply and sanitation in Senegal is characterised by a relatively high level of access compared to the average of Sub-Saharan Africa. SDE is responsible for the production and distribution of drinking water in 56 cities and more than 400 villages in Senegal. Over 580,000 connections representing around 6 million consumers are served by SDE.

Diery Ba from SDE said that his organisation gained its own expertise in large part through cooperation with the SAUR Group in France. The focus was on operations, customer management, information systems, security and other aspects

of water distribution. Some exchanges followed with Southeast Water Company in the UK. Subsequently there was south-south cooperation with Tunisia (in network efficiency) and Cote d'Ivoire (customer management).

Mr. Ba highlighted that his organisation was highly performance-oriented and was the first African water utility to be certified ISO 9001-2000 in 2002, followed by many other certifications. However, the utility also faced challenges in the form of dwindling water resources and rising energy costs.

In 2009, a WOP was started between SDE and ONEA, the national utility of Burkina Faso, also in Sub-Saharan Africa and considered one of its best performing water utilities. A number of professional visits were exchanged and training programmes were held. ONEA was interested in learning how to implement the ISO 9001 version 2000 Quality Approach. SDE auditors carried out two test audits in Burkina Faso. The key points and gaps noted during the certification audit were confirmed by the SDE auditors. By working with SDE, ONEA succeeded in achieving ISO 9001/2000 certification in 2008 and ISO 9001/2008 in 2009. All the professional visits made by ONEA's staff to SDE were financed by ONEA itself.

Meanwhile SDE is interested in ONEA's water treatment method using sea salt as an electrolyte. SDE currently uses gaseous chlorine in its process, which is difficult to ship while salt is widely available in Senegal.

According to Mr. Ba, partnering with SDE has helped ONEA to make positive changes in its quality management approach and be more motivated to look for innovations. Contacts established with SDE colleagues have allowed the ONEA managers to exchange information on major issues. Likewise, SDE has benefited by developing a fruitful partnership with a similar African enterprise. A feeling of solidarity between African counterparts greatly helped in sharing of best practices. SDE is now open to partnerships with other African utilities and cooperating in areas where it has established strengths.

Mr. Ba stressed that clear and smart objectives need to be set early for achieving good results in a WOP. Like many others he felt that a strong commitment was needed from the managers on both sides of a WOP along with a proper understanding of expectations.

SOCIAL EFFICIENCY FOR WOPS

Mainstream indicators of 'efficiency' are often insufficient for assessing water operator performance, frequently ignoring or marginalizing important social, political and environmental criteria. This is true of efficiency indicators used in many water operators partnerships, which tend to adopt narrow financial performance measurements, reproducing problems associated with such criteria in their knowledge transfer activities.

David McDonald of Queens University argued that WOPs could benefit by using more expansive notions of efficiency – often termed 'social efficiency' – which incorporate broader performance mandates along with financial data. Criteria such as gender equity, worker health and safety, and modified net present valuations could be integrated into more conventional cost-benefit calculations, leading to very different assessment outcomes and contributing to the promotion of equity-oriented water services. In his presentation, Dr. McDonald urged GWOPA to explore ways in which these expanded definitions of efficiency could be conceptualized and operationalized by water operators and incorporated into the mandates and knowledge transfer objectives of WOPs in particular.

BENCHMARKING FOR PRO-POOR SERVICES

Pro-poor water and sanitation service provision strategies have, in some instances, met with success but are in many developing countries abysmal failures. To encourage utilities in low-and middle-income countries to increase their pro-poor provision, there is a need for incentives and

support. Performance indicators, benchmarking and toolboxes for best practices are ways to provide this.

The PROBE (Benchmarking for Pro-poor Water Services Provision) research project aims to find out under which conditions and in what form benchmarking can be used by stakeholders as an effective tool to provide water and sanitation services to the poor.

Maarten Blokland, Associate Professor of Water Services Management at UNESCO-IHE devoted his presentation to the improvements needed to the existing benchmarking tools so that they could be included in WOPs for stronger focus on providing services to the poor.

Among the features of pro-poor services are policies designed to benefit the poor, technologies such as water kiosks and small bore sewers, affordable tariffs and utility partnerships with small scale providers.

Mr. Blokland presented perspectives and indicators as well as an assessment framework for pro-poor service provision.

DISCUSSION

- The importance of jointly agreed realistic objectives at the inception of the WOP
- How can we sustain results over the long-term and ensure an actual improvement in the provision of water and sanitation services?
- What willingness exists to share acquired knowledge with other utilities and within the utility?
- Conceptualisation of results: from quantitative to qualitative and intangible
- WOP partners that are more similar may yield better results
- Challenge to measure intangible change and to compare cases

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- Clear and smart objectives need to be set early for achieving good results in a WOP.
- Partnerships need to be designed in a collaborative manner.
- The results of WOPs are more than Key Performance Indicators. Intangible changes should also be captured, such as motivation and behavioral change.
- Social effectiveness benchmarking tools should be further developed and applied.
- Sustainable results require continuity. Pay attention to objectives before the WOP; monitor and adapt during the WOP; evaluate and assess at the end of WOP; use internal audit to corroborate results achieved
- Use 'quick wins' to motivate partners and for improved visibility to donors and customers.



Theme 3: Learning approaches in WOPs

WOPs are based on the idea that a mentor utility can transfer knowledge, skills and experience to the mentee and thus enhance its capacity, resulting in better and more sustainable service. But how does this actually happen? What are the approaches being currently applied? Do we know that they enhance capacity and performance and if so, are these results sustainable? Which approaches are suited for which capacity gaps? Are mentors motivated? These were some of the aspects that were considered at the session on learning approaches moderated by Maarten Blokland, Associate Professor of Water Services Management, UNESCO-IHE.

CREATING A FRAMEWORK FOR LEARNING

Currently, in most WOP arrangements capacity development is framed in terms of the problems to be solved and activities to solve the problems. Jenny Pearson, GWOPA Consultant, explained that capacity development is central to the implementation and success of WOPs, so there is a need to understand the learning and knowledge transfer methods already in use, and explore options for more effective approaches in the future.

According to Ms. Pearson, the need for learning goes beyond technical personnel and managers to the organisational level of the utilities, and beyond that again to the agencies and institutions in the operating environment that are influential in determining the enabling conditions for change to happen. There are many tools and techniques to approach different learning needs, beyond traditional training courses.

The improvement of water services also requires different levels of learning, for which the single and double loop learning theory provides a helpful framework. Ms. Pearson explained that 'single loop learning' is about operational matters, for example the installation of meters, and how to do them or how to do them better, sometimes referred to as 'doing things right'. But complex systems such as water services need another level of learning because, for example, single loop learning alone would not be enough to reduce the percentage of non-revenue water. Such a challenge requires 'second loop learning', or 'doing the right things', which is a combination of technical knowhow and intangible capacities like analytical and problem solving abilities. Second loop learning is essential for continuous improvement and organisational sustainability.

It is frequently assumed that activities targeting individuals will automatically contribute to higher-level needs, which is not the case. Nor can any single method provide the answers to complex needs. This means that training, so often the default response to capacity needs, is not the only answer. It has its place but is only really effective if placed within a broader process to facilitate change and the application of learning in the workplace. The most effective capacity development approaches are not, therefore, events but processes of linked and sequential actions, building on what already exists and moving forward step-by-step.

It was pointed out that the design of a capacity development process involves decisions about what needs to be achieved, who needs to be involved, and how to achieve the desired

results. The first step should be an assessment to understand the need, the potential of a given approach, and any barriers that will block changes in the workplace. A critical factor is management's attitude and ability to support staff to implement changes, because without organisational support the time and other resources spent on capacity development activities may be wasted.

The next step is planning, starting with the specification of overall goals for the capacity development agenda. Selecting multiple methods to use together to achieve the 'best fit' can be a very effective way of maximising the strengths, and mitigating the challenges, of each. Some steps and activities have to be completed to put in place foundational conditions before further initiatives can be started and achieving some 'quick wins' can be helpful to motivate people for the longer-term process. Many WOPs complete one phase and start a new one to build on what has previously been achieved and help the mentee move on to a new level of capacity.

Beyond training, most approaches call for the mentoring partner to think of their role as process facilitator rather than simply as trainer.

