



African Civil Society Network on Water and Sanitation
(ANEW)

Analysis of Water and Sanitation Policies
and Status of IWRM in Africa
&
Advocacy capacity assessment of
African civil society on water supply and
sanitation

SUMMARY REPORT

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Facilitated and produced by Nottawasaga Institute with the support of
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1 Introduction

With support from the European Union, the Africa Civil Society Network on Water and Sanitation (ANEW) has launched a region-wide initiative on “Promoting and improving the capacities of African Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) for advocacy and participation in governance to enhance provision of water supply and sanitation and Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM)”. The initiative aims to support and strengthen capacities of African CSOs as well as institutional development of ANEW over a three year period in order to facilitate dialogue and concerted action between African civil society and decision-makers on water and sanitation in Africa.

The objectives of the initiative are:

- To increase the number of African countries with explicit policy and strategies that promote progress towards achieving the IWRM and water supply and sanitation targets agreed to by the Heads of State and Government in Africa;
- To build political commitment to action by mobilizing and coordinating the experience and energy of African CSOs and support their network, ANEW; and
- To monitor progress and engage in dialogue that reflects the priorities of poor and marginalized communities, with national governments, regional bodies and high-level initiatives.

The initiative reflects the recognition that civil society in many parts of the world has been instrumental in water and sanitation provision, through its direct involvement in policy formulation through advocacy, participation in water resources development and management, campaigns for required national legislation and budgetary resources, public awareness-raising, and empowerment of local communities through knowledge-sharing and capacity-building. In Africa, a number of national and local initiatives instituted by various CSOs have gone a long way in providing safe water and adequate sanitation, especially in rural and slum areas and improving sustainable catchment management at river and lake basin levels.

Admittedly, the ANEW initiative has an ambitious and broad scope, but it has the potential to significantly strengthen and greatly enhance efforts to address the ongoing and emergent water and sanitation crisis in Africa. It can do this by helping civil society actors to play an effective role in the water and sanitation sector, while working in synergistic partnerships with governments, inter-governmental bodies, private sector and development cooperation partners.

To be successful, the initiative needs to be supported by an extensive knowledge-base and communications infrastructure to undertake informed actions at all levels. Capacity-building of civil society actors to undertake advocacy and participate in governance has to be an essential component of the initiative. To this end, ANEW commissioned a study with the general objective to review and analyze water and sanitation policies and the status of IWRM in Africa in order to promote informed and inclusive public debates and dialogues on key policy issues and IWRM.

Within this broad objective, the study aimed to:

- i. Review and analyze water and sanitation policies and the status of IWRM in Africa, with a view to identifying policy gaps that could be addressed by civil society advocacy;
- ii. Assess advocacy capacity of CSOs working on water supply, water resource management and sanitation, and identify gaps to be filled; and
- iii. Identify critical intervention opportunities and strategies.

The countries covered by the study were:

- Southern Africa: Zambia, Mozambique, Lesotho and Botswana

- Central Africa: Tchad, Cameroon, and Democratic Republic of Congo
- Western Africa: Senegal, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Mali and Nigeria
- Eastern Africa: Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia and Rwanda

The study was designed to provide information to ANEW on:

- Gaps and opportunities within the water and sanitation policy arena in Africa
- Existing CSO capacities and skills in advocacy and networking
- Gaps in the CSO knowledge-base, capacities and skills and ways to address them
- Opportunities for CSO advocacy on water and sanitation at the local, national and regional levels
- Indicators for monitoring progress.

The following executive summary of findings of the study has been prepared by the Nottawasaga Institute (NI), a Nairobi-based consulting firm specializing in institutional capacity assessment and development, with substantial experience in water and sanitation issues in Africa at the local, national, sub-regional and regional levels through its engagement and work with the African Union, African Development Bank, New Partnership for Africa's Development, African Ministers' Council on Water, UN Water/Africa, development cooperation partners and African civil society organizations.

