

Guidelines for Improved Local Water Governance

Draft for circulation and comment
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DRAFT

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Acronyms

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| AM – adaptive management |
| BN - Bayesian Network |
| CBO – Community Based Organisation |
| EMPOWERS – Euro-Med Participatory Water Resource Scenarios |
| EU – European Union |
| GPS – Global Positioning System |
| IWRM – Integrated Water Resource Management |
| M&E- Monitoring and Evaluation |
| NGO – Non Governmental Organisation |
| PC – planning cycle |
| PRA – Participatory Rural/Rapid Appraisal |
| PTD – Participatory Technology Development |
| QIS – Qualitative Information Systems |
| RAAKS – Rapid Appraisal of Agricultural Knowledge Systems |
| RIDA – Resource, Infrastructure, Demand and Access |
| SDCA – Stakeholder Dialogue and Concerted Action |
| SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound |
| SWOT – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats |
| TOR – Terms of Reference |
| WRA – Water Resource Assessment |

Glossary

Access

Access refers to the rights or entitlements of an individual or a group to obtain or make use of water resources or the services that provide water for different uses.

Accountability

Accountability is often used synonymously with such concepts as answerability, responsibility, blameworthiness, liability and other terms associated with the expectation of account-giving. In representative democracies accountability is an important factor in securing good governance and, thus, the legitimacy of public power. *Accountability* differs from *transparency* in that it only enables negative feedback *after* a decision or action, while *transparency* also enables negative feedback *before* or *during* a decision or action. In principle, *accountability* constrains the extent to which elected representatives and other office-holders can willfully deviate from their theoretical responsibilities, thus reducing corruption.

Adaptive management

Adaptive management is a type of management in which actions, strategies and plans are continually adjusted in the light of new information.

Aquifer

A geological formation that has sufficient water-transmitting capacity to yield a useful water supply in wells and springs. Aquifers have two fundamental characteristics: a capacity for groundwater storage and an ability to support groundwater flow

Awareness raising

Awareness raising is the process by which individuals or organisations have their knowledge increased especially in matters that are of particular relevance. *Awareness raising* is often an important component of targeted programmes of capacity development.

Bayesian Networks

Bayesian Networks (also known as Belief Networks) provide a relatively simple method of representing and analysing relationships between variables. More information on the method can be found at: www.norsys.com. Bayesian Networks are based on the Bayesian theorem which suggests that the degree to which one believes that a proposition is true depends on the *a priori* belief which one has in the truth of the proposition and in the evidence collected to investigate the proposition.

Capacity development

Capacity development is a process by which individuals or institutions develop and/or improve their knowledge, skills, competencies and abilities in areas that are important to them. *Capacity development* can also include activities aimed at creating a favourable enabling environment. *Capacity development* is invariably a long-term continuing process that requires both planning and support.

Civil Society

Civil society refers to the un-coerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. In theory, its institutional forms are distinct from those of the state, family and market, though in practice, the boundaries between state, civil society, family and market are often complex, blurred and negotiated.

Civil works

Civil works refers to the infrastructure that is created or constructed for the benefit or use of the general public (e.g. water supply systems).

Concerted action

Concerted action is an action or activity that has been planned, adjusted and agreed upon through stakeholder dialogue. This action or activity is then carried out by stakeholders or under the supervision of stakeholders with the aim of achieving a common vision.

Demand management:

The use of price, quantitative restrictions, and other devices to manage demand for water

Demand

In economic terms, demand is an expression of willingness to pay for goods or services. Non-economists often understand it as being the same as needs or requirements. In the EMPOWERS context it is used somewhere between these two extremes – an expression of need but based on an understanding and acceptance of the costs (monetary and other) that a given level of service entails.

Demographics

Demographics are the physical characteristics of a population such as age, sex, marital status, family size, education, geographic location and occupation. Therefore *demographic analysis* can involve analysing the trends of these characteristics.

Effectiveness

Extent to which actual performance compares with targeted performance

Efficiency

The ratio of the effective or useful output to the total input in any system. Often expressed as a percentage, efficiency is usually defined so that it can be measurable (e.g. irrigation efficiency).

Enabling environment

An *enabling environment* comprises the international, national, district and local policies and legislation that constitutes the “rules of the game” and enables (or otherwise) stakeholders to be participate in water management.

Equity

The degree to which different individuals or groups within a community or society at large benefit from a good or service. For projects and programmes, taking an equity-based approach typically means paying special attention to the specific needs of the most marginalised members of society who may otherwise be excluded from benefits. In the context of EMPOWERS *equity* relates to fairness in terms of access to water for domestic and productive uses and, as such, it does not mean equal access. Determining fair and/or reasonable access to water is a highly political process.

