

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND RURAL WATER SERVICES THAT LAST: A WAY FORWARD

Local government- ment has a critical role in the success SDG6

IN 2015, THE UNITED NATIONS General Assembly adopted the resolution for Agenda 2030, which establishes the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as the framework for achieving sustainable development and the elimination of poverty worldwide.

SDG 6 is to “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all” and within that, target 6.1 is: “By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all”

In 2015, the Joint Monitoring Program of WHO and UNICEF reported that an estimated 683 million people worldwide still lacked access to an improved water source and that 8 out of 10 of those lived in rural areas.

This role and the challenges and opportunities related to local government playing this role was the focus of a lively, four-week e-discussion organised by the Sustainable Services thematic group of the Rural Water Supply Network (RWSN) in May 2015 entitled: “Local government and rural water services that last: the way forward!”



Key Messages: COMMIT, CAPACITATE, COLLABORATE, CONVINC

- Strengthening and clarifying the capacity of local government institutions is critical to the success of SDG6 (Water) and contributes to SDG16 (Institutions);
- Commit to genuine partnerships with local government instead of by-passing them or only involving them as an after-thought;
- Help strengthen local government to ensure that they have the skills, experience and resources to perform their roles and functions in order to reach everyone with sustainable water services;
- Collaboration, coordination and oversight is essential—but has a cost. The effort to reach all areas of the district should be coordinated so as to mitigate overlap and inefficiencies;
- An outcome from coordination should be that all stakeholders involved in rural water services have a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities for themselves and others.
- Continuously convince all stakeholders of importance of having competent, well resourced local government in place to ensure the provision of sustainable water services to all. This is a political process that needs to be done with understanding the local and national political economy and with the support of, or led by, political leaders.



THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

ALL AROUND THE WORLD LOCAL GOVERNMENT HAS a crucial role to play in ensuring the provision of rural and small town water services. Roles previously taken up by national agencies or ministries are increasingly becoming the responsibility of local government, as part of ongoing decentralisation efforts.

The roles that local governments play differs from country to country: In Latin America, in particular, there are multiple institutions operating in the rural water space: environmental agencies, social development financial entities, and national sewage agencies. In Africa, such agencies do not always exist and the full burden of water service delivery is on the shoulders of the local government.

In Europe, local government either does not have a big role to play anymore and has delegated water supply functions to private utilities as in the *UK*; or it has a regulatory and oversight function as in the *Netherlands*; or does perform multiple functions as in more rural *Sweden* and *France*. Western governments move between centralised and decentralised approaches, suggesting that there is this is dynamic conversation where context and politics play an important role.

COMMON ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The roles of local government are dependent of the level and depth of decentralisation in a country, but commonly include the following:

Planning, resource mobilisation and coordination

Many Week 1 contributions from Africa (including *Rwanda, Kenya, Niger, Congo Brazzaville, Uganda and Malawi*) mentioned planning and resource mobilisation for the development of water services infrastructure as an important role of local government.

Community mobilisation and capacity building

About a quarter of the Week 1 contributions (including from *Uganda, Rwanda, Uganda, Congo Brazzaville* and *Timor Leste*) mentioned community mobilisation, sensitisation and / or capacity building as one of the roles of local government. This is the type of support that local government provides to communities before and during construction of new infrastructure.

Infrastructure development:

Almost all Week 1 contributions from Africa, Asia and Latin America mentioned water infrastructure development as one of the tasks of local government. Of the contributions from Europe, only the *Moldova* case mentioned infrastructure development as one of the tasks of local government.

Procurement, contracting and supervision

Half of the Week 1 contributions from Africa and the contribution from *Moldova* mentioned selecting, contracting and (/or) supervising service providers as an important role of local government. This includes construction services (as for example reported in Week 3 cases from *Ukraine* and *Honduras*) as well as the services of operators (as for example reported in Week 1 cases from *Uganda and Kenya*).

Service provision

Although local government was mentioned as being responsible for ensuring the provision of rural water services in many countries, in only a few of these countries (e.g. *Moldova, Sweden, Nicaragua* and *Pakistan*) local government was reported to also play a direct role in the provision of rural water services.

Monitoring

Monitoring was mentioned as an important role of local government by about a third of the Week 1 contributions. This referred to both monitoring of implementation activities, as well monitoring of ongoing water service provision. Only a contribution describing the situation in the *UK*, mentioned water *quality* monitoring as a task of local government.