Case studies and other documentation have identified some important conditions that support success in WOPs, which are: the right enabling conditions for the WOP to function; the right starting point; a strong planning framework; the overall WOP process creates conditions conducive to learning; and, quality of the relationships within the partnership.

However, all WOPs will, at some time, face a challenge of one form or another. The evidence from documented cases indicates that the main challenges fall into three key groups: language and cross-cultural working; insufficient diagnostics at the start, linked with unhelpful assumptions; and, lack of guidelines for those new to WOPs.

There are a number of important gaps in the available information, most significantly: how best practices are identified, adapted to local context, and transferred; monitoring and

evaluation processes for capacity development; understanding the relevance of motivations for learning to lead to change; and understanding capacity development at the enabling environment level. Another very important gap is any information about learning that can be gleaned from mistakes. More information about these issues would undoubtedly lead to clearer understanding of how to make learning approaches more effective.

Ms. Pearson explained that a guiding framework for capacity development in WOPs needs to draw together key features of good capacity development practice and make it applicable to the sector.

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLANNING AS A CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT TOOL

Drawing on early results from a 6-year, €1.7M project funded by the EU's Africa Caribbean Pacific Water Facility, Dr. Uta Wehn-Montalvo looked at how performance improvement planning, implemented through peer support could serve as a capacity development vehicle.

The project focuses on boosting the capacity and performance of utilities in mid-sized towns in East Africa, using peer support from Uganda's National Water and Sewerage Company and the African Water Associations' support in outreach to members. The idea is to develop utilities' performance and capacity levels simultaneously, building on the notion that it is through the mentee's active doing that the learning happens, not through what the mentor does.

Through a half-year of intensive active learning, group-based coaching and peer-learning, the mentee utilities have been developing Performance Improvement Plans to implement. Along the way, capacity is being built.

In an initial evaluation of the approach, some of the advantages observed in the model are that it helps put partner operators on equal footing. It also results in a thorough inventory of performance

challenges and CD needs which will support further capacity development. Finally, it has required teamwork and engagement that have led to rich learning on the part of the mentee utilities.

On the down side, developing the PIPs and their budgets, and prioritizing the work packages has been time and human resource intensive.

Overall, using PIP development to support capacity development appears to be a promising model to apply in WOPs.

FROM RECEIVING TO PROVIDING SUPPORT IN INDONESIA

Dwike Riantara from Indonesia's water supply association PERPAMSI said there were 410 water utilities in his country and at least half of them were lagging in performance in every aspect. PERPAMSI has been playing the role of facilitator for WOPs to improve their performance. International WOPs were being facilitated with the collaboration of organisations like WaterLinks and the Asian Development Bank. National WOPs were being managed by PERPAMSI itself.

Mr. Riantara said that international partnerships sometimes suffered from weaknesses related to language, culture and inappropriate technology. He also spoke about an Indonesian way of doing WOPs by applying local values and stimulating feelings of solidarity. The local water utilities do not compete with each other and have a sense of shared history. Even after a WOP ends, the utility partners continue to share their knowledge.

Many recipient Indonesian operators such as PDAM Palembang, PDAM Surabaya and PDAM Tirtanadi have gone on to become mentors to a large number of local utilities. For example, PDAM Surabaya has mentored PDAM Solo, PDAM Magetan, PDAM Wonosobo and PDAM Kab Semarang in the area of NRW management. There have been 22 WOPs in the last three years.

Social gatherings and picnics are being used very effectively in breaking the ice and building relationships. Mentor utilities have also been sharing knowledge and best practices. Targets are being set on the basis of mutual agreement.

However, a number of challenges related to capacity building and sustaining of reforms continue to persist.

RESULTS VS. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

WOPs can respond to real demand by utilities, said Siemen Veenstra of Vitens Evides International, however to boost the impact of these partnerships they need to be professionalized. Utilities face big challenges that global issues like climate change and public spending cuts make even harder to deal with.

To help utilities rise to the task, Mr. Veenstra shared his vision for strengthened WOPs. First, WOPs should use an output-oriented model, with their financing predicated on results achievements that can be observed in changes in Key Performance Indicators. They also require robust monitoring systems for greater transparency and accountability. Furthermore, WOPs mentors need support of their own in order to offer good support to others. These staff need the right human and technical skills and should be selected through a competitive process, and supported by human resource management policies that allow them to receive training on things like intercultural communication. HR frameworks also need to allow these experts to commit the needed time to the partnership, including documenting their work and learning from one another's WOPs experiences.

It was pointed out that developing clear terms of reference and planning the expert inputs well in advance as well as the logistics was very important. An assessment of expert competencies in the beginning and evaluation of performance after a WOP would greatly aid in knowing where the shortcomings were.

While putting emphasis on results may be at odds with slower but more sustainable capacity development, Mr. Veenstra argued that WOPs should nevertheless move toward an output-based model.

DISCUSSION

- Knowledge transfer should be approached as a holistic process
- Cycle of learning: diagnosis, evaluation, adaptation and follow-up
- Participatory processes to exchange knowledge
- Focus on assessment of end results (KPIs) rather than on the learning process
- Put learning explicitly on the agenda of WOPs

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- Training is not the only answer to capacity needs. It must be placed within a broader process to facilitate change and the application of learning in the workplace.
- Mentors are process facilitators not just trainers
- Learning requires the active engagement of both partners – mentee utilities should be the drivers of their own improvement process
- Capacity development is not helpful if attention is not given to the utilisation and retention of capacity in place
- Mistakes are a valuable part of the learning process and need to be documented



Theme 4: Capacity Development for Non-Revenue Water Management

Jens Liebe, Programme Officer of UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development (UNW-DPC) introduced the important theme of 'Capacity Development for NRW Management' at the Global WOPs Congress on the first day. The gathering of water operators pondered over the immense task of equipping their staff with the knowledge and skills of not only bringing NRW under control but maintaining it at an optimum level. NRW management is closely linked to asset management.

UN-WATER'S FOCUS ON NRW REDUCTION

Dr Liebe pointed out that water loss reduction has been a major area of focus for UNW-DPC, and the ball was set rolling in 2008 with an international workshop in Bonn, Germany titled "Drinking Water Loss Reduction: Developing Capacities for Applying Solutions" co-organised with UN-Habitat. Subsequently, more workshops were held between 2009 and 2011 in Latin America, Southeast Europe, Arab countries and Africa, which encouraged follow-up projects and the establishment of communication between the policy makers, water managers and researchers, as well as the providers of technical solutions.

A film titled 'Drinking Water Loss Reduction in Cities Around the World' produced by UNW-DPC was shown to the delegates. It highlighted

how water operators from different regions of the world were connecting over the management of a life-giving service. Following this, case studies on NRW reduction in Uganda, Lebanon, Bulgaria, Chile and Tajikistan were presented.

THE UGANDAN EXPERIENCE

Dorothy Kobel from National Water and Sewerage Corporation (NWSC) explained that NWSC is wholly owned by the Government of Uganda and operates on a financially viable basis. NWSC is mandated to manage urban water and sewerage services in 28 major towns. NWSC's NRW rate of 33% was a national average which did not reflect the difference between the high losses in the capital city, Kampala and the much lower losses elsewhere. She stressed that capacity development in the form of on-the-job training and short structured courses had gone a long way in bringing dramatic improvements in NRW reduction.

THE LEBANESE EXPERIENCE

Meanwhile, the presentation from North Lebanon Water Establishment said the region's NRW had been estimated at 40% by the World Bank in 2009. A cooperation with German Development Cooperation organization, GIZ, had helped the water authority to conduct a 'water balance' exercise as per International Water Association

standards at El Mina located in Tripoli in North Lebanon. This exercise, conducted in a pilot area with the help of electromagnetic bulk meters, helped to establish that the new network of pipes had NRW of 23% as compared to 59% in the old network (which was replaced). One of the conclusions from the presentation was that pressure management would be very effective in controlling water losses. The importance of economic levels of leakage beyond which NRW reduction would not be sustainable was also highlighted.

BULGARIA FINALISES NRW STRATEGY

Atanas Paskalev from the Bulgarian Water Association said that a regional seminar in 2009 had concluded that the current level of NRW in the region was “unacceptable.” However, he was happy that the region had become mobilised for water loss reduction. For the first time in the history of Bulgaria, a tender for NRW reduction has been called in Dobrich. The strategy for the water and sanitation sector has been finalised with a strong emphasis on NRW.