2 Comparative advantages of CSOs in the water and sanitation sector

Based on a review of available literature and observations received from the CSOs surveyed, some potential comparative advantages of CSOs vis-à-vis other entities working in the water and sanitation arena have been identified. These include:

- Credibility and hands-on experience of working among communities, especially marginalized groups in both rural and urban areas;
- Ground-level knowledge of the water and sanitation needs of local communities within their specific contexts - environmental, political, socio-economic and behavioural;
- Knowledge of and contacts with societal representatives and value-givers in communities— political, religious, etc.- including leaders of women and youth;
- Understanding of the feasibility and effectiveness of external interventions;
- Ability to transfer knowledge and appropriate technologies, including best practices and lessons learned;
- Cost effectiveness vis-à-vis large, often centralized programmes and projects.
- Ability to monitor and evaluate action on a day-to-day basis;
- Ability for advocacy to ensure governments' compliance with commitments made at regional and international fora.

However, in Africa as in some other developing world regions, the capacities of and resources available - financial, technical and human – to CSOs in order for them to play effective roles in the water and sanitation arena remain limited. A major concern is also the sustainability and scalability of their efforts over space and time. Often, governments are suspicious or oblivious of the activities of CSOs. In this regard, the ANEW initiative on behalf of African CSOs can play a substantial role in supporting and sustaining civil society efforts to ensure availability of safe water and adequate sanitation to communities most in need. As a representative organization working at the international, regional, national and local levels, ANEW has the challenge and opportunity to bridge the chasm between policy and implementation.

3 Findings and Analysis

a) Watsan policy and IWRM

Significant efforts are now being made in most of the ANEW-EU project countries, often with the support of development cooperation partners and inter-governmental bodies, to develop and implement national strategies and plans with regard to water and sanitation, IWRM roadmap/plans and plans for the achievement of the MDG targets on water and sanitation. Governments have intensified their efforts and have increased budgetary allocations to the Watsan sector as a whole. Some Governments are also working towards mobilising resources from the private sector and bilateral donors to address the related infrastructure requirements. A growing shift from sectoral orientation towards more integrated approaches, such as IWRM, to water and sanitation provision is also discernibly leading to sectoral reforms.

There is also an increasing recognition in the statements and proclamations by Governments and partners about the important role that CSOs and agencies can play in their own efforts to develop and implement Watsan policies and IWRM plans. Various public campaigns have been organised in some countries to ensure wider spread education on related issues, especially the importance of sanitation and hygiene. This has led to more resources and efforts being mobilised at the local level to improve water and sanitation infrastructure in some areas. However, the nature and extent of hard information available from different sources on the progress made on the above is uneven in the 17 countries covered by the ANEW-EU project. Less than 50% of cases have established proper monitoring and evaluation systems. In particular, substantive information on the role of civil society in developing and implementing Watsan policies and IWRM plans is difficult to obtain.

b) Advocacy Capacity Assessment

Challenges to Equitable Access to Water and Sanitation Services

In all the countries surveyed the primary focus for provision of Watsan services remains on formal urban settlements. Infrastructure in un-official settlements, low income and rural areas remains weak. Equitable distribution and access to water and sanitation services remains a key challenge for most populations across the continent. At the national level, common impediments to equitable access to water and sanitation were identified as follows.

- Constraints in policy development, ranging from complete lack of policy to a dis-connect between water and sanitation.
- Management constraints, ranging from lack of coordination between different stakeholders to lack of effective water regulation mechanisms to promote equitable access.
- Capacity constraints in government (lack of planning, weak skill base), CSOs (low awareness of policy, weak networks), and communities (culture and attitudes, low policy awareness, lack

of appropriate technology), and resource constraints (insufficient infrastructure, inadequate finances, lack of transparency).

- Externalities such as poverty and climate change.

The Role of CSOs in Watsan Policy and Service Delivery

To improve their participation in Watsan and IWRM policy formulation and implementation, CSOs surveyed for the study believe they could effectively engage in the following:

- Capacity-building on advocacy issues – especially policy interpretation, issue identification and management
- Awareness-raising of communities/consumers on their entitlements
- Creating bridges between service providers and communities/consumers
- Improving collaboration and coordination among CSOs for knowledge-sharing and concerted action
- Improving the public image of CSOs among governments and communities
- Effectively lobbying for active participation of communities in policy development and implementation
- Fund-raising for more interventions and wider coverage of issues
- Being watch-dogs monitor progress in government compliance with regional and international commitments relating to Watsan, IWRM and the MDGs.