Regulation and oversight

This was also mentioned as a role of local government by about the third of the Week 1 contributions. It was mentioned that in countries like *England and Wales*, regulation is undertaken by separate institutions outside of local government. In the *Netherlands*, the role of local government is limited to a (financial) oversight function, including tariff reviews. In several countries in Africa (*Burkina Faso, Ghana*), local government's regulatory role is to a large extent limited to reviewing and



New water system opened in Ukraine. Rural water services can be an entry point for strengthening local government and making decentralisation processes tangible (photo: Skat)

approving tariffs as well. In *Tunisia*, “Water Police” were established at local government level, to ensure proper use of water resources and prevent illegal connections to networks. However, these structures were not effective.

Direct post construction technical support

Local government can also be a source of post-construction technical support, including ongoing capacity building and refresher training. In *Ethiopia* for example, local government provides support to community-based water service providers in repairing water facilities and ordering spare parts. In *Malawi*, local government provides refresher training to caretakers. Local government plays a facilitating and bridging role between different stakeholders, especially between service providers and users.

Managing and mitigating conflicts

Several contributions highlighted the role local government plays in managing and mitigating conflicts between different stakeholders. Waki Martin Chungwa from the Salima Water Development Office in *Malawi* reported for example that the District Coordination Team in his district has been involved in solving disagreements between Area Mechanics (local entrepreneur artisans trained to provide hand pump maintenance services) and Water Point Committees. In *Pakistan*, conflicts are generally managed by the water service provider, but local government intervenes in cases of major problems. Local governments are not always alone in this. In *Nicaragua* for example, local government works in alliance with the Attorney General of the Republic through its Environmental Attorney in cases of conflicts over water sources between property owners of locations where water sources are located and communities.

“Local government plays major role at policy level; for example, for developing the water policy and its approval. Enforcement of the regulations is the responsibility of the water service providers. Local government would come in picture only when there is a deadlock, or dispute in enforcing laws and regulations” - FH Mughal, Independent, Pakistan

THE CHALLENGES

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FACES MANY CHALLENGES IN taking up the above mentioned roles and responsibilities. The participants of the e-discussion identified and discussed the following challenges:

Limited human and financial resources

The majority of contributors to the e-discussion mentioned the lack of human and financial resources as key challenges for local government level to carry out the duties needed for sustainable water services. Local government often has insufficient dedicated staff to take up the roles and responsibilities related to water service provision, with staff often playing multiple roles. As mentioned by Andrew Shantz (SNV, Cambodia) "There are also a lot of competing priorities for the time of local authorities - they don't work exclusively on RWS (rural water supply)!". In addition to lack of human resources in terms of number of dedicated staff, the technical capacity and experience of local government staff in dealing with rural water services was identified as a big challenge.

Another challenge that local government faces mentioned by the majority of the e-discussion participants, is the lack of financial resources, financial flows and the means needed to fulfil their roles and responsibilities, like transport facilities (vehicles, fuel) and tools (e.g. water quality testing kits) etc. In order to fulfil its roles and responsibilities related to water service provision, local government often depends on transfers from national grants or external donors. In *Mozambique* for example, the process of providing post construction support to communities and support to local water committees has been very effective in areas where programmatic funding was available. However, the costs are high and not really affordable from local government budget and therefore funded through the provincial and central budget.

Another challenges is the fact that disbursement of national grants tend to arrive late or not in the promised quantities. The limited level of mobilization of funds, both locally and from the national ministries, limits the efforts of local government to develop and support water service provision and hinders a timely response to water service challenges.

"In the DRC [...] communities identify their annual priorities they transmit to municipalities for funding. Nevertheless, the transfer of funds [are] lagging and / or comes to small slices, which negatively impacts the initial planning."

Adelard Mahamba, UNICEF, Republic of the Congo

"The biggest bottleneck is empowering the [local government] plans that are developed with adequate budget. Our pilot district has only been provided with \$500 and this is grossly insufficient. It also hurts the interest and willingness of local authorities because they work hard on all the data collection and planning activities - but then have no budget to do anything."

Andrew Shantz, SNV, Cambodia

"I wish to give an example to confirm the limited funding capacity to local governments. In this financial year Kamwenge District was given 470 million UGX (about 150,000 USD) in form of District Water and Sanitation conditional Grant (DWSCG) for construction of new water systems, undertake rehabilitation, management and community engagements. Water for People is to use more than this amount of money to construct a pipe water system for three villages with about 1500 people in one sub county!"