CHILE USES INNOVATIVE NRW REDUCTION TECHNOLOGIES

From Aguas Andinas, which is Chile’s largest water and sewerage utility, there was Oriol Mas Alcazar, who explained the various methods and technologies used to detect, locate and pinpoint leakages in distribution systems. The Chilean utility is controlled by Spanish company Agbar.

TAJIKISTAN TO REHABILITATE WATER SYSTEMS

Alimurod Tagoymurodov, from the State Unitary Enterprise Khojagii Manziliyu Kommunalni in Tajikistan, spoke about a project to rehabilitate water supply in four cities, being financed by the EBRD (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development).

The topics of discussion that followed the presentations included the economic levels of leakage reduction, funding of NRW reduction, regulatory issues and incentivising of leakage reduction.

There was unanimity on the need to build capacity for NRW reduction through WOPs, to improve training and to help embed NRW reduction into the daily, ongoing schedule of utilities.

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- The need for NRW reduction is creating a strong demand for know-how in developing countries.
- WOPs can be an important means for building capacity in NRW reduction.
- On-the-job training and structured courses are extremely helpful in passing on knowledge and skills.
- NRW reduction should be treated as an ongoing process.
- Good NRW efforts involve staff, in-house incentives and monitoring.



Theme 5: Water Workers and WOPs

Implementing the human right to water and sanitation, and ensuring universal access will take a lot of effort over the coming years. Partnerships between the many thousands of public water operators can unlock the large reservoir of knowledge, experience and expertise that lies within them.

The session titled 'Water Workers and WOPs' was organised by the workers and trade unions which represent the bulk of the workforce active within these utilities.

There are many questions that have to be answered with regard to the role of workers in WOPs. How can workers contribute to the development and implementation of partnerships? Does management have participatory mechanisms in place which draws on the knowledge and expertise of the workers? How can utilities help each other in constantly improving skill levels? Many development assistance projects fail in the medium and long-term because there is not sufficient attention paid to ensuring a stable and skilled workforce. Do water operators know how to create the conditions to ensure a stable and skilled workforce?

Worker involvement in all phases of planning and operation was the uniting focus of this session, chaired by Rosa Pavanelli, General Secretary of Public Services International.

INNOVATIVE PARTICIPATORY MANAGEMENT MODELS IN COLUMBIA

Ms. Margarita Lopez, General Secretary of SINTRACAVALLE, Colombia and Mr. Emanuele Lobina, Principal Lecturer at PSIRU, University of Greenwich, UK presented on public participatory management models in water management. Following a brief presentation of the situation in Colombia where 28% of the population do not have access to drinking water, Ms. Lopez outlined the existing economic models used to finance service provision: 11% from the State, 16% from royalties (petrol, mineral or other companies), 31% from tariffs and 42% from *Sistema Generalizado de Preferencias* (EU's Generalized system of preferences) and underlined that this model does not allow for the required investments to be made exclusively through tariffs.

The presentation focussed on strategies for public management of water provision based on experiences in Colombia with the *Plataforma de Acuerdos Publicos Comunitarios de la América* (Public-Community Water Agreements platform in the America). This model brought together three essential features: trust and confidence, knowledge and capacity and action and exchange. As an example of the public-community model, the case of the community aqueduct of Acuamiramelba was presented. The case displayed how strengthening public and community capacity can contribute to the operational strength of the aqueduct. Among the challenges of this approach, political willingness, financial management and increasing public policy were all identified.

PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE CHANGE

Mr. Carlos Carrión Crespo, Public service sector specialist in the International Labour Organization presented on social dialogue and participatory governance for sustainable water policy reforms. The challenges in this process were outlined, most notably: lack of knowledge about what needs to be done in order to deliver water services and a lack of will.

In a meeting held in 2003 on the challenges facing public utilities, it was established that social dialogue helps extend access to all communities, improve efficiency and facilitates the process of reviewing tariffs. Expanding on the challenges in service provision, Mr. Carrión Crespo emphasized that governance is the biggest obstacle to investment and political support. Nevertheless, governments are increasingly coming to realize that improving the administration of water resources is “one of the least costly ways to resolve water management problems.”

Social dialogue, understood to be a mechanism to foster understanding between diverse interests on issues of common concern, can help build consensus and avoid conflict. This can exist as a tripartite (including the government) or as bipartite (labour and management) process, can be informal or institutionalized, and can take place at national, regional or enterprise level. The advantages of this dialogue include social progress (leading to economic development), and consensus building, among others.

ILO has an action programme in utilities to develop and structure this dialogue, which seeks to develop joint strategies and actions to extend the efficiency of public utility services, help identify policy solutions and improve the dialogue process. To achieve this, the programme establishes steering mechanisms to decide on priorities and baseline indicators, and organizes workshops and seminars to support national activities. Early indicators of this approach have shown increased participation from unions and

workforces in the modernisation of the utility and improved service delivery nationally through sharing of best practice.

LIFE-LONG LEARNING IN GERMAN PUBLIC UTILITIES

Roland Knitschky of the German Association for Water, Wastewater and Waste shared Germany’s model of staff training and skills building. Organised by a member-based association of public water utilities, it has proven to be affordable and motivating for workers, while ensuring high quality services for the community. These programmes provide life-long training, which fits well into the career progression of staff, and helps to create an environment in which workers remain motivated and dedicated. The program presents a model worthy of replication.

EMPLOYEES VIEWS STRENGTHEN WOP DESIGN

Ms. Wilma Berentsen, Director of Utilities and Social Services at ABVAKABO FNV/PSI in the Netherlands, presented on the Employee Satisfaction Survey in the WOP between DUNEA in the Netherlands and Mwanza in Tanzania. She firstly highlighted that the Dutch union, Abvakabo FNV, is a partner in this WOP in cooperation with the Tanzanian union TUGHE. Improving employee satisfaction was seen as a key step to better service delivery. With this in mind, a survey was carried out in 2012 and a subsequent action plan was developed on the issue.

Following field visits and initial contact with Mwauwasa staff, a survey was developed focussing on topics identified by employees, such as: working time and payment, organization of work, and health and safety, among others. The questionnaire itself was made available in English and Kiswahili to facilitate participation and consisted of 48 largely multiple-choice questions. By highlighting that the survey was anonymous, the response rate was high (63.5%).

On organizational issues, the survey results revealed gender disparities, the need for training, and a call for more participatory management. On health and safety the outcomes, the survey identified concrete needs such as covering ground holes, employee earplugs and facemasks, among others. In terms of council and union, employees called for improved relations between the council and employees as well as between the union and members. A short-term and longer-term action plan were developed with key actors and end goals. This plans were supported by management and the Minister of Water in Tanzania.

SOCIAL DIALOGUE IN PERU

Mr. Luis Isarra Delgado, General Secretary of Federación de Trabajadores del Agua Potable y Alcantarillado del Perú (FENTAP) spoke of social dialogue in the public service sector in Peru. Recalling the outcomes of the 2003 ILO meeting in Geneva, in which there was a call for national and regional workshops on this Dialogue process, Mr. Delgado highlighted the need to disseminate best practices.

In Peru, the political will to engage in this dialogue was affirmed through a Memorandum of Understanding signed between the government, the unions and the utilities in 2008. The MoU outlines a firm commitment to find solutions through the dialogue and to include all parties concerned. The dialogue allows workers and their unions to contribute openly to the modernization plans of the utility on the understanding that they hold important knowledge on the operational activity of the operator.

To further strengthen social dialogue in Peru, all parties agreed to establish permanent mechanisms to address sanitation issues through dialogue between workers, utilities and the government. They identified the needs of all parties to fully participate in the dialogue, established rules and norms for the process and identified the priority sanitation issues to be addressed in Peru.

DISCUSSION

- Workers should be integrated into regional WOPs platforms
- Finance remains a core issue, and tax justice must be implemented
- Concern about trade and investment treaties which could block not-for-profit WOPs and force water into market dynamics, blocking government actions to advance social rights and environment
- Protection for indigenous peoples and land use questions, including land-grabbing and water misuse, including from mining

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- All WOPs (including donor-driven) projects must include workers and community members in the design and implementation.
- Worker involvement in planning and training is essential to ensuring the sustainability of projects.
- Water and sanitation SDGs should include a reference to the tax justice issues and campaigns – the desperate need for finance, the unfunded mandates of local authorities and the needs of the poor can be met under tax justice.