As expected, while the available capacities of CSOs relating to the above vary greatly from one country to another, the need to engage and the areas for engagement are uniform. On the whole, most CSOs express substantial need for support to develop the required capabilities as well as enabling environments where they can be most effective in advocacy at the national, sub-regional and regional levels.

Gaps in Watsan Policy Formulation and Implementation

Significant gaps exist in the knowledge available to CSOs about existing national Watsan policies and IWRM plans, and they often lack the capacity to advocate for their greater participation in those endeavours. In all 17 countries, most CSOs, not participating directly in policy processes are not very cognizant of the efforts being made at the international, regional and sub-regional levels in the arenas of Watsan policy and IWRM. They are thus unable to hold Governments accountable for the commitments that their respective governments may have made in regional and international fora. In this regard, ANEW has an opportunity to play a significant role in helping CSOs to address knowledge gaps as well as their advocacy capacity.

Water and Sanitation Policy Landscape at Regional/Sub-regional and International levels

The level of awareness of regional policy processes and knowledge of engagement of the national governments within these processes varies from country to country. Where the respondents were regional or national coordinating organisations, there was some awareness and understanding of the regional processes and the role of national governments therein. However, often CSOs were unaware of the existence of regional and sub-regional processes, though more aware of international treaties and agreements that their governments are parties to.

The impact of the international agreements on national-level action for water and sanitation service delivery was seen to be substantive. Water sector reforms, increased budget allocations for water and

sanitation, improved accountability and increased access to Watsan services were cited as some of the improvements achieved as a result of international agreements.

CSOs play a minimal role in the formulation of international agreements but do play a role in the dissemination and awareness-raising about agreements. CSOs have a limited mandate to monitor the implementation of policy, but they feel that their recommendations are not given due consideration. Opportunities for CSO engagement are varied. Factors such as a weak understanding of issues and processes at the regional level, lack of communication, insufficient funding and lack of “openings” within processes were cited as impediments to participation.

Existing Advocacy Activity

The percentage of resources allocated to advocacy varied from country to country and organisation to organisation, from a low of 0% to 90%. In 10 of the 17 countries surveyed CSOs were members of a Watsan network, and engaged in activities ranging from policy dissemination, organising dialogue platforms, and lobbying policy makers. Organisations that devoted resources to advocacy had an advocacy strategy in place, and identified issues through consultations and research. Where there was no advocacy strategy in place, there were also no indicators in place to monitor the implementation of Watsan initiatives.

Limited research is carried out to inform advocacy work, and in some cases baseline surveys and periodic evaluations have been used to provide information. In over 90% of the countries surveyed, research is weak and not targeted. Data accessed to support advocacy included national statistics, INGO research and publications, mainstream media, and donor evaluation reports.

Lack of funding, recognition and mismatched perceptions were key challenges to advocacy identified by the CSOs. Other challenges identified included weak institutional frameworks, changing policy structures, ineffective communication between partners within and across sectors, lack of awareness on IWRM requirements, inconsistent CSO efforts, and weak CSO management structures. Increased funding and employing dedicated resources to advocacy are some strategies that have been initiated and proposed to improve advocacy performance.

c) Institutional Capacity of ANEW and members

ANEW has emerged as a strong civil society platform that is recognised by governments in Africa and other major stakeholders in the Watsan sector at sub-regional, pan-African and international levels. AMCOW has invested ANEW with a substantial mandate, from the grassroots and national level to the sub-regional and pan-African level. Such recognition for CSOs in Africa is not common and is a demonstration of the impact that ANEW has had in the Watsan sector in a short time period. It is a hard-won opportunity that should not be lost. The expectations CSOs have of ANEW are also quite high. To fulfil these expectations, ANEW itself needs to build the capacities of its constituent organs - the Secretariat, National Focal Points and Regional Coordinators. The external demands, as well as internal demands of its members, have expanded at a rate that is not matched by ANEW's structural growth. ANEW's current operational structure provides a framework that needs to be strengthened to ensure that ANEW is able to deliver on its mandate.

