



Women walking long distances

Gujarat: Water important survival and campaigning issue for women in Bhal community

Since 1981 Utthan has intervened for gender empowerment, livelihood security and conflict transformation for dalits (untouchables), religious minorities, adivasis (ethnic and tribal groups) and poor in the Bhal region of Dhandhuka taluka, an area of the western state of Gujarat, India. Ashoke Chatterjee in his book *Rising Utthan: an Indian quest for dignity and hope set in Gujarat* describes Utthan's journey into Bhal, one of the most difficult environments in Gujarat - devastated by salinity, drought, barriers of caste and patriarchy as well as political neglect.

Utthan (<http://utthangujarat.org/>) is a non-profit organisation, working in four water stressed and resource poor districts in Gujarat for the past twenty years.

Four young women fresh out of college ventured into this area to try and understand what options the communities might have for development and hope. Experience soon revealed that the key survival issue was drinking water, and that the burden of survival fell primarily on women, suppressed by a particularly harsh patriarchal society. A major experience in institution building than began, with drinking water as the catalyst. Utthan's efforts commenced with identifying and working with local women with a potential for leadership and with stamina to face the physical, social and environmental barriers to change.



Fighting for water

Mr. Chatterjee focuses on the struggle of women and others to establish their rights over natural resources, primarily water, and their enormous achievements toward water security (including major technical breakthroughs with massive plastic-lined

ponds to conserve and store rainwater as well as rooftop rainwater harvesting system) despite their efforts having been written off more than once as "hopeless". A major part of this struggle has been to establish the right of women to take charge of at least some part of their lives and of local resources, often in the face of violent reaction from orthodox elements.

Keep water safe for consumption

Over the years, the struggle for water has transformed into campaigns for greater gender equity, family health, livelihoods and above all, for human rights. Sanitation emerged through strong awareness efforts to keep harvested water safe for consumption. Hygiene education has addressed the demand for dignity and privacy that women have expressed for years and that have remained unrecognised by the men in power and by official schemes that promote lowest-cost systems, rather than options that respond to needs and aspirations. An important example has been the inclusion of washing and bathing spaces as part of the sanitation package that women and families want and are willing to invest in.

As Utthan's work in water and sanitation accelerated, communities were mobilised around broader livelihood needs and around developing leadership among both women and men, and most particularly among communities left at the margins of local society.

Forestry, fisheries and fuel production have been some of these efforts that now include a major thrust in lobster farming among fishing communities who are severely deprived. Watershed challenges in Utthan's efforts have included the devastation of the 2001

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Lined pond

earthquake and the 2002 pogrom against Muslim minorities in Gujarat. Relief efforts in both natural and man-made disasters underlined the critical importance of water and sanitation services that were equitable and gender sensitive.

Uganda: Local dialogue helped improved WASH operations in three West Nile districts

A good governance and accountability project has served as a catalyst for decentralisation in three West Nile districts in Uganda, empowering grass root communities to demand water and sanitation services and actively participate in affairs that affect them. This is the main conclusion of an external evaluation by a local consultant on the EU funded Improved WASH Governance in West Nile through Local Dialogue project. The project was implemented between December 2008 and December 2010. Its main objective is to give support in the development of accountable and responsive WASH services in selected rural communities in Uganda. See for its achievements <http://www.irc.nl/page/61949>.

Consultant Hilda Nankunda also concluded that the project has led to effective implementation and achievements of WASH policies. Latrine coverage has greatly improved since constructing toilets is a requirement for the provision of boreholes to the community under the Kampala Declaration on Sanitation. Greater emphasis is also being placed on proper hygiene practices and the safe water chain.

The project has intersected with related policy initiatives with similar objectives of good governance in the districts, including the Leadership Code, Clients Charter, Anti-Corruption Bill, and the decentralisation of the office of the Inspector General of Government (IGG).

Through these years, Utthan has been a major force in the water and sanitation movement in India, south Asia and globally, and has linked its work to issues of peace, conflict resolution and equity. Nafisa Barot has emerged as a spokesperson not only for the sector but for the human rights movement in this part of the world. For her and for the Utthan team, water and sanitation has been a gateway for a larger understanding of human rights, peace and the environment as foundations for genuinely sustainable development.

Currently, the book is available only through Business Standard Books, New Delhi. The overseas distribution of "Rising" is still being worked out by the publishers.

Ashoke Chatterjee is a volunteer working in the water and sanitation sector in India and overseas and with other development and educational institutions, including the Prabhat Education Foundation (Ahmedabad) for children with special needs. He was Executive Director of the National Institute of Design and President of the Crafts Council of India in a career that has also included the engineering industry, the International Monetary Fund and the public sector. Ashoke Chatterjee was one of the key authors and promoters of the Water for People Vision 21 in 2000. See the titles in our WASH digital library at <http://www.washdoc.info/docsearch/result?s!mt=20&txt=Ashoke+Chatterjee>.

Dick de Jong and Ashoke Chatterjee.

Community empowerment through governance and accountability

The project has greatly contributed towards community empowerment, getting the community to understand that they should raise their demands with service providers for them to be better served. The project has therefore laid a good foundation for these and upcoming policies. Sustainability will greatly depend on the vigilance of the Water Officer in coordinating other stakeholders and collaborating with other departments at district level to ensure the scaling up of the dialogue and action research approach with integrity and transparency.

Understaffing was an issue mentioned by respondents, even elected leaders. There is a need to strengthen the capacity of the Water Office at district level with qualified and competent officers. In Adjumani, the person serving in the position of Water Officer was a former pump mechanic, who had not been properly trained. This resulted in gaps in service delivery and frustrated the community representatives. Moyo district had an Acting Water Officer who was lacking in experience, and the department was badly understaffed. In two districts the project was appreciated and principles were adopted. However, respondents (mostly elected leaders) were uncomfortable with the operations of the water office and raised concerns about some integrity issues.

In Nebbi district, the Water Office embraced the project and was reported to be accountable to the stakeholders to a great extent. "He talks with others....he

calls you and you plan together....maybe because he is new to the system." (Elected Leaders)

The ultimate improvements in service delivery in the three districts depend on the cooperation and integrity of technocrats in availing a prompt response and ensuring quality of service to the communities.

The consultant advised donors and key stakeholders to organise another external evaluation of the Good Governance and Accountability Project after about five years to make concrete conclusions about the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the project.