Theme 6: Reducing Risks: Water and Sanitation Operators helping each other

That extreme events have become frequent is now common knowledge and yet, disaster-management usually becomes a topic of discussion only after a disaster. As the saying goes, when one fails to prepare, one has to prepare to fail.

However, WOPs have the potential to give water utilities the confidence to face risk more confidently. In the session titled 'Reducing Risks: Water and Sanitation Operators Helping Each Other', two major issues: natural disasters and water quality risks were addressed in the context of partnerships.

The case studies presented gave participants an overview of the utilities' challenges in managing disasters and protecting water quality, while looking at where WOPs are helping utilities build resiliency to disaster.

The outcome of this session was compiled as a joint message to the High Level Experts and Leaders Panel on Water and Disasters (HELP). It will also be followed up in the process towards the 7th World Water Forum in the framework of the Dialogue between mayors and heads of water and sanitation utilities.

LESSONS FROM JAPAN

Tadashige Kawasaki of Japan Water Agency (JWA) spoke about the 'Great East Japan Earthquake' of 2011 and a "water quality accident" in the Tone River in 2012 both of which taught valuable lessons on handling disasters. JWA is a river basin organisation with a mandate to develop water resources, supply water and carry out flood control measures.

A large number of pipes, pumps and valves were damaged during the 2011 earthquake. An emergency operation centre was created within five minutes of the earthquake and a target of seven days was set for resuming domestic water supply. Portable desalination technology was used to provide water.

The 'water quality accident' led to the Tone River being contaminated by a formaldehyde precursor which affected the drinking water supply of hundreds of thousands of people. "We took emergency measures such as stopping supply to 360,000 houses and dilution of river water through emergency discharge from upstream dams as well as using alternative resources to meet the shortfall," said Mr. Kawasaki. According to him, the main lessons learnt from the two disasters were that good leadership, availability of relevant information, cooperation with related organisations and regular drills would go a long way to manage future events.

CHILE CREATES COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTRES

Chile, which has experienced its share of earthquakes, has also found out the value of structured partnerships. Water supply in rural areas of Chile is managed by a community organisation of 1500 small operators registered as “Cooperativas de Servicios Sanitarios” (water committees). In the quest for improving their management and technical capabilities, a federation called Federación Nacional de Cooperativas de Servicios Sanitarios (FESAN) emerged, which is a non-profit organisation ruled by cooperative principles.

After a severe earthquake rattled Chile in February 2010, FESAN decided to build a strategic alliance with CINARA from Colombia, an institute for research and development in water supply and sanitation. The damaged wastewater treatment systems of Maule town were rebuilt through a WOP between these two organizations aided by GWOPA and the Inter-American Development Bank.

“We saw the opportunity to create Community Learning Centres (CLCs) using the green wastewater treatment system in Maule as a demonstration tool,” said Guillermo Saavedra, President of FESAN who made a presentation along with Miguel R Pena-Varon of CINARA.

The main objective of FESAN was to reconstruct Maule infrastructure, and to improve the management and technological capabilities of 600 rural water and sanitation services in the central zone of Chile, through the creation of seven CLCs. The first CLC will be located in the town of Maule, where Cooperativa Maule, a partner of FESAN, will take an active role in this project. The centre will share its experience on design, construction, operation and maintenance of environmental friendly technologies with FESAN members, using WOPs.

WATER STEWARDSHIP IN ECUADOR

Juan Carlos Romero from Ecuador’s Empresa Pública Metropolitana de Agua Potable y Saneamiento (EPMAPS) said that public water utilities had to play a lead role in watershed stewardship. He believes there is a convincing value proposition for utilities to invest upstream. “An authentic participatory watershed governance structure is essential, with legally-recognised, publicly-funded watershed councils working in concert with public agencies and private interests,” said Mr. Romero. Endorsing the spirit of WOPs, he said that experimentation and co-learning is critical to better understand how urban utilities can improve their watershed protection role.

IMPLEMENTING WATER SAFETY PLANS IN BETHLEHEM

Several organisations are coming together to help Bethlehem develop and implement a water safety plan (WSP) for its drinking water systems. A WSP approach ensures the safety of drinking water through the use of a comprehensive risk assessment and risk management approach that encompasses all steps in water supply from catchment to consumer.

Mahmoud Hafsi from ONEE-Morocco (the country’s national electricity and water company) made a presentation along with Akram Nassar of Water Supply and Sewerage Authority Bethlehem about the different phases of the implementation of this multi-party cooperation.

In the first phase, a training session was organised in Beirut by GWOPA to train operators from six Arab countries to develop a WSP. The second phase led by GWOPA aimed at supporting those utilities who invested in adopting WSPs. In this phase, a WOP was formed between ONEE and the Bethlehem utility under the aegis of GWOPA.

The activities so far implemented in the WOP include a training programme on the WSP approach organised for the WSSA staff in charge of the drinking water supply in Bethlehem. The

next step will be a ten-day capacity-building programme for operators and technicians on the monitoring of drinking water systems. Different aspects of WSP will be taught by specialists both in the laboratory and in the field. This will be followed by an assessment carried out in Bethlehem and based on which an extension of the scope of the WSP in other drinking water systems may be considered. In the final step, a three-day evaluation of the project has been envisaged.

BUILDING CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE WITH WOPs

In Asia, a lack of safe water and sustainable sanitation is likely to be aggravated by climate change. “Potential climate-related impacts such as freshwater shortages due to drought conditions, water quality degradation, extreme rainfall and associated floods, and sea water intrusion from rising sea levels could disrupt the provision of services that affect the lives and livelihoods of urban inhabitants,” said Arie Istandar from WaterLinks, a regional WOP platform in Asia that promotes and supports partnerships between water service providers.

To understand the “readiness” of these water services providers to respond to climate change impacts, ECO-Asia, a regional project of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and WaterLinks conducted a rapid assessment of 14 selected water services providers in the Asia region and Australia.

The rapid assessment gathered and analysed information to determine the level of climate change preparedness or resilience of participating services providers; identified challenges and potential actions to strengthen their adaptive capacities; and documented good practices that contribute to building resilience.

The assessment results indicated that of the 14 participating providers, only two: Australia’s Water Corporation and Singapore’s Public Utilities’ Board were in the advanced readiness phase, having completed the four-stage cycle

[Awareness, Assessment, Planning and Actions] and continuing to build their adaptive capacities. Most services providers in the assessment were in the intermediate readiness phase, where they had undertaken some activities but not completed all four elements. For instance, certain providers had taken actions that improved their operational efficiencies which by consequence increased their adaptive capacity, without ever explicitly planning to address climate change resilience.

The unavailability of robust climate data, proper data analysis, and appropriate means to distill useful information for use by decision-makers and communities were significant limitations faced by many services providers. With limited resources and data, service providers recognised the value of scenario planning, in which they developed scenarios and risk-mitigation options based on available information and current capabilities to address climate-related risks.

Water service providers emphasised that WOPs between peers that also involved the academic community could greatly support the building of adaptive capacities and resilience. Partnerships enable sharing of good practices for awareness-raising, risk identification, planning systems, and the implementation of structural and non-structural measures to adapt to climate variability and change.

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- WOPs with peers and scientific/academic communities can build adaptive capacity and resilience
- Networking and interaction with partners can greatly aid in better preparedness
- Disasters can be the opportunities to completely revamp and change systems





SDGs: The Role of Operators in the Post 2015 Sustainable Development Agenda

To ensure that water receives the attention it needs in the post-2015 Development Framework, UN-Water has been working to articulate a dedicated Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) on water. In the weeks leading up to the Congress, an online consultation "The Voice of Operators in the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda" was conducted to seek the inputs of the operators on the UN-Water position paper and on their role in the achievement of sustainable development.