Martin Watsisi, Water For People, Uganda

Lack of clarity of the roles and responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities of stakeholders related to the provision of water services, including local government, are generally clearly defined in policies, acts, frameworks and manuals. However, many contributions reported that these are not always well known by local government themselves, other organisations active at decentralised level, like (I)NGOs and development partners, or citizens. This can lead to local government not taking up its roles and responsibilities, duplication of tasks and inability of citizens to hold local government accountable.

Duties related to the provision of water services are often spread over a number of agencies, including local government. However, there is often little coordination among agencies, and even less communication or inclusion of stakeholders in the planning and implementation processes. Development partners, central government agencies, NGOs and humanitarian organisations do not always involve local government in the planning and implementation of their projects and activities, undermining the mandate of local government. Waki Martin Chungwa, Salima District Council, *Malawi*, for example mentioned “uncoordinated implementation of water supply activities by other partners who think their financial muscle is bigger than that of local councils” as a big challenge for local government. This ultimately undermines the ability of services to be owned locally and sustainably over time.

Political influence in decision making

The fact that local government sometimes based decisions on political motivations, which may not be aligned with the wider interests of their citizens, rather than on facts, knowledge and experience was highlighted in the third week of the e-discussion related to the siting and drilling of boreholes. This tends to be a combination of the above mentioned lack of technical capacity in combination with political motives. Such political machinations are challenging to handle, but ignoring the political economy is likely to increase the chances of failure.

“In general [in Uganda] the roles and responsibilities are clearly stated from evidence of the policy books and guidelines. The reality of execution on ground indicates that key players are often half informed or even committed to the stated roles. The problem is lack of systematic dissemination of the policies among the implementers. To make matters worse, there are limitations to demanding accountability and fulfilment of these roles.”

Martin Watsisi, Water For People, Uganda

“Where local government is weaker (for whatever reason) NGOs tend to take over rather than support and truly capacitate local government people. This leads to confusion and conflicts among and with citizens.”

Peter Bury, based on his various experience working with local government since 1986

“Over the last few years, my work, particularly in Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Liberia, South Sudan and Chad has highlighted the challenges faced when non-technical managers or political leaders take decisions without properly considering technical realities. [...] We are finding that decisions about where to site (place) wells, and how to set up and manage drilling contracts often do not take account of the risks and uncertainties of drilling.”

Kerstin Danert, RWSN Secretariat

THE CHALLENGES (CONT...)

Lack of (long and medium term) strategic planning frameworks

What seems to be missing in many countries is a structural approach to medium to long term budgeting and planning of water service development at local government level. Annual budgeting frameworks make it hard to plan for long-term life cycle costing for infrastructure and ongoing management costs. Without a longer-term framework within which to work, it is difficult to have a high-level view of the recurrent costs related to operation and minor maintenance (OpEx) and longer term costs related to major repairs and rehabilitation (CapManEx).

Lack of regulatory frameworks and means of enforcement

Lack of regulatory frameworks and means for enforcement were mentioned by several participants as challenges for local government to take up its role as regulator and enforcer of level of services and performance of service providers. Good examples of effective regulation of rural water supply and enforcement of norms and standards by local government have not emerged strongly from this e-discussion.

Recent and unfinished decentralisation processes

As concluded after the first week of the e-discussion focussing on the challenges, the one factor explaining most of the above mentioned challenges is the fact that **decentralization in many countries is very recent and unfinished**. 'Hanging' fiscal decentralization and uncompleted devolution are constraints for local government to truly exercise the roles that are defined for it in national policy frameworks. For example, Waki Martin Chungwa, a Community Water Supply and Sanitation Officer from the Salima Water Development Office, Malawi, mentioned "Lack of full devolution as the capital budget is still with the Central Government" as an important challenge. According to him, there is a lack of political will at Central Government level to support devolution / decentralisation. He illustrates this with the fact that it has taken almost 10 years since 2004 for Malawi to have Ward Councillors in place who are mandated to make local council decisions.

"[...] [In Kenya] devolution of water service provision to the Counties [...] has enabled the Counties to purchase their own drilling rigs and to start BH (borehole) construction according to their own imperatives. This [...] is not always underpinned by sound hydrogeology. I have had past experience of the 'political method' of siting BHs, as many Kenyan hydrogeologists will also have.

"A study commissioned by the Water Resources Management Authority confirms its prevalence; this study [...] detailed a catalogue of problems, which in addition to 'inappropriate' intervention by political/civil leadership, included scanty (and sometimes fabricated) geophysical data, inappropriate geophysical methods, inappropriate drilling methods, lack of proper drilling supervision and poor record keeping."