Other issues

A number of issues arose that would have improved the project if they had been addressed:

1. Some respondents observed that the good governance and accountability project was not adequately transparent to all stakeholders "...we did not know the details of the budget, it should have also been displayed on the notice board for us to study... (Elected Leader)
2. The project should have been located in the local government structure for greater impact on district staff in areas such as time keeping and other good practices. "NGOs change but government is permanent....the processes should have been driven by the internal staff....maybe we would have done more....for sustainability." (Technocrat)
3. The study revealed the need to further empower community members to manage their resources so that they

can improve their livelihoods. Some communities were reported to have raised Ug. Shs. 5m (€1,350) from water source users and they did not know how to use it when there was no need for borehole repairs.

A consultancy commissioned by the IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre. Data collected 1st - 10th September 2010,

Dick de Jong

Source: External Evaluation: The Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness and Sustainability of the WASH Good Governance and Accountability Project West Nile, Uganda Districts of Adjumani, Moyo and Nebbi, see <http://www.irc.nl/page/64398>.

Burkina Faso: Transporting and storing water: sources for contamination?

Water borne diseases are the third cause of infant mortality in the world. In Burkina Faso, the rate is one of the highest: 91 for one thousand in 2009.

The causes listed to explain the recrudescence of these diseases are poor awareness of hygiene and insufficient access to potable water. To fight against this problem, the government increased access to safe drinking water in rural areas by drilling boreholes. Indeed, underground water resources, less exposed to climatic hazards, are generally of better quality than surface water.

Surprisingly, the impact of these measures on the health of the populations was minimal according to UNICEF. The International Institute for Water and Environmental Engineering (2iE) at UNICEF's request conducted a study on analysing microbiology and physic-chemical quality of the water along its supply chain (welling, transport, storage). This was coupled with a study on behavioural practices of hygiene linked to supply of water.

Specifically, the objectives of the study were to:

- measure the impact of training on global hygiene given previously by local NOGs;
- study the evolution of quality of water along its supply chain;
- identify factors that can alter the quality of water,
- establish a statistical link between the quality of water and household lifestyles; and
- suggest improvements in transport and storage of water.

Methodology

This four-month study conducted from March to June 2011 was undertaken in ten villages of the Ganzourgou province, a Central region in Burkina Faso. Five villages received training on general hygiene and five received no training. The training was focused on global hygiene and water quality conservation and dedicated to women (about 90 per village) in charge of the family life.

The goal of the study was to assess the impact of training on the quality of



water. Subsequently, a survey was undertaken in each village on a sample of 40 households. A household questionnaire was divided into two parts: the first on the general behaviour with regard to hygiene and the second on knowledge, practice and perception of the water supply chain. The objective was to analyze people's behavioural activity in the areas of hygiene and their relation to water. A second part focused on the quality of water. A sampling of different sites enabled the assessment of the quality of water at its source. Then, two samples were taken amongst 10 of the 40 households: one after transport and one after storage in the home (before new collection). This enabled the characterization of water quality at each stage (source, transport and storage). The parameters analyzed on these samples were essentially microbiological (total coliform, *Escherichia coli*, faecal streptococci) indicating contamination by pathogen germs causing water borne diseases.

Results

The results of these studies were grouped statistically with the results of the surveys in order to establish one or more links between practice and use of water and microbiological recontamination. Findings from the quality of water at the source, showed that water was mostly exempt from contamination (82% of drilling areas were free of bacteria). Nevertheless, comparing water quality (transport and storage) between educated households and non educated households, the study showed little impact of hygiene training programmes on the water quality of the stored water.

The transport phase was also not found to be the most problematic. In 64% of cases, the quality of water was maintained after transport. For the 36% contaminated, the presence of germs was linked to the use of transport containers with narrow entry, which are difficult to clean effectively and likely to develop biofilms and algae around the edges.



Women transporting water

The storage at home was found to be the most critical factor. Cross analysis of results from microbiological studies and answers to the questionnaire shed light on the main practices responsible for this. Children and animals accessing stored water were the most important factors contributing to contamination. The practice of using a cup to collect the water from the source was also found responsible for micro-organisms entering into contact with the water. Lastly, the cleanliness of the recipient as well as the hygiene of the household had a major impact on the quality of water.

Solutions

The study showed that the quality of water collected from the boreholes was relatively good, that it deteriorated along the transport route and mostly while it was stored in households. Training programmes on hygiene are a good start to sensitize populations to the preservation of the quality of water, but they have a limited impact. The phases of transport and storage must be optimized. Transporting in a container that has a large opening will make cleaning easier and more effective. A better protection of home storage will limit access by children and / or animals – e.g. storing water one meter above the ground. Using a valve, faucet or ladle in order to avoid direct contact of water with objects or outside users is also useful. Finally, in order to obtain water quality in accordance with WHO standards, treating the water at home seems inevitable. UNICEF and major NGOs working in this field should take these criteria in to account.

Franck Lalanne, International Institute for Water and Environmental Engineering (2iE)

WASH in schools: debates trigger new call to action

Increase national and international investments in WASH in Schools and engage those who set policies are two of the key messages emerging from recent debates organised by IRC, UNICEF and WASH in Schools partners in Europe in April and May 2011.

IRC and UNICEF organised web-based debate on four topics around what we can do to improve water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in schools in the developing world. Right now less than half of all primary schools have access to safe water and just over a third have adequate sanitation in countries where data are available. Outcomes of this discussion was fed into a European Call for Action on WASH in Schools that IRC organised on 24 and 25 May in The Hague, The Netherlands (<http://www.unicef.org/wash/schools/>). The international Call to Action for WASH in Schools campaign was launched in 2010 by the WASH in Schools Partnership calling on decision-makers to increase investments and on concerned stakeholders to plan and act in cooperation, so that all children go to a school with child-friendly water, sanitation and hygiene facilities.

This meeting brought together WASH in Schools advocates from various organisations (largely, but not exclusively) based in Europe (ministries, UN agencies, academia, foundations, and non-governmental Organisations) with the aim to encourage development partners to work on strategies to follow up the Call to Action for WASH in Schools.

Over the course of two days donors, NGOs, consultancy firms and UN agencies discussed (1) key challenges and recommendations regarding the WASH in School six key points of action, and (2) developed action plans for three

Task Groups: Advocacy, Mapping and Information Management.