DELIBERATING ON A POST-2015 AGENDA

In the session on SDGs, Michel Jarraud, the Chair of UN-Water and Secretary General of the World Meteorological Organisation spoke to the audience through a video message. Pointing out that 2013 had been the International Year of Water Cooperation, he said that GWOPA's work was particularly relevant to the theme. The Congress, he said, was being held at a defining moment when the world community was deliberating on a post-2015 development agenda. Highlighting that 80% of the wastewater around the world was being discharged untreated into water bodies to everyone's detriment, Mr. Jarraud said there was "much unfinished work in the water sector." He asserted that exchanges between water and sanitation operators would greatly help to strengthen capacity and increase the quality of basic services.

Referring to the MDGs, Mr. Jarraud said that progress had been made in halving the number of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water, however there were still 700 million people without this facility. Besides, there

were 2.5 billion people without access to safe sustainable sanitation of which one billion were resorting to open defecation.

"2015 cannot be seen as a deadline; rather it is only a milestone for the huge amount of work that still has to be done in order to make the world a better place," said the UN-Water Chair. He informed that discussions are taking place amongst governments, UN, academia, business community and civil society on the successive framework to the MDGs and what the way forward should be. Recently at a special event in the UN General Assembly, he said that UN member States renewed their commitment to meet the MDG targets and affirmed that the post-2015 agenda should reinforce the commitment to poverty eradication and sustainable development. Member states have agreed to hold a high-level summit in September 2015 to adopt a new set of goals. An open working group of member states appointed by the General Assembly is still in the phase of gathering information and building consensus. So far some common ground has emerged pointing to a single post-2015 UN agenda which will put poverty eradication at the centre of SDGs by focusing on human development and dignity for all living together in harmony on a healthy planet. In this context, water and sanitation has emerged as a key priority to the extent that the draft interim report of the open working group highlights its broad support for a dedicated water goal.

A range of other processes have been put in place, including consultations and analytical work to inform the negotiations on the post-2015 and SDG agenda. Significant effort has been made to emphasise the centrality of water and sanitation and the need to have them at the core

of the global development actions. The subject has therefore received considerable attention in all the deliberations. In particular, the report of the high-level panel on the post 2015 agenda suggested that achieving universal access to water and sanitation coverage should be a goal in the future development framework.

“It is not yet clear how water will be reflected in the next generation of goals,” concluded the UN-Water Chair. “But there is a general convergence of views that the post-2015 development agenda should not only address water supply and sanitation but also include water resources and wastewater management and address water pollution,” he said. He also made reference to the UN-Secretary General’s statement that any water effort should be inspired by the values of equity, solidarity and human rights.

A POTENTIAL WATER SDG

At the Rio+20 Conference in 2012, member states not only reaffirmed their commitment to the MDGs but officially decided to launch an inter-governmental process to develop a set of sustainable development goals as an integral part of the post 2015 agenda.

Anthony Cox, Head of the Climate, Biodiversity and Water Division in the OECD Environment Directorate and also Chair of UN-Water Working group on SDGs, made a presentation titled ‘Emerging advice on a potential SDG on water’.

The presentation conveyed that water is at the core of sustainable development and is critical for socio-economic development, healthy ecosystems and for human survival itself. It is vital for reducing the global burden of disease and for improving the productivity of populations. Water is also at the heart of climate change adaptation and serves as the vital link between the climate system, human society and the environment. Without proper water governance, there is likely to be an increased competition for water between sectors and an escalation of water crises of various kinds.

“We need to manage the whole water cycle in a holistic and sustainable way,” said Mr. Cox. He shared that the process of constructing a SDG, which involved consultations at thematic, national and regional levels. It also involved drawing on reports of the High Level Panel, Sustainable Development Solutions Network, UN Global Compact and Open Working Group on SDGs. There is much technical and political work to be done.

“The good news is that we are not starting from square one,” said Mr. Cox while explaining that the monitoring of progress on the MDG target of water had given a platform to launch from. Finishing the unfinished work of the MDGs was already a starting point for the SDG. The discussions around the human right to water needed to be added to this. The question which remained was how to weave in the whole water cycle.

A graph was shown to demonstrate that an enabling environment with policies, plans and laws had a strong correlation with actions on water resources management. Most countries that had a strong enabling environment showed positive actions in managing their water resources.

Three priority areas have emerged while formulating the post-2015 goals and all three are linked inextricably with water. The priorities are i) to have healthy people, which can be linked to universal access to water, sanitation and hygiene ii) to enable shared prosperity, which can be linked to sustainable use and development of water resources and iii) to have healthy ecosystems, which can be linked to improving water quality and wastewater management.

The proposed overarching goal has been tentatively framed as “Securing Sustainable Water For All.” This could be supported by a coherent and inter-dependent set of targets. Some of the targets mentioned were:

- Achieving universal access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene (which could include sub-targets such as zero open-defecation)
- Sustainable use and development of water resources (which could include sub-targets such as maintaining a threshold level of environmental flows)
- Improved water quality and wastewater management (which could include sub-targets such as reducing nutrient pollution from agriculture by x%)

“It is for politicians to determine the level of ambition with the goals,” said Mr. Cox. Adding that it is a political process, he informed that the more recent discussion had been around how to incorporate disasters into the framework.

Convincing political establishments to include sustainability in their plans is only possible if the economic benefits of such plans are also highlighted. In this connection some of the cited arguments were:

- For every dollar spent on universal access to sanitation, the economic benefits could range from one to five dollars.
- For every dollar spent on universal access to clean water, the economic benefit could range from one to two dollars.
- For every 1% reduction in drought area, there could be a 2.8% increase in economic growth.
- For every 1% increase in the area affected by floods, there could be a 1.8% reduction in economic growth.
- For every 1% investment in irrigation infrastructure in Africa, there were economic returns of 26%.

THE OPERATORS OUTLOOK ON A POST-2015 WORLD

Rose Kaggwa from the National Water and Sewerage Corporation of Uganda (NWSC) said that it was important to have an integrated approach to water management when it came to providing facilities for the urban poor. She pointed out that simply providing water for the poor and not providing for sewage or waste management would only amplify the existing problems. Again the organisations that were in charge of extracting water did not care much for protecting the sources from where they extracted. She also said that the sustainability goals would be hard to implement without any support from the laws of the land. Water still had a low priority as compared to matters such as defence and therefore the budgets for water were much lower. Utilities have to work with such limited finances that it impedes their performance. “As operators we need to convince politicians about the need for funding of the water sector,” she said.

Cristina Schembri, Division Manager of COPASA, Brazil’s second largest water utility said it was good to have ambitious sustainable development goals “because it will push us to work harder.” She also said that the goals should take into account the diversity with respect to availability of water resources in a country. In the southeast of Brazil for instance, where water was plentiful, it was much easier to achieve the goal of universal access to water. But in the northeast, where there was lesser access to finance and ability to pay for services, the goal would be harder to reach. There is no incentive for people to save water in the Amazon basin. On the other hand, in the northeast, which was more arid, there was a basic understanding among the people to save water. “We need different approaches for different parts of the country,” said Ms. Schembri.

DISCUSSION

- SDGs and its targets are aspirational, aimed at bringing people together on common ground. The challenge is to make them operational.
- SDGs and its targets are supposed to be applicable to all in contrast to MDGs meant for developing countries. How do you develop goals and targets that are applicable to all and yet take into account the national, regional and local circumstances?
- Should SDG have a dashboard approach, that allow countries pick and choose the indicators? These are technical issues that will be discussed over next few years.
- Regardless of all the issues such as capacity building, finance and integrated management, SDGs can help just like MDGs in getting governments to make policies around access to water and basic sanitation, and in driving money into the sector.

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- An SDG on water is not finalised, lobbying efforts need to be intensified as the political negotiations start in 2014.
- MDGs were simple, inspirational and measurable. SDGs should learn from the experience.
- Proposed overarching SDG “Securing sustainable water for all” must be applicable to all countries, measurable by water operators, not imply standard solutions
- The role of operators in the SDG era will be greater and their capacity development will need to be given much higher priority
- Very little data on water quality and wastewater treatment
- Data collection capacities and related funding should be increased, particularly in water and wastewater management.



Region 1: WOPs in Asia and the Pacific

With 60% of the world's population, it is hardly surprising that the water stresses in the Asian region have no parallel. Despite being one of the less urbanised continents, the share of the Asian population living in urban areas has grown from 32% in 1990 to 42% in 2010, according to the United Nations Population Division. By 2026, the UN forecasts that half the Asians will be city dwellers.