Externality

The unintended real (generally non-monetary) side effect of one party’s actions on another party, often ignored in financial assessments and in decision making by the party causing the effects.

Facilitation/facilitator

A *facilitator* is someone who skilfully helps a group of people understand their common objectives and plan to achieve them without personally taking any side of the argument. The facilitator will try to assist the group in achieving a consensus on any disagreements that pre-exist or emerge in the meeting so that it has a strong basis for future action.

Gender

Gender relates to the different roles played by men and women, boys and girls. A gender based approach means dealing explicitly with these differences. It also often implies an element of empowerment of women. Gender is often bundled with *equity* (see above) with which it is closely related.

Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming ensures that gender inequities are considered in decision-making processes.

Geographical Information System (GIS)

A computer system for storage, analysis and retrieval of information, in which all the data are spatially referenced by geographic coordinates. GIS tends to store similar data in 'layers' – for instance information on wells in one layer, roads in another, and economic activities in another. Different layers can be coded and superimposed on one another to create visual displays (maps) and analysed in different ways. Many GIS also contain modelling elements – for instance hydrological models that generate stream flows for a rivers layer from layers containing information on soils, topography, and rainfall.

Governance

Water governance relates to the range of political, social, economic and administrative systems that are in place to develop and manage water resources and the delivery of water services at different levels of society. EMPOWERS focuses particularly on local and intermediate level water governance – that is governance at levels ranging from the community to district/governorate.

Global Positioning System (GPS)

A system of 24 satellites which circle the earth twice a day in a very precise orbit and transmit information to earth. IF GPS handsets are able to receive signals from three or more satellites, they are able to calculate the latitude and longitude of their current location.

Groundwater

Water that occurs underground and can be abstracted from boreholes or wells using pumps or buckets. Groundwater exists in the spaces between soil (pores) and rocks, in cracks and fissures. Unlike soil moisture it is not bound to the soil/rock and is free to flow under the force of gravity – for instance into a well, but also into rivers, or where forced to the surface to a spring.

Indicator

A parameter or a value derived from parameters, which points to, provides information about, describes the state of a phenomenon/environment/area, with a significance extending beyond that directly associated with a parameter value.

Information

Data or knowledge that is captured and stored – typically in written form, but also as audio or video recordings, in diagrams and pictures etc. It is sometimes referred to as explicit knowledge. Information can be (relatively) easily transferred from one person to another through a wide variety of means..

Information management:

Process of gathering, storing and analysing information needed for a specific purpose, such as planning or making management decisions.

Infrastructure

In the context of EMPOWERS, infrastructure refers to the systems (hardware and software) that are needed to abstracting, treating and conveying water for different purposes and the institutions required to manage these activities.

Institutional level

Institutional level refers to the relative position or rank of stakeholder dialogue and/or decision-making on a scale that runs from the local level to the national and international levels. In the context of EMPOWERS and in administrative terms, local level is considered to be the level of towns, villages, hamlets and below. Whereas the intermediate level is considered to be the district and governorate level.

Integrated water resource management

Integrated water resource management is a process which promotes the co-ordinated development and management of water, land and related resources, in order to maximize the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems.

Management:

The decision-making process whereby a plan or a course of action is implemented. Planning forms part of this process as does the allocation of resources and the resolutions of conflicts of interest. Effective management is only possible if managers have access to reliable information

Marginalised

Marginalisation refers to the overt or covert trends within societies whereby those perceived as lacking desirable traits or deviating from the group norms tend to be excluded by wider society. *Marginalised* social groups tend to be poor and have limited access to water for both domestic and productive purposes. They also tend to be excluded from and/or are unable to influence decision-making processes that influence their access to safe water.

Mesqa

The third level of irrigation canal in Egypt. Primary and secondary are large, lined, and managed by the state. Mesqa's are field level, typically unlined, and managed by farmer groups

Modelling

Modelling refers to computer-based systems that use mathematical formulas to represent systems and processes. If the model is an acceptable representation of a given system or process, it can be used to answer hypothetical "what if" questions and/or to assess the sensitivity of a system or process to change.

Monitoring and Evaluation

While *monitoring and evaluation* often become blurred in practice, it is important to understand the distinction between them. *Monitoring* is the continuous assessment of project (or program) implementation in relation to agreed schedules and the use of inputs, infrastructure and services by beneficiaries. *Evaluation*, on the other hand, is the periodic assessment of a project's (or program) relevance, performance, efficiency, and impact (both expected and unexpected) relative to its stated objectives.