Six key messages

Among the various recommendations that emerged from discussions around the six key points for action, the following issues prompt further action by the Partnership itself:

Key Message 1 – Increased Investment in WASH in Schools

Further national and international political commitment and enforce accountability. This entails political commitment that can be monitored through international monitoring reports such as GLAAS and JMP and other upcoming relevant documentation.

Key Message 2: Engage those who set policies

Continue to advocate recognition in key documents such as the Hashimoto action plan 2 which stresses the importance of WASH in schools.

Key Message 3: Involve Multiple Stakeholders

Explore the involvement of and collaboration with other initiatives such as the Global Handwashing Day, WASH United, Sanitation and Water for All, the UNSGAB new five-year year drive on sanitation (http://www.unsgab.org/HAP-II/HAP-II_en.pdf) and others.

Key Message 4: Demonstrate Quality WASH in Schools projects

Encourage the focus on simple, sustainable, scalable WASH in Schools projects.

Key Message 5: Monitoring WASH in Schools Programmes

Continue to develop WASH in Schools monitoring packages at international and

national level that encourage monitoring WASH in Schools programmes.

Key Message 6: Contribute Evidence

Reflect critically on the type of research methodology and tools that are used for gathering data, and explore the use of alternative methodologies.

Agreed action points

Three tasks groups were formed that agreed on various follow up actions:

Global Advocacy

The group developed and agreed on the outcomes, activities and focal points for global advocacy. For each of the five outcomes policy recommendation briefs will be developed. The Raising Clean Hands advocacy booklet will be updated.

Resource Mapping

By the end of 2011, the information gathered through the mapping survey of ARC (Alliance of Religions and Conservation) and one of the partners in *Raising Clean Hands* partnership will be available online. The information will be indexed by country and will reflect on challenges and failures.

The Community of Practice

IRC and UN-Habitat will develop a concept note addressing the objectives, potential content, functionality and type of moderation required for maintaining an online WinS Community of Practice, including the funding requirements and the identification of sources to sustain the funding in the long term.

Read the debate on whether or not we have failed on WASH in Schools at:

http://www.createdebate.com/debate/show/We_have_failed_on_WASH_in_Schools.

Marielle Snel and Dick de Jong

First consultation on developing post-2015 monitoring indicators, Berlin: Refocusing the monitoring approach

Ton Schouten, Director of IRC's Triple-S initiative presented the keynote paper at the first consultation on developing post-2015 Indicators for Monitoring Drinking-Water and Sanitation, held in Berlin from 3-5 May 2011 and organised by WHO and UNICEF. As the first consultation about what will be measured after the 2015 deadline for the Millennium



Development Goals has passed, the event was well-linked to IRC's committed focus on advocating for "sustainable services at scale". Amongst a group of 60 high level professionals in the sector were representatives from UN organisations, development banks, and international networks and knowledge centres. IRC had a strong participation at the event, based on its pioneering work on service levels and pro-poor and country-led approaches.

Based on the IRC paper - *Taking a service delivery approach to monitoring water supply in low income areas and implications for the Joint Monitoring Programme*, Ton presented the latest thinking as well as promising examples of how to address the need for a change in monitoring practice. He also posed questions on the future role of the Joint Monitoring Programme in supporting this change.

Water supply in low-income areas needs to shift the focus from building new hardware,

to providing sustainable services. To support this shift, monitoring practices will also have to move from tracking coverage (the number of systems built and users who have access) to tracking services delivered at an agreed level of quality over time.

Current monitoring is conducted via:

1. sample based surveys which shape policy and decision making, as well as international comparisons; and
2. service provider data used for management purposes.

Both methods are integral to achieving good governance and improved service delivery, but both need to be adjusted to take into account the actual service delivered.

Guy Hutton, Senior Economist at the World Bank, agreed with this line of thinking, saying: "Since the milestone year of 2010, the question of what will happen after 2015 is increasingly asked. Monitoring progress towards the current target is based solely on the use of facilities and does not take into account other important parameters, such as the drinking-water quality, the overall availability of adequate quantities of water for domestic use, the distance to a water source or sanitation facility, the time members of a household spend on access and use of sources and facilities, the number of hours the service is available, social obstacles to access for certain population groups, maintenance of the infrastructure, whether excreta are safely disposed of, or whether the services and

facilities are affordable. For the people for whom they are intended."

If universal coverage was an elusive goal when it was set in the 1980s, and is also seemingly difficult to achieve within the term of the Millennium Development Goals; then the question now arises about what the WASH sector believes the target(s) should be after 2015.

One possible answer regarding post-2015 targets comes from the human rights community, that governments, rather than aiming to solve the drinking-water and sanitation crisis by a set date, should make tangible progress towards the realisation of this human right, as outlined in the Human Rights Framework prepared by the United Nations General Assembly in July 2010.

Angelica de Jesus, IRC

Life-cycle cost approach, a useful tool for sustainability - but who will foot the bill?

The man who has been responsible for meeting the technical challenges of rural water supply in Ghana has backed the life-cycle costs approach (LCCA) as a key element in the search for sustainable services, but has questioned how all the costs will be met.

Mr. Van Ess, the immediate past Director for Technical Services at the Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA), said that the WASHCost Project, which is collecting and analysing the life-cycle costs of water and sanitation services, will help in the accurate computation of service delivery costs.

During an interview at a sector meeting in Accra, he said: "The life-cycle cost approach looks at the whole spectrum of cost in service delivery, not only the initial investment cost but other related costs that go into service delivery. This will give a

broader picture of the actual cost of service delivery in the sector."

The life-cycle cost approach identifies the cost of ensuring adequate water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services to a specific population in a determined geographical area within a particular time frame. It includes not only the hardware and software costs needed for initial construction (Capital expenditure – CapEx), but also the operational and minor maintenance expenditure (OpEx), capital maintenance expenditure for rehabilitation and replacement (CapManEx), the direct post construction support costs in supporting communities, and the indirect support costs involved in macro level planning and policy formulation. It also includes the cost of capital (mainly the costs of loans).

Mr. Van Ess observed that even though the approach is a useful tool to ensuring sustainability in service delivery, the challenge to the approach is whether all those cost could be paid for by the financiers. "To ensure that the LCCA becomes a workable tool to the sector, it has to be factored into the budgeting process by the funding agencies, either government, district assemblies or donor agencies."