Mike Lane, Kenya



Village administrator, near Khujand, Tajikistan. Administrative capacity and potential of lowest government tiers of often overlooked and lacks support and investment. (photo: S. Furey)

THE OPPORTUNITIES

THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE E-DISCUSSION SHARED and discussed possible solutions and opportunities for ensuring that local government can take up these roles and responsibilities.

Legal Framework for Rural Water Services Provision

In any environment or context, it is important that the national level government clearly communicates the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders. Having clarity on roles and responsibilities at all levels goes a long way (as for example argued by Peter Bury in Week 1). This can include translating acts, policies and manuals into local languages and making sure that there are disseminated to the relevant stakeholders.

Delegation of tasks

Local government plays a key role in the provision of water services. However, this does not necessarily mean that they will have to play this role themselves. They can delegate certain tasks to community-based organisations, NGOs, private sector, or public utilities, as was shown by the examples from *Colombia, Burkina Faso, Moldova and Mozambique*.

Clear contractual arrangements and follow-up of these arrangements is then essential. Third parties can also play a role in this, as illustrated by the case of *Ukraine*, where when local government contracts private sector actors, local government is obliged to hire a third party for technical supervision on behalf of and paid for by local government, as reported in Week 3 by Vyacheslav Sorokovsky.

In addition to support in the form of training and process facilitation, support can be provided through the provision of information materials and tools.

Support does not always have to be provided by external entities. Local government entities can also join and support each other, as illustrated by the case of the *Mancomunidades* in *Honduras*. In this way, local government can overcome the challenges related to a lack of economies of scale.

Case Study 1: Support to action plan development

In Burkina Faso, IRC has been supporting two municipalities with the development of their Municipal Development Plan. IRC Burkina Faso accompanied these towns to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate action plans. This has not been a simple operation. In a workshop setting with local government, monitoring data was interpreted and problems were identified.

Based on this, the municipality and its partners came up with an action plan in order to address these challenges, with clear roles and responsibilities for each of the activities. The municipality is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the action plan through a tool that is the monthly dashboard. The action plan is assessed at mid-term and at the end of the year. The action plan allows these two towns to coordinate the activities of all partners. It is also used for advocacy and fundraising.

Similarly, SNV is currently supporting annual district-wide forum in Cambodia, increasing sharing of financial and resource information among all the stakeholders. This allows local government, citizen's and the private sector to interface and hold each other accountable.

Based on a contributions by SAWADOGO Mad from IRC, Burkina Faso and Andrew Shantz, SNV, Cambodia



Councillors outside the District Office. Mbale, Uganda. Often the most important meetings happen outside the council chamber (photo: S. Furey)

THE OPPORTUNITIES (CONT...)

Access to up-to-date monitoring information

Monitoring data can inform technical support, planning and implementation, and can help keeping all parties accountable for their roles and responsibilities. This includes ongoing monitoring of systems, their functionality, service levels and performance of service providers. Monitoring is often linked to the provision of technical support, as was presented in cases from *Ghana*, *Mozambique*, and different *Latin America* countries, where SIASAR (new.siasar.org/) has been implemented. Monitoring data is also used for informing planning and implementation, as explicitly mentioned in the contributions from *Malawi*, *Rwanda*, *Nicaragua* and *Cambodia*.

Lobby for changes

As mentioned by one of the contributions to the e-discussion “Change will only truly come when there is political will to support the decentralisation process and funding allocations so that the local authorities can actually implement their assigned functions.” It is therefore important to raise experiences and lessons learned from the field to (political) decision makers at local government as well as at national level to lobby for change.

Support to local government

From the e-discussion it became clear that local government needs support. In order to overcome the capacity constraints of government, there is a need for external support to local government in terms of capacity building and technical support. This was brought up by several contributions, including from *India* and *Malawi*. This kind of support can come from central government entities, but is also often provided by national and international NGOs.

Using methods, such as the Water Integrity Toolbox (www.waterintegritynetwork.net/tools/) can support openness and transparency of local political processes and reduce opportunities for corruption.

Case Study 2: Associations of municipalities bring economies of scale

Mancomunidades in *Honduras* are (voluntary) associations between municipalities in a certain region. Typically a *mancomunidad* consists of some 8-10 smaller rural municipalities, and is used as vehicle to facilitate implementation of infrastructure projects, including water supply.