"Whether you call it base of pyramid, bottom billion or urban poor, they are all in Asia, not Africa, as some people think," said Naomi Chakwin, Representative, European Representative Office at Asian Development Bank in her opening message at the Asia-Pacific session of the Congress.

The effective management of water services has become an urgent necessity. It is in this context that USAID through WaterLinks and the Asian Development Bank have facilitated over 60 WOPs in Asia since 2008. WOPs have focussed on improving efficiencies in many of the key operational areas of utilities such as NRW reduction, septage/wastewater management, water quality management and climate change adaptation. The WOPs have been designed to secure measurable efficiency gains which can be scaled up. Water operators from developed countries, supported by their development agencies have also implemented WOPs in this region.

Arjun Thapan, Chairman of WaterLinks, chaired the session which showcased a variety of WOPs experiences and examined their principal gains, pitfalls and opportunities for an expanded programme in the future.

WOPs HELP THAILAND'S PWA TO LEARN AND TEACH

3.58 million connections and 74 provinces to cater to, Thailand's Provincial Waterworks Authority has an immense need to continuously improve its efficiency of operations. Kuakool Rattanasuwan, Deputy Director of the organisation presented three WOP case studies at the session.

In its WOP with Malaysia's Ranhill Water Utilities from 2007 to 2009, PWA was the mentee utility and cooperated on managing NRW and improving water quality management as well as water safety plans. The WOP aimed at:

- Raising awareness on NRW for technical and senior managers
- Introducing water balance and audit (using IWA method) in a pilot waterworks
- Sharing of practical approaches to district metering area (DMA) set-up, leakage detection and customer management

It featured a number of classroom sessions and hands-on training workshops. The WOP resulted in increased capacity for senior managers on NRW management. A water balance software was translated into Thai and applied. A handbook on NRW management was prepared and 300 copies were circulated to PWA managers. Guidelines were made for future activities.

In the area of water quality management, the WOP carried out from 2008 to 2009 focussed on water treatment optimisation and chlorine stabilisation through field training. As a result,

turbidity and manganese levels were controlled with increased aeration, improved chemical mixing and filtration processes. Chlorine residuals were stabilised due to better treatment processes and increased pipe flushing.

Ms. Rattansuwan also described a water safety plan that was developed for the Nakornnayok area. Standard Operating Procedures were prepared to control and evaluate each step of treatment and distribution. A WSP framework was subsequently adopted in all waterworks.

Meanwhile, PWA benefitted from another WOP on water quality management in its Khon Kaen with Korea's K-water, a public corporation in Korea responsible for developing water resources and its management. It plays a key role as a wholesaler and is responsible for providing 45% of the country's total supply. K-water provided its expertise while PWA financed project construction and equipment. USAID via WaterLinks provided financial assistance to support international travel and training events.

The impact of the WOP has been to enable Khonkaen waterworks to manage high turbidity levels and maintain adequate chlorine levels. K-water seconded its staff for one year at PWA locations and PWA continues to send trainees to K-water.

From a mentee, PWA transformed into a mentor and partnered with Lao PDR to improve water supply operations from 2012 to 2013. The exercise was supported by ADB and involved technical assistance to the department of Housing and Urban Planning at Lao PDR. In Phase 1, three towns and Phase 2, five towns were covered. Training was imparted by PWA to build water treatment systems, water distribution systems and manage NRW.

WHEN THE PHILIPPINES LEARNED FROM KOREA

San Jose Water is also a government-owned and run corporation in the Philippines. It provides safe and potable water to all the 59 barangays (smallest political unit) in the City of San Jose Del

Monte in Bulacan Province. With over 82,000 household connections, the utility supplies water to 60% of the city's population. Loreto G Limcolioc, General Manager of the utility presented his experiences to the audience at the Asia-Pacific session.

From March 2011 to September 2012, K-Water and San Jose Water executed a WOP which focussed on improving water quality in San Jose through a better system for turbidity and manganese removal and more efficient maintenance of residual chlorine. K-Water's staff visited the Bulacan utility four times, while the latter visited the former twice. A great deal of remote consultation took place. Essentially K-Water provided technical assistance, carried out capacity building exercises and connected San Jose Water with technology suppliers and vendors.

The WOP resulted in cost savings in operation and maintenance and more reliable service was delivered to consumers. San Jose Water invested US\$75,000 for staff training and improvement projects.

Mr. Limcolioc strongly advocated for recipient operators to become mentor operators for other districts. He called for better dissemination of WOP success stories to start a trend among other utilities. "Puerto Princesa Water District in Palawan is now twinning with K-Water on similar issues after attending a seminar-workshop organized by San Jose Water in 2012," he informed the audience.

IWK'S LEADERSHIP JOURNEY FROM SINGLE TO MULTIPLE WOPS

Malaysia's national sewerage company, IWK, which has overseen development from primary on-site systems to large-scale centralised facilities, is uniquely positioned to benefit others in Asia. Lim Pek Boon gave an overview of IWK's WOP experience at the Global WOPs Congress.

Regional NGOs such as Waterlinks and international funding agencies such as the Asian Development Bank played a key role in WOPs

between IWK and other utilities in the region by giving much-needed support and funding for the partnership to be implemented successfully. IWK has been a “mentor operator” in more than ten WOPs through which it has directly benefitted operators in Vietnam, Indonesia, Philippines and India. Over 90 technical staff have benefitted from sharing technical know-how, from sewerage management to the O&M of sewerage facilities and septage management.

IWK also progressed from a single WOPs framework meaning one mentor matched with one recipient to a ‘Multiple WOPs’ model whereby IWK mentors more than one recipient at a given time. The intent is to facilitate a wider impact of mentorship and benefit more partner utilities.

A WOP with Perusahaan Daerah Air Minuman (PDAM) Tirtanadi in Medan, Indonesia was cited as an example of a successful transfer of know-how, resulting in an increase in connections and improved services in Medan. Both PDAM Tirtanadi and IWK were recognised with the Waterlinks Award 2010 for the successful outcome and the WOP was featured among GWOPA’s WOP Case Studies.

One of the key factors cited for its success in achieving the targeted increase in connections was the involvement of all stakeholders in Medan in the WOP. PDAM Tirtanadi persuaded representatives from the local government to form a technical committee to attend all training sessions with IWK. This created a platform for buy-in and government support for the increase of sewerage connections in PDAM Tirtanadi’s service areas. Another factor was the “seeing is believing” concept, wherein Medan’s team visited IWK’s facilities and saw for themselves the impact of efficient sewerage systems serving local communities. The good rapport between IWK and PDAM Tirtanadi also played a key role for successful partnership.

WOPs between IWK and utilities in the Philippines were also presented. In 2010, IWK partnered with Maynilad Water Services under a single WOP model facilitated by

Waterlinks to improve sewerage collection and treatment systems in Metro Manila. They conducted workshops and hands-on training to enhance Maynilad’s capability in the design of collection networks and treatment facilities with small footprint to overcome land constraints in Metro Manila. IWK also shared best practices on sewerage project development and implementation. As a result, Maynilad was able to implement sewerage projects to serve 50,000 residents successfully. Maynilad’s increased commitment helped it to develop another ten treatment facilities within the following year.

Building on the good relationship with Maynilad, IWK, along with WaterLinks, developed a Multiple WOP model to benefit more utilities in the Philippines. Maynilad and the Philippines Water Association (PWA) played a supporting role as local counterparts to facilitate the multiple WOP. The key area for capacity-building was to improve septage management for five local operators at Baliwag, Caranatuan, Cebu, Calamba and Laguna water districts. This set-up provided opportunities for bigger scale of knowledge sharing and replication of best practices across the water districts in the Philippines. The key success in septage management included improved access to services for at least 45,000 people; strengthened capacities of the water districts; and adoption of new practices introduced through the WOP by the water districts.

The benefits to the mentor utility were also highlighted by Ms. Lim. These include heightening IWK’s profile in the region. Today, IWK has a strong network amongst the partner utilities and is well known amongst many sewerage operators in South and Southeast Asia as well as the Middle East countries. Mentoring has enhanced IWK staff confidence, widened its field of expectations and instilled an interest in sharing knowledge with other countries. It has also contributed to IWK’s corporate social responsibility, and set the stage for replicating its support to other operators.