Mr. Van Ess advised WASHCost to broaden its consultation process on the LCCA to enable the sector to agree on the modalities and elements that go into each of the various cost components.

Victor Narteh Otum – DCO, WASHCost Project Ghana



Uganda: Why the sub-county is critical for WASH sector coordination

The Uganda WASH sector is awash with government and non-government actors at national, district, sub-county and even parish level. However, the variation in mandates, agenda, and resources often lead to duplication and ineffectiveness in terms of service delivery, as well as lack of alignment with government policies and guidelines. This lack of coordination at national and district level affects the sustainability of rural water services.

Efforts towards harmonisation and coordination have been made, especially through the Sector Wide Approach to Planning (SWAp) at national level and through decentralised structures. Sector policies and guidelines help to ensure that there is a proper framework and standards for service delivery.

The District Implementation Manual (DIM) was issued by the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) to provide specific guidance for sector stakeholders at district

local government level. The DIM spells out the many ways in which parish and sub-county levels link to the district in terms of planning, monitoring, and evaluation of water services. While in most districts the District Water and Sanitation Coordination Committees (DWSCCs) are functioning well, coordination at sub-county level has not been fully explored.



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Nigeria: WASH Ambassador drives efforts to address sanitation and hygiene issues

The positive momentum that is supporting the sanitation and hygiene campaign in Nigeria owes a great deal to Engr. Ebele Okeke, WSSCC's "WASH Ambassador" in the country. The former head of Nigerian civil service and once the Permanent Secretary in Nigeria's Ministry of Water

Resources, Engr. Okeke has been influential in pushing sanitation issues throughout the country since her appointment in September 2010. She is working with the press and the National Task Group on Sanitation (NTGS) to drive high-level advocacy and campaigns towards addressing the significant challenges in sanitation and hygiene.



Engr. Ebele Okeke is an enthusiastic and active ambassador for water, sanitation and hygiene issues in Nigeria

... through advocacy visits

One of her first advocacy visits was a courtesy call on the Honourable Minister of Water Resources. During her visit, Engr. Okeke discussed bringing sanitation to the forefront by suggesting the establishment of a department within the Ministry to focus on sanitation issues. In a subsequent restructuring, a new Department of Water Quality Control and Sanitation was established within the Ministry of Water Resources to focus on sanitation and water quality. The new department, with its own mandate and budget line, has led the sector in responding to the sanitation challenges of the country. The department is leading the Sanitation and Water Quality sector in actualizing the contents of the National Road Map on Water Resources as it affects the sector.

... through delivering keynote addresses and goodwill messages

The WASH Ambassador brings sanitation and hygiene issues to the forefront by speaking at national events. For example, the second National Roundtable Conference on Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) was held in Calabar, Cross River State,

from 5 to 9 October 2010. The Conference focused on the current state of CLTS implementation and provided a platform for CLTS practitioners to share their experiences and advocate to support sanitation development. A goodwill message was delivered on the WASH Ambassador's behalf during the Conference and placed particular focus on mobilising resources at the state and local government levels to take CLTS to scale.

A few days later, Engr. Okeke marked the 2010 Global Handwashing Day, the annual event designed to raise awareness and foster the practice of hand washing with soap, 15 October with a keynote address in Nigeria. The WASH Ambassador focused on the importance of hand washing at critical moments and called for effective collaboration amongst key stakeholders to address the hand washing challenges in Nigeria. The event marked the first collaboration between the private sector, Unilever, and government and civil society in a hand washing campaign. In the presence of a large number of school children as well as the Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Water Resources, Executive Directors of Unilever, and other dignitaries, the WASH Ambassador demonstrated the correct manner to wash hands with soap and water. Stemming from the success of the event, Unilever invited Engr. Okeke to chair the opening ceremony of their one day symposium on Hand Washing on 17 May 2011.

Carrying momentum into the new year, the WASH Ambassador—on an invitation from the National Council on Water Resources, the highest decision-making body in the water sanitation sector in Nigeria—attended the first Presidential Summit on Water on 17 January 2011. Speaking at the Summit, Engr. Okeke called for a Presidential Committee on Sanitation to be set up. She emphasised that a high-level committee will have the leverage to push for joint memorandum of understanding across the three tiers of government in Nigeria and to mobilise resources from the three levels of government to fund sanitation interventions. She is following up with relevant contacts at the Presidency for setting up the Committee.

... through the inauguration of a State Task Group on Sanitation

A WSSCC-funded sensitisation workshop held in June 2010 encouraged states to form a State Task Group on Sanitation (STGS). Working towards this, and to bring synergy into WSSCC funded activities in Nigeria, the NTGS prioritised the two states selected for the Global Sanitation Fund (GSF) Programme—Benue and Cross Rivers—as the states to be supported to have functional STGS.

As part of the GSF intervention for the states of Benue and Cross Rivers, two teams were organised to visit each state. The WASH Ambassador led the team on an advocacy and sensitisation visit to Benue from 29 to 30 March 2011, while the Director of Water Quality and Sanitation led the other team to Cross Rivers. In Benue, the WASH Ambassador held discussions with the Honorable Commissioner of the Ministry of Water Resources Benue State and other high-level officers. She informed them of the criteria used for the selection of the State for the GSF with the aim of taking sanitation intervention to scale in Nigeria by achieving 100% open defecation free Local Government Areas in the State. The Commissioner assured her of the State Government's commitment to the GSF project.

... through hosting political dialogue on sanitation

Leading up to the election, the NTGS monitored campaign promises made by Nigeria's 60+ registered political parties. Despite the daunting challenges faced by the country in terms of sanitation coverage, an analysis of campaign promises showed that sanitation and hygiene were not prioritised. In response, the WASH Ambassador and the NTGS collaborated to organise a political dialogue with the political parties to inform them of the key sanitation and hygiene issues in the country, and to encourage them to prioritise these issues once in office. The event was held on 17 March 2011 with the active support of WaterAid, NEWSAN, and the WASH Media Network. The NTGS is following up on commitments with the new administration.

"I have been committed to improving sanitation and hygiene practices in Nigeria,

and through Africa, for many years now," said Engr. Ebele Okeke. As a WSSCC Ambassador, I have the chance to step up

this work, and be a part of a worldwide group of people who share a similar vision. I believe that providing access to

safe, affordable sanitation to all people is possible, and it is our responsibility to make it happen."