It would be very difficult and expensive for each of these smaller municipalities to have its own engineer or technical staff, and set up its own procedures for project implementation, contracting of consultants, procurement and so on. The *mancomunidades* therefore establish one technical unit, which carries out all the project implementation for the member municipalities.

The thinking behind it is that it would be much more cost-efficient to have such a unit for a group of municipalities, rather than each one having its own unit. These units are also a bit bigger and may be better able to contract the rightly skilled staff. This kind of set-up with *mancomunidades* being responsible for project implementation – including procurement and contracting – is quite common in other Latin American countries as well.

Based on a contribution from Stef Smits, IRC

Case Study 3: Service provision by community-based organisations and regionalised utilities in Moldova

Community based management of small piped water systems has been introduced with the support of Swiss development cooperation and provided good results as an alternative option for citizens when local governments are unable to provide services.

A recent trend that is favoured by the government and a range of donors is regionalisation, which means that larger utilities will provide water and sanitation services not only for urban settlements but also manage small systems in the villages of a larger region or district.

Based on a contribution from Florian Klingel, Skat

Case Study 4: Successful lobby for more technical staff at local government level in Mozambique

The provincial WASH working group called GAS has been a driving factor for the increased number of technicians in the districts and the standardisation of approaches, especially in the northern provinces (Nampula, Niassa and Cabo Delgado). Powered by a structured support from Swiss Cooperation (SDC), the GAS in these provinces has boosted the exchange of experience between districts and provinces and enabled the creation of a critical mass pressured district governments to put efforts in the allocation of water and sanitation technical staff, including their empowerment.

Based on the contribution from André Uandela, IRC

Case Study 5: Support to procurement process in Kenya

SNV has been supporting local government in engaging private sector as operators of rural water system since 2011. Currently, there are seven rural water systems managed by domestic private operators engaged by two councils.

The process followed included: i) development of business case, ii) call for Expressions of Interest, iii) short-listing of the Operators, iv) request for proposals from short-listed private firms/businesses, v) selection of the firms, vi) contract negotiation and vii) contract signing. Parallel to this, there was another process of community engagement and education to build clarity on who does what, water tariff and users voice mechanism in the contractual arrangement.

The major strength of this approach was that the government was leading the entire process and water users were fully engaged on this. In fact, water users associations are one of the three parties on the contract. SNV as facilitators were providing very close technical assistance in the entire process as the local authorities required guidance to ensure a transparent and all-accepting procurement and negotiation process.

Based on a contribution by Chiranjibi Tiwari formerly SNV Kenya



New pipeline near San Lucas Tolimán, Guatemala. The role of local government in public works on private or public land varies considerably around the world. (photo: S. Furey)