Region 2: WOPs in Latin America and the Caribbean

The regional session on Latin America and the Caribbean addressed the achievements and challenges of the WOPs in the region. Case studies based on projects executed during the period 2008 to 2013 were presented.

FIRST WOP WITH A US UTILITY

In a first for a US utility, Contra Costa Water District in Concord, California entered into a WOP with Belize Water Services in Central America in 2011. The Inter-American Development Bank and GWOPA/UN-HABITAT partially funded the direct costs (travel, lodging). Belize self-funded 12 additional participants while the indirect costs (staff time, training materials, facilities tour, social activities) were covered by the Contra Costa operator.

BWS identified areas in which it sought capacity building such as technical services/engineering, information technology, customer service, meter-reading, emergency operations and finance and with the help of the WOP, has succeeded in making a number of important achievements.

- Setting up a safety committee based on Contra Costa's model
- Implementing backflow prevention and flushing programmes
- Developing an Emergency Operations Center
- Improving financial planning for projects and operations

- Reducing communications redundancy
- Using new skills to further reduce NRW

The Belizean operator was highly appreciative of the opportunity to receive support through the WOP and gave very positive feedback. Certain of Contra Costa's practices were not applicable in Belize, due to different regulatory or cultural conditions, so training in these areas will be modified or curtailed. Contra Costa employees were nevertheless surprised at how similar the two utilities were, despite working in different physical and regulatory environments. They also expressed a boost in morale and felt "good to help others."

In a second phase being supported by GWOPA, the areas that have been selected for cooperation are:

- Improving worker safety
- Improving use of SCADA (a communications) system
- Improving computer server
- Operator certification and training
- Water meter calibration
- Backflow prevention and water quality monitoring
- Human Resources and Public Relations

A CASE-STUDY FROM SURINAME

Suriname is blessed with an abundance of water resources. However, in recent years, floods and shortages have become fairly common. Integrated water management has become essential in order to ensure that the available water can be used sustainably.

In 2008, the Rijn & IJssel water authority and World Waternet from the Netherlands joined forces to form a WOP with MCP Water Board in Nickerie, Suriname. They worked together on a registration system for charting the water infrastructure of Nickerie. It consists of a database and maps of locations and dimensions of the infrastructure, its ownership and other related aspects. Apart from this, the WOP has resulted in a new organisational structure, a maintenance plan, communication plan, water schedule and guide for elections of the board.

The WOP is being continued with a project titled "Capacity Building for Integrated Water Management in Nickerie, Suriname", and is funded by the European Union for the period 2012–2016.

The case study was presented by Manodj Hindori, Chairman of the Water Board in Nickerie and Gerard Rundberg, Director of World Waternet. The presenters observed that 'hardware' is important, but capacity building is key for sustainability. They also stressed that the involvement of the local community is important.

DISCUSSIONS

- WOP-LAC under ALOAS administration committed to deliver an ambitious but realistic working plan
- Achievements and challenges of five former and ongoing regional WOPs
- Importance of supporting WOPs traditional subjects but also engaging in actual themes
- Convenience of long-term planning and continuity
- Information is crucial and should be departure point



Region 3: WOPs in Africa

Africa is urbanising fast, and demand for water in African cities is growing. Over the next 20 years, Africa's urban population is expected to double, and demand for water will more than triple. Between 2000 and 2010, 83 million urban Africans gained access to improved water and 42 million gained access to improved sanitation. But urban population increases moderated these successes, leaving the share of the population with access to improved water and sanitation unchanged at 83% and 43% respectively.

WOPs have the potential to greatly help African utilities to learn from one another and from international utilities. At the session on WOPs in Africa, chaired by Hamanth Kasan, General Manager, Scientific Services at Rand Water South Africa, an update was given on some WOPs in the region. Selected case studies were presented and nine African WOPs funded by OPEC Fund for International Development were launched and their partnership agreements signed.

THE DUNEA-MWANZA WOP

Tanzania has very poor service levels for water supply and sanitation. The water sector is dependent on donor funds and many utilities are not even able to cover their operating costs due to low tariffs and poor efficiency. Mwanza, on the shores of Lake Victoria has 70% of its 700,000 population living in informal settlements. The Mwanza Urban Water and Sewerage Authority (MWAUWASA), with its 276 staff is responsible for water supply and wastewater services. About 50% of the town is covered by water services and 15% by wastewater services. NRW stands at 40%.

Dunea Water Utility in the Netherlands supplies drinking water to 1.2 million people. It has over 500 employees and provides support to the global water sector by sharing its expertise through partnerships with service providers.

The Dunea-Mwanza WOP is being funded by the European Commission (EU Water Facility – Partnerships for Capacity Development in the ACP Water and Sanitation Sector) to the extent of €1.377 million.

Before its partnership in Tanzania, Dunea had prior WOP experience in Indonesia and Sudan. Like other Dutch water operators, Dunea is empowered to spend up to 1% of its turnover on overseas development cooperation.

The case study was presented by Leo Nijland, Dunea's International Cooperation Programme Manager, who said the WOP had informal beginnings from his personal contacts with Mwanza where he lived and worked some years ago.

The stated aim of the WOP was affordable and sustainable (financially and technically sound) water and wastewater services for the Mwanza urban area and improved water governance, thereby supporting the Tanzanian National Water Policy and the MDGs.

A result expected from the WOP is to reduce NRW from 50 to 25%. Some of the other expected outcomes apart from reducing NRW are improving revenue collection, improving staff performance by providing knowledge and skills, making manuals and guidelines available for O&M, raising employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction.

To achieve the outcomes, there have been exchange visits, training and demonstration, provision of materials and services including water meters, workshop equipment and billing software.

Dunea assessed that a well-equipped meter repair workshop would greatly help to reduce NRW, by as much as 20%. Dunea estimated that slow-

running meters were costing MWAUWASA about €470,000 per annum in lost revenues. There were no suitable existing premises for meter repair so a decision was made in November 2012 to build a low-cost workshop. The building was completed in March 2013. During April 2013 while the workshop was being equipped with meter test-bed, the MWAUWASA staff was being trained by Dunea. The workshop is now fully operational and the replacement programme has started.

In June 2013, the European Commission review team said the WOP is in its first steps and it is too early to assess its effectiveness. However, it cannot be denied that the early outcomes are positive.

PARTNERSHIP FOR SMALL CITIES OF MOZAMBIQUE

If one looks at the water balance of Mozambique, the country has a substantial water surplus. Water is one of Mozambique's natural assets. However, it is one of the world's poorest countries with GDP figures near the bottom of global rankings and fighting poverty is at the heart of government policies. The international community is providing much support, which makes Mozambique one of the most aid-dependent countries in the world.

AIAS (Administration of Water and Sanitation Infrastructures) has the mandate to supply water and sanitation services to 149 towns with about 3.1 million people. About 96% of the population lacks access to safe water and 89% lacks access to safe sanitation. According to Marco Schouten, Regional Director at Vitens Evides International who presented the AIAS-Dutch operators WOP case study, AIAS is a young institution with a huge mandate.

The deficiency in water and sanitation systems in small cities and villages in Mozambique paved the way for the creation of an institutional capacity building project for AIAS and the operators. In September 2013, an agreement between the Dutch Embassy and AIAS was formalised. About 15 towns have been selected for capacity building under the agreement.

The project has been envisaged for four years and the funding entails an external component of €7.6 million. The amount of €7 million is being provided by the Dutch Government and €1.3 million by the Dutch consortium of Vitens, Waternet, SNV and BoP with the Mozambican Government contributing 10% of the funds.

The expected outcome of the cooperation is to professionalise AIAS, implement financially sustainable processes and make AIAS a stronger organisation with proven value propositions to investors.

According to Mr. Schouten, patience is a virtue that is extensively needed in a WOP. It is time consuming and cannot be rushed, however, in the end "it is worth it."

AN ALL-AFRICAN WOP BETWEEN BAUCHI AND SWAZILAND

Swaziland Water Services Corporation (SWSC), is a government-owned public enterprise in southern Africa, which was corporatised in 1994. Bauchi State Water Board (BSWB) is a state-owned utility in northern Nigeria that essentially operates as a department of the Ministry of Water Resources.