West Africa WASH Journalists Network: harnessing the power of people and media

In Africa today, limited access to information presents a major challenge to improving and sustaining service delivery of sanitation and water services for poor communities. Supported by active and dynamic civil society organisations, these communities are becoming actors in their own development and are asking for platforms to share their stories, voice their needs and ask their governments to stand up to their commitments. The partnership between people strongly affected in their everyday lives by the lack of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), the media and civil society organisations is critical to influencing policies at regional scale in West Africa, while strengthening citizen's participation in the delivery of WASH services. In this way people's voices can be amplified and the capacity of the media in turn can be strengthened by the relationships with civil society organisations.

To respond to this challenge, the West Africa WASH Journalists Network (WASH-JN) was formed in late 2010 with the objective to leverage the voices of the poor and influence policy change and accountability through the collective power of media in the region.

The West Africa WASH Journalists Network is a network of networks, comprising national WASH Media networks from 13 West African countries – Benin, Burkina

Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. Its strategic objectives are:

- To amplify the voices of the poor to make them heard at national, regional and international levels;
- To ensure enhanced quality and flow of information on WASH service delivery coming from a wide range of sources;
- To ensure better targeting for enhanced influence and increased awareness on WASH for all citizens and decision-makers.

The activities of the Network include the production of compelling reports on WASH focusing in particular on poor people's perspectives in order to achieve increased attention from all citizens and decision-makers, capacity building of member journalists to ensure better quality of reporting, strategic partnership with WASH organisations for an enhanced quality of data collection and dialogue within the WASH sector.

The network, which is open for wider participation, encourages strategic use of media by sector organisations and is available and open for any collaboration involving documentation work, interviews, capacity building and linking with established regional, international and global media platforms. It is currently



Newly elected members of the West Africa WASH Journalists Network's Coordinating Mechanism François Koami Amegnignon from Togo and Celia Faconam Dede from Mali are discussing future activities. Accra, Ghana, April 2011. Photo: Tatiana Fedotova, WSSCC

supported by the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (www.wsscc.org) and WaterAid in West Africa (www.wateraid.org) and is looking for more financial partners.

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Resources: Blog: <http://www.wash-jn.net>; Twitter: <http://twitter.com/washjournalists>; Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/washjournalists>; Mailing list: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/washjournalists>; E-mail: washjournalists@yahoo.com

News from WSSCC

Registration open for the Global Forum on Sanitation and Hygiene

It is now possible to register for the WSSCC Global Forum on Sanitation and Hygiene, which takes place in Mumbai, India, from 9-14 October 2011. The meeting will be a leading platform to discuss and advance issues of importance to billions of people. Arranged by WSSCC for its members and for professionals from around the world. To learn more, visit www.wsscc-global-forum.org.

Good Dignity Practices (GDP) for Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

The new Global WASH Campaign is here: Good Dignity Practices for Gross Domestic Product (GDP for GDP). The Global WASH Campaign, initiated by WSSCC in 2001, is a global advocacy movement around safe water, sanitation and hygiene. A new set of materials has been developed, themed GDP for GDP, focusing on the economic benefits to be gained from investing in sanitation while also stressing human dignity. The materials are available at www.wsscc.org.



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Sub-counties fill a significant local government gap between the parishes and the district. A district is made up of several counties, each of which is divided into sub-counties. There are many parishes in each sub-county.

Logiri as an example to learn from

Logiri sub-county in Arua district provides a good example of the viability of sub-county water and sanitation coordination committees. In 2009, under the Learning for Policy and Practice (LEAPP) initiative, SNV and NETWAS Uganda piloted sub-county level coordination in Logiri with a focus on capacity development, working with the local Youth Development Organisation (YODEO), to support the Logiri Sub County Water and Sanitation Coordination Committee (SCWSSC) to hold quarterly meetings.

Once the committee was fully functional, SNV and NETWAS phased themselves out, while the Logiri SCWSSC has continued to date to hold quarterly meetings that have progressively addressed key WASH issues. One of their best achievements is compilation of up to date data on household sanitation, collected from all the 86 parishes in the sub-county.

YODEO coordinator, Odama Oscar, reported that before the SCWSSC many non-functional sources were never reported to the District Water Officer (DWO). With sub-county level coordination, any non-functional sources are quickly reported and rehabilitated and this has resulted into increased functionality. The DWO also now has reliable data about the Logiri sub-county, which has gained recognition in DWSSC meetings and reports.

In April 2011, with support from Triple-S Uganda, a group of sub-county WASH actors from Lira district visited Logiri to learn more about sub-county level coordination and to make efforts to replicate the lessons in their own areas. The learners expressed particular interest in issues like the rationale for SCWSSC, its funding, communication with and support from the DWO, and linkages with the Water User Committees.

Relating the story of Logiri SCWSSC, the Arua DWO, Stephen Obitre, explained that the reason why they decided to go to the sub-county was because the key issues of sustainability of sources, operation and maintenance all happen at that level. They decided that the sub-county would handle all critical issues

while the district concentrated on support, monitoring and supervision.

What is next for Lira?

Since their visit to Logiri, sub-county level WASH actors in Lira have taken steps to establish their own SCWSSC. Annet Birungi, a Health Assistant in Lira sub-county explains that as soon as she got back to Lira, she wrote a report about the Logiri learning visit and shared it with the Lira sub-county political leaders and technical staff, including the sub-county Chairperson and the sub-county chief. Working with other non-government WASH actors, they organised an advocacy meeting. The idea was welcomed by all key actors and a SCWSSC was formed immediately. Since the financial year was ending, there were no funds to facilitate the committee activities in the short term. However, sub-county leadership has already committed to budget for the SCWSSC next financial year 2011/2012 that started on 1 July. Birungi attributes the turn of events to the fact that already in Lira sub-county, WASH was a priority. Both the political and technical arms of local government welcome ideas on how to enhance service provision.

Lydia Mirembe; Communication and Advocacy Officer, Triple-S Uganda

BRAC WASH team visit to WASHCost India Project in Andhra Pradesh

A WASH team from Bangladesh visited Andhra Pradesh, India from 12 to 17 May 2011, to get a better understanding of the role of the state in providing water and sanitation services.