Case Study 6: Examples of information materials and tools for local government

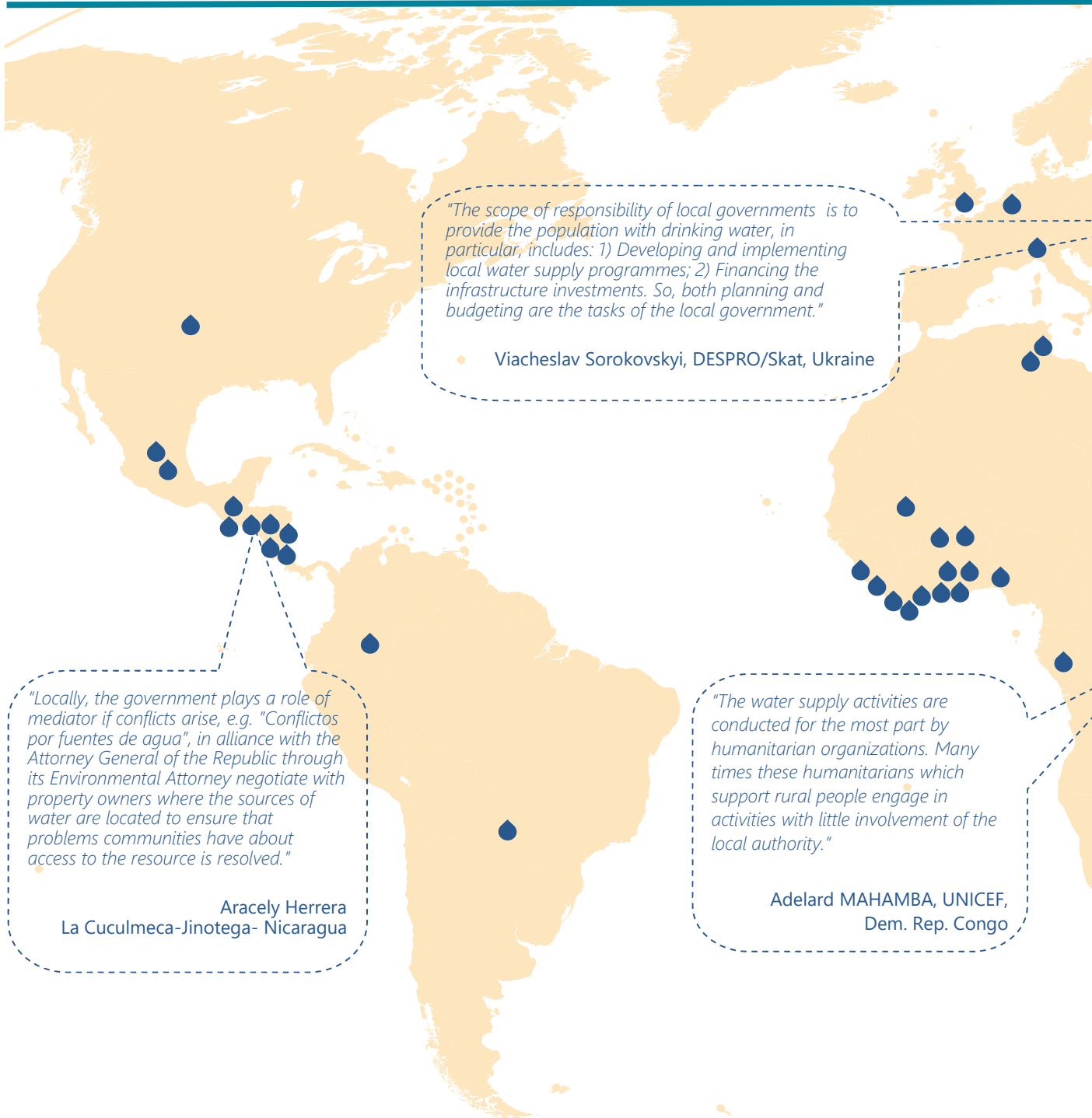
In order to raise awareness of project managers and political leaders on professional borehole drilling, WaterAid, UNICEF and Skat Foundation have developed a **series of short (4 minute) animated films**. These can be accessed on: vimeo.com/channels/drilling

In order to realise the vision of Everyone, Forever, whereby all communities in a municipality would be covered and the mechanisms are in place to ensure sustainability, IRC and Aguaconsult, in collaboration with Water for People developed **tools for life-cycle costing at municipal level**, ultimately culminating in a budget plan for a 10 year period. With that, municipalities can see not only what new investments are needed over that period (so they can mobilize funds for that), but also what capital maintenance needs would be. More information on the tools can be found here www.ircwash.org/news/costing-everyone-forever-in-bolivia.

In Honduras, RASHON (the Water and Sanitation Network of Honduras) has compiled a **manual on measures to improve transparency and accountability** in all aspects of the project cycle. This manual (www.rashon.org/manual-de-transparencia-rendicion-de-cuentas-y-acceso-a-la-informacion-para-juntas-de-agua/) is an important tool for municipalities and communities in transparent project management.