Ownership

Ownership is the state of either exclusive or shared possession or control over property, which may be an object, land, water, intellectual property or similar.

Participation,

Participation in water governance is an umbrella term including different means for the public to participate in decision-making processes. *Participatory processes* attempt to actively involve the stakeholders in stakeholder dialogues and decision-making processes to help ensure that the outcomes of decisions match their needs and aspirations.

PRA tools

A range of participatory tools designed to involve stakeholders in the collection and analysis of information.

Participatory Technology Development

Participatory Technology Development is research which involves all relevant parties in actively examining together current action (which they experience as problematic) in order to change and improve it

Partnership

Partnership in the context of EMPOWERS can be defined as arrangements between organisations in which there is an agreement to work co-operatively to achieve a public policy objective for which there is: 1) Shared authority and responsibility for achieving results; 2) Joint investment of resources (time, funding, expertise); 3) Shared risk-taking; and 4) Mutual benefit.

Plan

A plan is a coherent set of decisions about the use of resources, translated in activities that taken together have the potential to achieve a vision. A plan includes an explicit statement of the methods to be used, costs, responsibilities, schedule of activities and agreed targets. *Planning* is the process of creating and refining a plan, or integrating it with other plans

Policy

A *policy* is a plan of action to guide decisions and actions. The term may apply to government, private sector organizations and groups, and individuals. The policy process includes the identification of different alternatives, such as programs or spending priorities, and choosing among them on the basis of the impact they will have. Policies in short can be understood as political, management, financial, and administrative mechanisms arranged to reach explicit goals. *Policy alignment* is the process by which consistency is achieved across a number of policies that have the potential of interfering with each other.

Problem focussed

A *problem-focussed* approach to planning starts by analysis of problems and concludes by matching solutions to these problems. It is the opposite to a “one size fits all” approach to planning which works on the premise that solutions to problems are universally applicable.

Problem tree

The *problem tree* is a visual problem-analysis tool that can be used at many levels to promote stakeholder dialogue and to specify and investigate the causes and effects of a problem and to highlight the relationships between them.

Process documentation

In the context of EMPOWERS, process documentation focuses on monitoring and documenting the process by which water-related decisions are made.

Planning cycles

Planning cycles incorporate two important ideas. Firstly, it refers to the concept of a project or programme proceeding through various evolutionary stages from visioning to planning to implementation and evaluation, forming an identifiable and rational cycle of development. Secondly, it recognizes the need for management of such a cycle through all its various stages. Central to planning cycles is the idea of managing a process, rather than managing a one-off event

QIS

Qualitative Information System (QIS) is a flexible system to monitor, capture and compare qualitative information over time and space, to store and manage this information in computer databases, and to link assessment with action planning during stakeholder meetings

RAAKS

RAAKS is a participatory action research methodology that provides ways for those involved in complex situations to understand what is happening and to begin to find answers for themselves.

(see http://www.tropenmuseum.com/frameset.asp?/specials/html/rk_raaks.asp&fnr=1& for more information)

Resistance to change

Resistance to change is the action taken by individuals and groups when they perceive that a change that is occurring as a threat to them.

RIDA framework

The *Resources-Infrastructure-Demand/Access(RIDA) framework* is a tool for structuring the analysis of complex water delivery systems.

Rights based approaches

A rights based approach focuses on building people's awareness of their rights (such as a legally mandated right to a water supply of a given quantity and quality) and empowering them to effectively demand this right from those who's responsibility it is to provide it.

Risk

In the EMPOWERS context *risk* refers to the inherent uncertainty in whether or not a strategy and/or plan will achieve an agreed vision. In many cases, risks can be mitigated by carrying out a risk assessment and modifying strategies and/or plans.

Scale

In the EMPOWERS context, *scale* refers to the temporal and spatial boundaries within which decisions are made and/or are relevant. When mapping decision-making processes it is important to recognize that water management objectives and governance issues and challenges are usually scale dependent

Scenarios

A scenario is a consistent description of a possible future situation as determined by those factors that are both most important and most uncertain. Scenarios are stories about the way the world might turn out tomorrow. Developing a set of narrative scenarios helps identify possible pathways (strategies) towards a shared vision of the future, based on current trends and knowledge of sources of greatest uncertainty. Narrative scenarios can and should be a mix of qualitative and quantitative information.

Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews are conducted within a fairly open framework which allow for focused, conversational, two-way communication. They can be used to both give and receive information. Unlike the questionnaire framework, where detailed questions are formulated ahead of time, semi structured interviewing starts with more general questions or issues

Stakeholders

In the context of EMPOWERS, stakeholders are considered to be institutions and individuals that are concerned with or have an interest in water resources and that would be affected by decisions relating to water resource management. Stakeholders include people who may have little knowledge of such affects and lack the means to participate.

Stakeholder dialogue

In the context of EMPOWERS, *stakeholder dialogue* refers to mediated interactions and discussions between different stakeholders aimed at resolving competing interests and competing views on the nature and severity of water supply problems and, as a next step, reaching a consensus on how best to tackle these problems in a way that is efficient, equitable and sustainable.

Stakeholder platform

In the EMPOWERS context, a *stakeholder platform* provides a mediated forum for stakeholder dialogue, conflict resolution and integrated planning. In a practical sense, a stakeholder platform can take the form of a committee, a workshop, a village meeting or even a telephone call. The key aspect is that mediation using a range of tools and methods is leading to constructive dialogue amongst stakeholders.

Strategy

A strategy is a medium to long-term planning framework within which specific activities are described. Over time an effective strategy should lead to achievement of a specified vision.

Strategic planning

Strategic planning consists of the process of defining objectives and developing strategies to reach an agreed vision. By labelling a piece of planning "strategic" we expect it to operate on the grand scale and to take in "the big picture" (in contrast to "tactical" planning, which by definition has to focus more on the tactics of individual detailed activities).

Subsidiarity

The notion that decision-making should occur at the level at which the people most directly concerned can take responsibility.

Summary sheets

In the EMPOWERS context, *summary sheets* provide a concise summary of the outputs from dialogue between stakeholders at the same level and, where relevant, between different levels. In general, they are structured using a RIDA framework and they used to ensure that the outcomes of stakeholder dialogue are disseminate to all those who might be affected.

Sustainability

A development path along which the maximisation of human well-being for today's generations does not lead to declines in future well-being

SWOT

SWOT is an abbreviation for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. *SWOT* analysis is a simple tool that can be used to promote stakeholder dialogue and identify potential solutions to water-related problems.

Trade-off

In economic terms, a *trade-off* is what must be given up, and what is gained, when an economic decision is made. Although the terms *trade-off* and *externality* are often interchanged, the main difference is that a *trade-off* is an intended loss or negative impact whereas an *externality* is unintended.

Transparency

See *accountability*

Triangulation

Triangulation is a simple method of establishing the accuracy of information by comparing three or more types of independent points of view on information sources (e.g. interviews, observation, and documentation). Akin to corroboration and an essential methodological feature of water resource assessments

Uncertainty

A statistically defined discrepancy between a measured quantity and the true value of that quantity that cannot be corrected by calculation or calibration. Uncertainty is an inevitable part of the assertion of knowledge

Up-scaling

Up-scaling is the process by which relatively small-scale pilot studies are scale up to cover larger areas. Up-scaling often involves addressing many issues relating to sustainability, cost and institutional capacity.

Variability

In statistics, variability is a measure of statistical dispersion, indicating how its possible values are spread around the average or expected value. In many cases, higher levels of variability are linked to higher levels of uncertainty and risk.

Vision

A vision is a concise description of a desired future state. Visions provide a picture of how we would like the world (or our water resources and services) to be at some future time. Consensus on this vision is required before a strategy is developed.

Water balance

A water balance is the balance of inflow and outflow of water per unit area or unit volume and unit time taking into account net changes of storage

Water management

Planned development, distribution and use of water resources, in accordance with predetermined objectives and with respect to both quantity and quality of the water resources

Water resource assessments

Water assessments, under various different names (e.g. water accounting and water resource audit), are being promoted increasingly as a key component of programmes of *integrated water resource management*. The concept of water auditing is based on the argument that knowledge of the current status of water resources and trends in demand and use is a precondition for successful water management. In general, water audits involve collating, quality controlling and analysing secondary information from a wide range of different sources. The design of a water audit, in terms of complexity, duration and outputs should be determined of a needs assessment that involves all primary stakeholders.

Water service delivery

Water service delivery is a user or customer oriented activity. Water service delivery activities are carried out by organizations and are oriented towards meeting users or customer needs and expectations. In the context of EMPOWERS, water services encompass all potential water users (e.g. domestic, agricultural, industrial, commercial and municipal users, the environment)

Water users

In the context of EMPOWERS, water users encompass domestic, agricultural, industrial, commercial and municipal users and the environment.

Watershed

An area drained by a river system. Also referred to as a catchment area.