The team from BRAC (Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee) was also interested in good practice in community participation in the WASH sector and to learn more about the costs of WASH services. This visit was coordinated by Dr Snehalatha, Country Coordinator of the WASHCost (India) Project, who met the BRAC team at an international workshop in Bangladesh. After listening to her presentation during the workshop, the BRAC team asked to visit the WASHCost project and Andhra Pradesh. The team consisted of 14 engineers, social scientists and financial specialists who are implementing the WASH programme at BRAC.

WASHCost (India) project staff at the Centre for Economic and Social Sciences (CESS) and at WASSAN shared information and findings from their research and experiences in the field, and

learned in turn about the experiences in Bangladesh. Each appreciated the extent of work being carried out in the other country.

The BRAC team had a discussion with the representatives of Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Department in Andhra Pradesh to learn about the government's involvement and about policies, practices and software. The Bangladesh team was impressed with the level of involvement the government has in providing WASH services in India. One of the BRAC team members commented: "In Bangladesh, 70% of the work is done by the NGOs; here it seems that 70% of the work is carried out by the government." During their visit to the RWSS Department, they had a demonstration of the "WaterSoft" software which was created to monitor WASH services in the state.



BRAC team informal discussion outside the office in Gagadevipally Gram Panchayat office, Photo: WASSAN

To learn more about good practice, they visited the prizewinning Nirmal Gram Puraskar (NGP) villages of Gangadevically and Medipally, as well as the municipality of Suryapet. At Gangadevically they had a robust discussion with the Sarpanch and Secretary of the village. The BRAC team shared their opinions about the need to include a gender balance within committees to obtain a more holistic understanding of issues within the village. The BRAC team was pleased to note the level of dedication within the village to maintain services through voluntarily efforts. They talked about the possibility of

experimenting with some of the methods they had seen when they returned to Bangladesh. In Medipally they witnessed how a village obtained the Nirmal Gram Puraskar through self initiative.

Mr. Milan, programme head of the WASH team noted that in Bangladesh they had less money to spend. "The level of expenditure in providing WASH services at the village here is much higher. It is not possible for the people at BRAC to spend such large amounts because BRAC has limited resources and works with people from a much lower income category. In

Bangladesh we emphasise more people's involvement through labour and kind, giving them a larger number of choices in putting up the infrastructure."

All in all, the BRAC team was delighted with their visit and felt that they had learnt much about the strategies of providing WASH services that they could take back and share in Bangladesh. They also contributed in terms of sharing their experiences within this sector at each site they visited.

Ms Safa Fanaian, WASSAN, India

Sanitation and hygiene lessons: Where do we want to be?

What works in hygiene and sanitation programming and what does not? Why, with so many good experiences and advances, are basic needs and challenges not met? What are our future priorities?

These questions were addressed in eight regional practitioners' workshops, held in four continents, during which 250 professionals shared experiences and research findings on sanitation and hygiene promotion between the period of 2007 and 2011. With over 100 papers delivered and deliberated upon, discussion in the workshops provided remarkable insight into hygiene and sanitation in WASH programming worldwide.

Of the eight regional workshops, seven were organised by the IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre with its partners. The eighth, a hygiene practitioners' workshop in Melbourne, was organised by WaterAid Australia and attended by IRC.

A report, *Lessons learnt from sanitation and hygiene practitioners' workshops 2007-2011*, freely downloadable from our site <http://www.irc.nl/page/65234> highlights the commonalities and innovative thinking arising from the deliberations in all eight workshops. It underscores the urgent need to prioritise sanitation and hygiene in WASH programmes and details key intervention strategies that are helpful in improving governance and enhancing, for example, urban/rural programming, financing, and monitoring.

Six actions needed

It lists the actions needed as:

1. Prioritising sanitation and hygiene
2. Devising better strategies for sanitation and hygiene
3. Implementing strategies better: management, capacity, roles focusing on management, mobilisation and governance among partners
4. Addressing the challenges to reach the urban poor
5. Financing and reaching poor people
6. Monitoring and measuring.

Future focus

The workshops and papers point to several recommendations where efforts

and resources should be concentrated in the next three to eight years.

- Switching and sometimes contradictory trends in sanitation and hygiene programmes should give way to a more consistent, reflective, longer, and well-monitored efforts. Sanitation and hygiene programmes should also be based on a holistic framework that covers a broad geographic scope so that issues of sustainability and scale are addressed. More intensive focus should also be directed to supporting the poor and slum dwellers in towns and cities.
- Greater attention should be given to priorities integral to good management, such as intensive supervision, field contacts and capacity building. Good management also requires placing accountability and transparency mechanisms on the agenda. A decisive shift towards establishing partnerships between local government, civil society, the private sector and community members and developing the capacities in ways that facilitate responsiveness to a specific situation are key to improving management.
- We need to expand our knowledge base by carrying out research on the specific challenges and problems already recognised in the different sanitation and hygiene strategies. We can accelerate efforts to expand this knowledge base by applying practical monitoring tools and using innovative tools that study behavioural change.



News in Brief

Water crisis: world needs water leadership say former heads of government

Former heads of government have agreed to establish a new panel to help fill a "serious void in leadership related to global water issues". Saying that "international water leadership is virtually nonexistent," the retired leaders apparently have little faith in existing international organisations and forums such as UN-Water, the World Water Council (WWC) and the Global Water Partnership (GWP). The panel will work to elevate the issue's political prominence in an effort to avert a looming "water crisis."

The formation of the new water panel was announced at the 29th meeting of the InterAction Council held from 29-31 May 2011 in Québec City, Canada. Participants [1] included former presidents Bill Clinton (USA) and Vicente Fox (Mexico) and former prime ministers Yasuo Fukuda (Japan) and Gro Brundtland (Norway). Co-chairing the meeting were former Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and former Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky. In the final communiqué [2] of the meeting, the group urged a new international water ethic and offered policy makers some 17 recommendations to move world water management forward, including increased investment in sanitation and access to safe water supply, making the right to water legally enforceable and raising the price of water to reflect its economic value while making provisions for people in poverty.