Despite considerable effort by the state government to improve services in both rural and urban areas, access to water and sanitation in Bauchi is as low as 36% and 22% respectively.

At the WOPs Congress, Peter Bhembe, Managing Director of Swaziland Water Services Corporation made a presentation on his organisation's mentorship of BWSB.

USAID, the Bauchi State Government in Nigeria, and the World Bank are funding the BSWB in becoming more efficient, accountable and effective in providing services to urban residents. In fact, USAID is supporting improved access to water and sanitation in nine countries in sub-Saharan Africa through the six-year Sustainable Water and Sanitation in Africa (SUWASA) project.

SUWASA promotes commercial viability as fundamental to the sustainability and expansion of services. The World Bank's prior experience in the urban water sector in Nigeria taught stakeholders that unless there was a demonstrated commitment to top and bottom driven reform, investments would not have the desired impact or be sustainable. A draft bill was written to establish a new corporate structure for BSWB with a governing board and greater regulatory oversight, including a performance contract with transparent performance indicators. Through joint missions with the World Bank, USAID developed an investment plan to meet the total demand by 2017.

To underpin the reform, a tailored WOP was developed with Swaziland's SWSC under the auspices of GWOPA. SWSC has been providing hands-on training and mentoring support that will address critical capacity gaps such as non-revenue water management and operational efficiency.

Mr. Bhembe said that five priority areas have been identified for the WOP:

- Customer relations
- NRW management
- Billing and collection
- Maintenance
- Asset management

BSWB undertook a massive customer enumeration exercise. More than 20,000 consumers were identified and added to a customer database and more than 30,000 illegal connections were eliminated.

One of the benefits of the WOP has been that the World Bank has identified Bauchi State as one of three states in Nigeria to benefit from the US \$350 million Third National Urban Water Sector Reform Project.

According to Mr. Bhembe, involvement of high-level officials in the WOP is extremely important, and without it, there cannot be much progress.

NINE NEW SOUTH-SOUTH WOPs LAUNCHED IN AFRICA

A signing ceremony was held to launch the start of 9 new WOPs being facilitated by GWOPA with the financial support of the OPEC Fund for International Development. The new WOPs, which will take place over the next year, are envisaged as preparatory WOPs that will result in fundable performance improvement plans that, backed with finance, could then be implemented over a longer period. It is anticipated that if a good relationship is established between the utilities during the first WOP, it could be extended to support the implementation of the improvement plan.

DISCUSSION

- Provision of a structured performance improvement plan (manual near completion)
- More autonomy for utilities
- Receptiveness of mentee utilities

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- WOPs are certainly helping in raising capacity in Africa
- Past WOPs are a rich source of lessons for other WOPs
- There has to be improved communication between mentors and mentees, and better feedback to WOP-Africa
- The importance of patience and staying the course cannot be over-stated when it comes to WOPs
- Personal commitment of top management and political leaders is extremely important
- Structured performance improvement plans can be useful in all WOPs

Networking, Social Activities and WaterCube

The Global WOPs Congress was a unique occasion for practitioners and supporters from around the world to come together. While the formal proceedings took place in conference rooms, ample opportunities were provided for informal interaction.

The **Networking Fair** was a semi-structured session designed to give participants the opportunity to talk and engage on subjects of common interest. During a two-hour window, participants were free to roam and stop at any of the well-marked stations in the room. Each station hosted different dialogues or activities of potential interest to the participants. Facilitators were present to lead the activities and animate the discussion. Participants were also free to use the session to meet with old partners or forge new connections.

Map your WOP was an exercise where participants were encouraged to draw the lines linking the partners involved in their WOPs on a large wall map of the world, alongside their photos.

It has often been noted that despite the many conferences on water held around the world, their main messages have not been reaching the general public. Akvo, a Dutch organization (that means water in Esperanto) decided to change this with their unique **WaterCube** project. WaterCube captures the people and issues behind international development efforts to improve water and sanitation around the world. First established in Stockholm in 2009, it has gathered hundreds of video interviews with people working around the world. It was founded by Akvo, Stockholm International Water Institute and IRC.

At the WOPs Congress, delegates were encouraged to speak about their WOPs activities in short videos. While Akvo's Mr. Mark Charmer

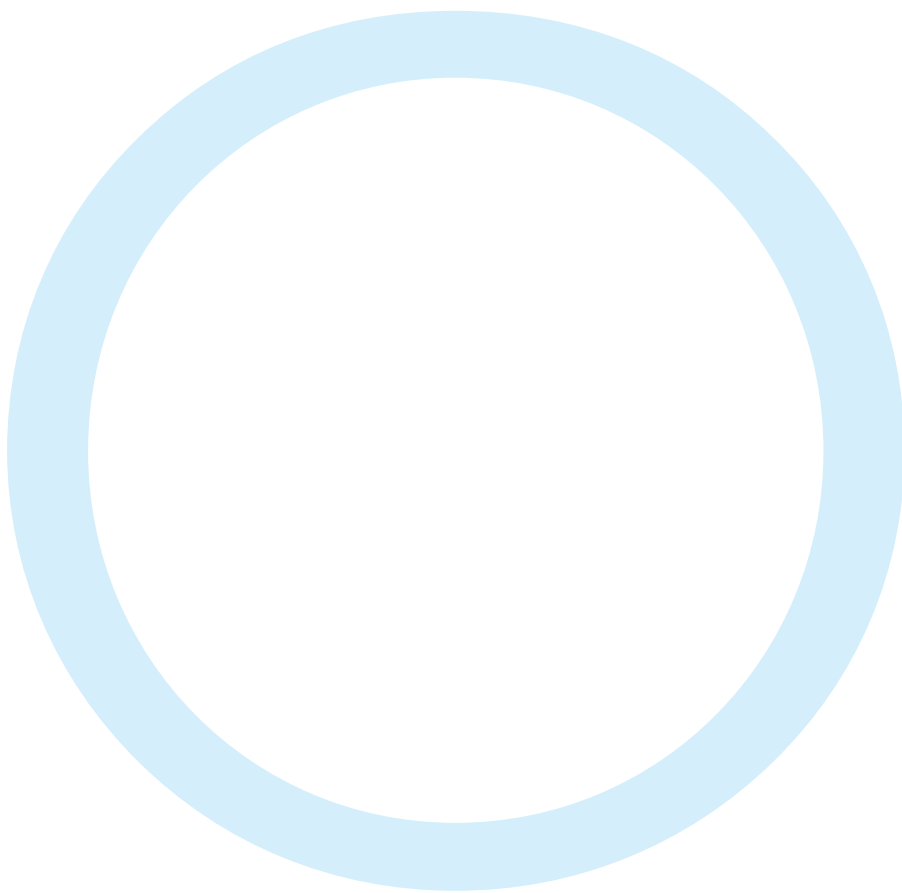
and Mr. Luuk Diphorn conducted most of the interviews, the delegates were also encouraged to carry out interviews of each other. These were uploaded immediately on youtube for viewing and sharing worldwide at www.youtube.com/user/watercubetv; a repository of informal views on WOPs challenges, opportunities and activities for posterity.

The **City Hall Cocktail** was held on Tuesday the November 26, 2013 to welcome congress delegates to the heart of the old city. Hosted by the City of Barcelona, it provided an opportunity for visitors to enter the City Hall also known as Casa de la Ciutat, through the neoclassical façade which concealed Gothic gems such as the historic Great Hall designed by Pere Llobet and built in the 14th century.

Delegates were also taken by the City of Barcelona to the little visited **Stormwater Reservoir at Joan Miró Parc** with a capacity of 50,000 cubic metres. There was a presentation on the advanced management (SMART) system of sewerage of Barcelona after which the delegates got a chance to see the facilities which were mostly automatic and remotely controlled.

The next stop was the **Magic Fountain** at the base of the Montjuïc which is one of the icons of the City of Barcelona. A visit to the underground infrastructure of the fountain enabled delegates to see the hydraulic and lighting facilities that created the fountain's 'magic'. The remote control room was shown to explain the computer system that controls the fountain. Delegates saw the choreography programme, the 3D graphic simulator and editor which contributed to the grand dance of the water in the fountains.





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