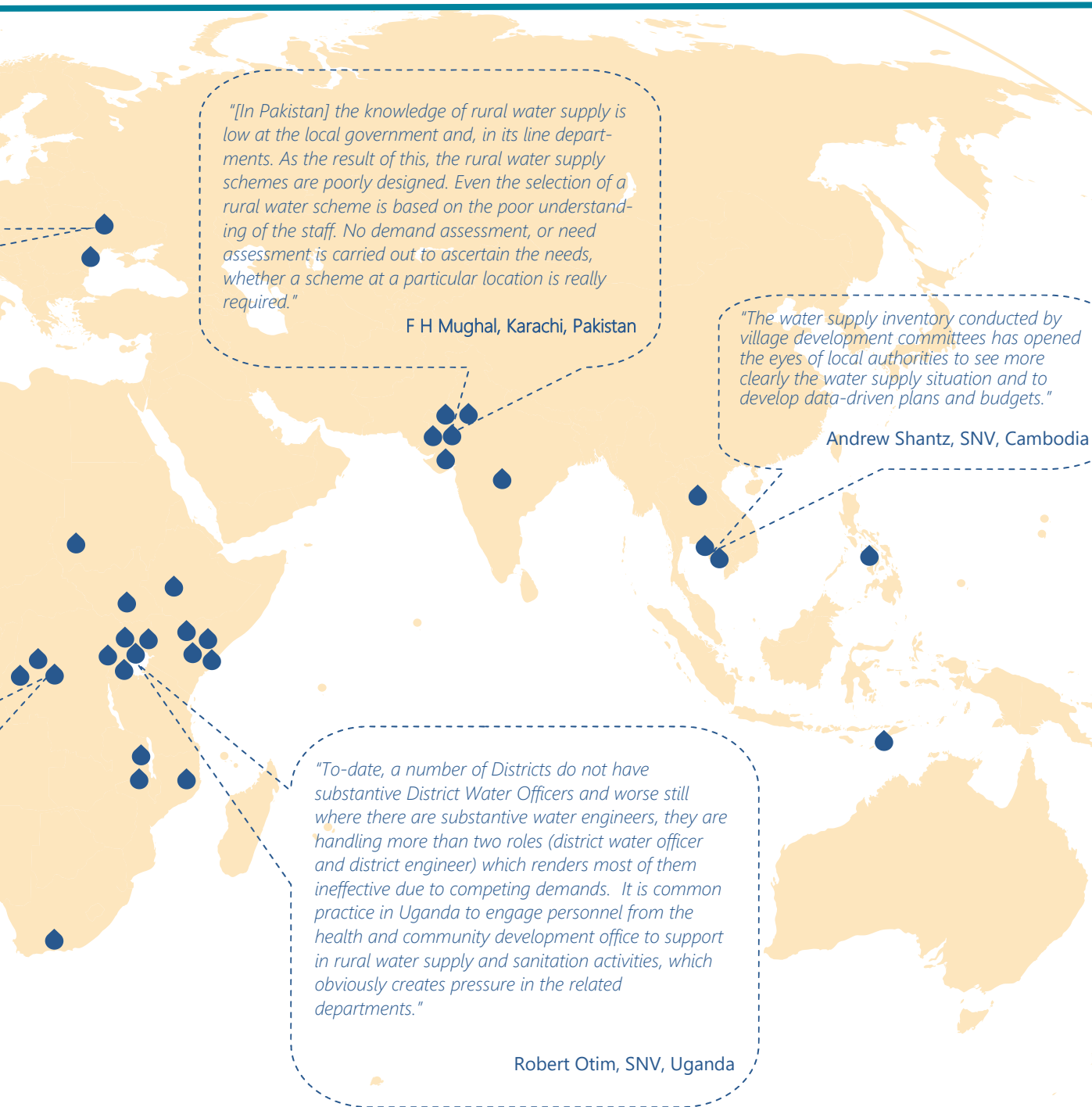
Based on contributions from Stef Smits, IRC and Kerstin Danert, RWSN Secretariat

Experiences of local government and rural water supply



Experiences shared ●

Over 4 weeks, 58 RWSN members contributed their experiences of the role of local government in rural water services.



"[In Pakistan] the knowledge of rural water supply is low at the local government and, in its line departments. As the result of this, the rural water supply schemes are poorly designed. Even the selection of a rural water scheme is based on the poor understanding of the staff. No demand assessment, or need assessment is carried out to ascertain the needs, whether a scheme at a particular location is really required."

F H Mughal, Karachi, Pakistan

"The water supply inventory conducted by village development committees has opened the eyes of local authorities to see more clearly the water supply situation and to develop data-driven plans and budgets."

Andrew Shantz, SNV, Cambodia

"To-date, a number of Districts do not have substantive District Water Officers and worse still where there are substantive water engineers, they are handling more than two roles (district water officer and district engineer) which renders most of them ineffective due to competing demands. It is common practice in Uganda to engage personnel from the health and community development office to support in rural water supply and sanitation activities, which obviously creates pressure in the related departments."