Sustainable sanitation: UN Secretary-General launches the Five-Year-Drive to 2015

On 21 June 2011, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon officially launched the "Sustainable Sanitation: Five-Year Drive to 2015 (5YD)", a push to speed up progress on the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target of improving global sanitation by 2015. The launch took place at UN Headquarters in New York in the presence of UNICEF Executive Director Anthony Lake, Ugandan Minister of Water and Environment the Hon. Maria Mutagamba, and His Royal Highness the Prince of Orange who chairs the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation (UNSGAB).

With 2.6 billion people still without access to improved sanitation and over 1.1 billion people practising open defecation, the MDG target is lagging far behind. On 20 December 2010 the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution calling upon the UN Member States to "redouble efforts to close the sanitation gap". The Drive to 2015 has been endorsed at several high-level meetings, most recently by the Fourth South Asian Conference on Sanitation (SACOSAN-IV).

Nieuws in Brief continued on p. 11



Urine diversion toilet explained in Uganda

- Future programmes are more effective when they are informed by the best of the past – learning from and building on existing and viable strategies and institutions – as opposed to focusing on the creation of new ones. The same goes for scaling up strategies where the application of participatory approaches, social marketing and community approaches have proven to be useful in advancing sanitation and hygiene practices and conditions.

The workshops

The findings are based on the following workshops:

- East Africa practitioners' workshop on pro-poor urban sanitation and hygiene (29-31 March 2011, Kigali, Rwanda) hosted by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Rwanda; supported by IRC, the German International Cooperation (GIZ), UNICEF Regional Office, WaterAid and the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC)
- South Asia hygiene practitioners' workshop (1-4 February 2010, Dhaka, Bangladesh) co-organised by IRC, BRAC Bangladesh, WaterAid and the WSSCC

- Community of practice learning workshop on hygiene promotion (June 2010, Melbourne, Australia) organised by WaterAid Australia
- Seminario de intercambio de experiencias sobre gobernanza de servicios de saneamiento sostenibles en Centroamérica (1-3 February 2010, San Salvador, El Salvador) supported by IRC, Red de Agua y Saneamiento de el Salvador, Red Regional de Saneamiento de Centroamerica (RRAS-CA) and the WSSCC
- Partnerships for sanitation for the urban poor: learning & sharing workshop (24-25 November 2009, Maputo Mozambique) hosted by Conselho de Regulação do Abastecimento de Agua; co-convened by the IRC, WSSCC and Building Partnerships for Development (BPD Water and Sanitation); supported by the CoWater Consultores in Maputo and the Water Sanitation Program in Mozambique
- West Africa regional sanitation and hygiene symposium (3-5 November 2009, Accra, Ghana) jointly organised by IRC, the Resource Centre Network Ghana, UNICEF, West Africa Water Initiative (WAWI) and WaterAid; supported by the WSSCC
- South Asian sanitation & hygiene practitioners' workshop (29-31 January 2008, Dhaka, Bangladesh) co-organised by IRC, BRAC Bangladesh, WaterAid and the WSSCC
- Seminar for practitioners on household and school sanitation and hygiene in East and Southern Africa (19-21 November 2007, Moshi, Tanzania) supported by IRC, UNICEF East and Southern Africa and the WSSCC

Carmen da Silva

Costing sustainable services training is successful, Brisbane

Life-cycle costs represent the aggregate costs of ensuring delivery of sustainable WASH services through a system's cycle of wear, repair and renewal. That message was delivered at the WASH Conference 2011: "Towards sustainability in water, sanitation and hygiene" in Brisbane, Australia, 16 – 20 May 2011.

A one-day training session, led by WASHCost Project Director Catarina Fonseca and WASHCost India Country Coordinator Dr. Mekala Snehathala, provided an introduction to the life-cycle costs approach, and its practical application to WASH programmes based

on experiences in Burkina Faso, Ghana, India and Mozambique. The trainers covered 10 steps to collecting life-cycle costs data and showed how it has been done by WASHCost in India, introducing a number of methods and tools. Dr. Snehathala emphasised that the challenges arise in their practical application.

One senior level government representative stated after the meeting: "It dawned on me that there is something missing in the government WASH programmes in the



province" and indicated an interest in learning more about the application of life-cycle costing. Another senior manager of an international NGO intends to apply the ideas and methods at project level.

Several participants emphasised that one day is too short to really grasp the ideas. One participant suggested inviting country or provincial representatives to present best practices and lessons learned in achieving lasting results in WASH projects. It is anticipated that future training sessions will be up to a week long to get deeper into the practical application of a life-cycle costs approach.

Above expectations

Participation exceeded expectations and the capacity of the room. Catarina Fonseca: "Attendance went beyond planned and exercises and examples worked well for a full day of very enthusiastic and interested audience. The feedback on the evaluation was also very good."

Two briefing notes on European aid effectiveness

US\$ 11 billion is needed annually to meet Africa's water and sanitation needs; this is the gap that is not met by national budgets and donor aid. Insufficient political prioritisation by African leaders, weak sector capacity to develop and implement effective plans and strategies, and uncoordinated and inadequate investments inhibit many African countries from making effective use of aid. This and the international financial landscape add urgency to the need to make aid more effective; recipient countries and donors need to optimise aid for water and sanitation.

The IRC Support Group to the European Union Water Initiative (EUWI) Africa Working Group (AWG) contributed to two new briefing notes to help policy and decision makers implement some of the high level declarations that call for accelerated progress to meet sanitation and water targets in Africa.:

Briefing Note on Aid Effectiveness and Africa

The Briefing Note "Aid Effectiveness and Africa" is a document resulting from the EUWI/AWG Aid Effectiveness seminar held

Overall, the evaluation revealed that participants found it an inspiring session and appreciated both the materials and ideas presented and the opportunities to interact. Graphs, maps and presentation were appreciated: "The pie chart revealing hidden costs was useful, I've never had to do this before", said a private sector professional who provides technical support to national WASH projects.

Find the materials online

The materials from the session are available online on the IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre website: www.irc.nl/brisbane2011.

For a brief introduction to core concepts see the key note presentation by Catarina Fonseca entitled Shifting to life-cycle costing. The presentation and audio soundtrack can be downloaded at <http://www.watercentre.org/wash2011>, (click on presentations and then on financial sustainability).

Catarina Fonseca and Dick de Jong

at the Stockholm World Water Week 2010. Enormous challenges still exist for recipient countries to access and make effective use of aid. This Briefing Note lists a number of crucial issues that need to be addressed as well as recommendations for the sector <http://www.irc.nl/page/64431>.