Robert Otim, SNV, Uganda

Week	Theme	Week facilitators (*prepared week summary)
1	Roles and responsibilities	Vinny Casey* (WaterAid), Ton Schouten* (IRC / chair RWSN)
2	Planning, Coordination and Budgeting	Kimberly Slinde Lemme* (Water for People), André Olschewski (Skat), Stef Smits (IRC)
3	Procurement and Contract Management	Kerstin Danert* (Skat); Louisa Gosling (Wateraid)
4	Regulation and on-going support	Marieke Adank* (IRC), Sean Furey (Skat), German Sturzenegger (IADB)

Participant	Organisation	Language
Abel NDEMBE NIMI	UNICEF	French
Adama IDO	National Office of Drinking Water (ONEP)	French
Adamson Sakala	WaterAid	English
Adelard MAHAMBA	Unicef	French
Al Atiri Raqya	Association Eau et Développement	French
Amisial Ledix	HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation	French
André Uandela / Alana Potter	IRC	English
Andrés Gil	IRC	Spanish
Andrew Shantz	SNV	English
Aracely Herrera	La Cuculmeca	Spanish
Béatrice Tourlonnias	Programme Solidarité Eau	French
Chiranjibi Tiwari	SNV	English
David Muli Kavili	Kenyatta University	English
David Schaub-Jones	See-Saw	English
Edgar Fajardo	Water for People	Spanish
F H Mughal	Independent	English
Florian Klingel	Skat Consulting	English
Gashaya Chekol	WaterAid	English
Germán Sturzenegger	Inter-American Development Bank	English
Ibrahim Musah	WaterAid	English
Ivette Morazán	Water for People	Spanish
Jeff Yoder	Independent	English
Juan Manuel Oliva G	Living Water Internacional	Spanish
Kerstin Danert	Skat	English
Khammai Khounsaveng	SNV	English
Kim Lemme	Water for People	English
Madi SAWADOGO	IRC	French
Mariama Dalanda DIALLO	Présidente RE.NIE/GUINEE	French
Marieke Adank	IRC	English
Martin Watsisi	Water for People	English
Maurice Kwizera	WaterAid	English
Mike Lane	Aquasearch Ltd / Rural Focus Ltd	English
Muhammad Asim Saleem	Plan International	English
Nwaro Henry	Independent	English
Ousmane AMADOU	Consultant du bureau d'études BERIA	French
Paul Hutchings	Cranfield University	English
Peter Bury	Independent	English
Robert Otim	SNV	English
Roman Rhienhardt F. Ladaw	International Committee of the Red Cross	English
Sanford Berg	University of Florida	English
Sean Furey	Skat foundation	English
Stef Smits	IRC	English
Steven Ouma	-	English
Sylvia MAGENE SWEDI,	SNV	French
Viacheslav "Slava" Sorokovskiy	Despro	English
Vida Affum Duti	IRC	English
Vincent Casey / Ayenew Asega / Adugnaw Getachew / Gashaye Chekol	WaterAid / Burie Zuria District	English / Amaharic
Vincent Casey / Oswald T Nkhuwa	WaterAid / Nkhotakota District, Malawi	English
Vital Nsengiyumva	WaterAid	English
Waki Martin Chungwa	Salima Water Development Office	English
Wewa Charles,	SNV	English
Yao Geoffroy TOURE	EAA	French
Yazon BOUE	Commune de Houndé	French
Yazon MUD	Former Mayor Houndé	French
Zedekiah Chitayi	Welthungerhilfe	English

About the e-discussion

This paper is a synthesis of the major themes discussed during the local government e-discussion held during May 2015, which included 75 contributions from 58 people presenting experiences in English, French and Spanish and cases from 43 different countries from across the globe. Each week focused on a specific theme. Dedicated week facilitators introduced the theme in the beginning of the week, led the discussion during the week and summarised the main discussion points at the end of the week. The paper highlights the discussed role local government can and does play in ensuring sustainable water service provision, the challenges that local government is facing in fulfilling these roles and responsibilities, and the opportunities for overcoming these challenges.

Thank you to all the facilitators and participants.

The weekly summaries and an overview of all e-discussion contributions can be found [here](https://dgroups.org/RWSN/sustainable_services_rwsn/library) in French, Spanish, and English: https://dgroups.org/RWSN/sustainable_services_rwsn/library. These formed the bases of this paper.



The Rural Water Supply Network (RWSN) was founded in 1992 and today comprises nearly 10,000 professionals in over 150 countries striving to get safe, accessible, affordable water to everyone living in rural areas around the world. www.rural-water-supply.net

Imprint

Compiled and edited by Marieke Adank (IRC), Kimberly Slinde Lemme (Water for People) and Sean Furey (Skat Foundation)
 Design and Layout: Skat Foundation. Published by the Rural Water Supply Network (RWSN) as part of the Sustainable Services Theme, Suggested citation:
 RWSN (2017) *Local government and rural water services that last: a way forward: Rural Water Supply Reality Check*, RWSN, Skat Foundation, St. Gallen, Switzerland.