Briefing Note on Mapping EU Support for Sanitation in Africa

The Briefing Note "Mapping EU Support for Sanitation in Africa" is based on a full study by the UK based Water, Engineering and Development Centre (WEDC). The purpose of the study is to obtain an overview of the status of the involvement of EU Member States and the European Commission in sanitation-related activities in Africa. It is anticipated that this will be useful for arguing for greater priority for sanitation within international organisations and for individual donors to use in discussing their own official development assistance (ODA). (<http://www.irc.nl/page/64433>).

The full PDF report is available on the EUWI website. http://www.euwi.net/files/Mapping_EU_Support_for_Sanitation_in_Africa.pdf

Dick de Jong

Continued from page 10

The Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) is helping to develop the 5YD advocacy strategy and materials in collaboration with UNSGAB, UNICEF and the other partners supporting the initiative.

Health policy: global assembly approves three WASH resolutions

The 64th World Health Assembly (WHA) has adopted a resolution on drinking-water, sanitation and health, and two other related resolutions on cholera and Guinea worm (dracunculiasis). The WHA is the governance forum of the World Health Organization (WHO). It is the world's highest health policy setting body and is composed of health ministers from 193 member states.

The resolution on "Drinking-Water, Sanitation and Health" [1] recognises the global scale of the challenge of access to WASH and the multiple health benefits and economic advantages of WASH. It pushes for progressive realisation of human right to water and sanitation and for the provision of WASH in health centres, schools and other public buildings.

Ghana: only 0.1% of budget committed to sanitation

In spite of the Government's pledge to commit 0.5% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to sanitation, the 2011 budget made provision for 0.1%, said Executive Secretary of the Coalition of NGOs in water and sanitation (CONIWAS), Benjamin Arthur. Ghana is one of the signatories of the 2008 eThekweni Declaration [1] in which 17 African governments pledged to allocate a minimum of 0.5% of GDP for sanitation and hygiene.

Arthur said despite the government's 2010 promise to commit 200 million dollars every year towards water and sanitation activities beginning in 2011, this year's budget did not reflect that commitment. At the current rate Arthur estimated it would take another 40 years for Ghana to attain the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) sanitation target of 54 per cent coverage.

Arthur was speaking at a sensitisation workshop on "The Right to Water and Sanitation" organised by WaterAid in Ghana and the Centre on Human Rights and Eviction (COHRE) for journalists in Accra.

The outcome of the workshop would be used as an input for a National Stakeholders Workshop and a National Action Plan.

Talking sustainability: water services that last

IRC's Triple-S project has launched a new blog to regularly report experiences, stories and questions on rural water supply, see <http://waterservicesthatlast.wordpress.com/>. It will ask questions and provoke debate on how sustainability of water systems can be improved. It seeks to provide examples and learn from failures. It does not aim to provide ready-made answers; if these existed, they would win the Nobel Prize for Water, or, more likely, the Silver Bullet Award. We invite you to contribute your thoughts and stories, to provoke and to question, and to share these debates more widely. Stef Smits is the main contributor to this blog.

Here is a selection in summary of his recent posts:

Is the water sector sexy enough?

The Guardian the other day posted an article <http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/poverty-matters/2011/jun/27/donor-aversion-water-projects> which claimed that water and sanitation projects are not sexy enough and that donors therefore are not willing to invest in them. According to various interviewees in the article, donors prefer to invest in schools or clinics, rather than in "unsexy" water projects. The interviewees call for an increase in donor funding for water and sanitation. Rather than sexing up the sector, I think the water sector should be a bit careful in what it is asking for, as more money is not necessarily the solution to the

problem, and may even reinforce the donor dependency in the sector

Can the recognition of the right to water contribute to more sustainable water services delivery?

The other day I had a heated discussion with a human rights lawyer on the merits, drawbacks and possible implications of the recognition of the right to water. Although I welcome the principle behind it, as a self-declared sceptic on about everything, I have my reservations on its practical potential. A specific question that interests me is whether the right to water can speed up the realisation of sustainable WASH services for all, or only the speed up of the realisation of the increase in coverage.

Perspective on supporting rural operators

This week I attended a meeting organised by the Inter American Development Bank for its water officers and their counterparts working for governments and utilities from all over Latin America and the Caribbean. One of the sessions was dedicated to sustainability. It proved to be a very inspiring event, giving a good insight into trends in rural water supply in the region, and ways to address the challenge of sustainability of rural water supply.

Hundred years of sustainability

How long is sustainable? 5 years? 20 years? 100 years? From here to eternity? This is

a relevant question to ask in the context of rural water supplies, where the quest for sustainability has been going on for as long as modern water supplies have been developed. As engineers, we have often talked in terms of life-spans of a water system. A piped water supply should have a life span of some twenty years. A hand pump would last 10 years. But few users would be happy to have a system for 10 years, and once it reaches the end of its life-span, to be left with nothing. Neither would engineers or planners expect to see such a situation.

So, what happens when the 10 or 20 years have passed? One option is for service providers collect enough money through tariffs from users over that life-span to replace the assets, or even to expand them, and live happily ever after. However, the inclusion of the full replacement, or depreciation, costs in tariffs is often prohibitive – in most places, tariffs are barely high enough to cover operation and minor maintenance costs. In reality, in most places, some funder external to the community – for example a government agency, a donor or an NGO – turns up to cover the costs of replacing the assets, sometimes with matching funds with the service provider.

<http://waterservicesthatlast.wordpress.com/>

Dick de Jong

IRC steps up transparency and accountability

Recently, IRC has become a member of the INGO accountability charter (www.ingoaccountabilitycharter.org) which provides a recognized standard for improving and reporting on our own governance. Improving governance by governments, businesses and NGOs is necessary to deliver on our vision of sustainable water and sanitation services.

We actively work to support better governance in the sector through various activities, but we also believe it is important to apply the best practices of transparency, accountability and integrity within our own organisation. Signing the charter confirms our commitment to improve these aspects of our organisation, and provides a framework approved by the Global

Reporting Initiative against which we will report on an annual basis.

Accountability site started

For IRC transparency and accountability are core values and considered so important

that we created a dedicated IRC reporting web site where we are sharing all relevant annual financial and other reports, see <http://www.reporting.irc.nl/>

Dick de Jong

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