4 Recommendations

a. Strategic direction:

ANEW to prepare a strategic plan to guide its development over the next 3-5 years. This should include a comprehensive organisational assessment and organisational capacity development plan to ensure that the internal development of the organisation meets the demands of its growing mandate in Africa.

b. Advocacy strategy

As part of its overall strategic plan, ANEW should develop an advocacy strategy that prioritizes strategic and critical entry points for advocacy while at the same time building on the unique position and mandate of the organization. Features of the strategy should include the following:

- Training on the basic concepts, forms and modes of advocacy.
- Partnering government and stakeholders in policy formulation/implementation.
- Building on the unique position of civil society to provide a linkage between the micro and macro levels;
- Strengthening skills of CSOs in inclusive and participatory planning processes;
- Strengthening trans-boundary, river basin and sub-regional networking as a platform for working with AMCOW and other inter-governmental initiatives;
- Strengthening the role and capacity of civil society in monitoring and evaluation, and research to inform stronger Watsan policy and decision-making.

As part of its advocacy strategy, ANEW should identify key entry points where its efforts can have the most effect and impact; entry points could include the following:

Regional Level entry points

- Mobilize a major popular campaign for water and sanitation as a rights-based issue.
- Focus on awareness-raising, capacity-building and advocacy to bring sanitation to the centre in all Watsan and development planning and action.
- Advocate stronger inter-governmental collaboration at sub-regional and basin levels.
- Focus on water related impacts of climate change as a component of the African position at the UNFCCC; this could be linked to the movement for “climate justice”.

Country Level entry points

- Promote the CSO strategic niche and comparative advantage in bridging the micro-macro divide, facilitating multi-stakeholder engagement and participatory planning.
- Advocate more prominent inclusion of water and sanitation in development planning, particularly in the context of PRSPs and national budget allocations.
- Promote and support the adoption of mechanisms for transparency and accountability in implementation of Watsan policies and strategies.

c. Advocacy capacity-building:

Implement advocacy training for ANEW members, ensuring all countries benefit from training. Key elements to include:

- awareness-raising and capacity-building on national, sub-regional, regional and global policies and initiatives in the Watsan sector;
- developing and advocacy strategy;
- identifying decision makers, mapping policy processes, developing relationships and building credibility;
- using documented evidence, case studies, and research as a key tool in advocacy;

- strengthening networking for advocacy at national, regional and international levels;
- media strategies for highlighting the advocacy efforts of civil society organizations;
- advocacy toolkit: media releases, web-sites and internet campaigning, organizing media conferences, working with parliamentarians;
- Advocacy impact assessment, M&E.

d. Knowledge management and policy analysis:

Institutionalize mechanisms for gathering, managing and disseminating knowledge on policy developments and initiatives/actors in Watsan for access by members and the general public. Establish help-desks at national level, where local CSOs can get assistance in policy interpretation and improve their ability to engage in Watsan issues.

Strengthen networks at the national and regional level to ensure functioning and vibrant information sharing and resource mobilisation. In conjunction with AMCOW-TAC, establish a policy analysis think tank with sub-regional presence. This will engage African intellectuals and other stakeholders in policy interpretation and formulation and facilitate more effective input of CSOs into policy formulation processes.

e. Implementing the AMCOW-ANEW MoU:

Prepare a plan for implementing the AMCOW-ANEW MoU, and arrange with AMCOW TAC for presentation and discussion of the plan, with an aim to finalizing agreement prior to the 7th Ordinary Session of AMCOW. Recommended components of the plan are:

- Mechanisms for coordinating and consolidating CSO contributions to AMCOW policy and planning deliberations;
- ANEW's role in knowledge building in Watsan issues in Africa;
- Fostering and strengthening partnerships between civil society and AMCOW bodies at regional and sub-regional levels, and with national governments and other partners such as ANBO, African Groundwater Commission, AWEPA, etc.;
- Capacity development of CSOs for their role in achieving Watsan MDGs;
- Documentation and dissemination on civil society initiatives and approaches;
- Organizing a major annual CSO event as part of the African Water Week.

f. Strengthening the Secretariat and Network Structures

To ensure that the organization's development is paced with the expansion in its mandate, the staffing structure and skill base at headquarters, regional coordinators and national focal point should be evaluated and addressed accordingly. This process needs to be guided by a comprehensive strategic plan developed to guide ANEW's operations throughout Africa.

Expand ANEW's financial resources; develop a resource mobilization strategy that will enable it to facilitate its internal and external expansion.

To consolidate recognition as an independent entity, and to ensure it can accommodate required management support systems, the Board should consider options for establishing and housing the secretariat independently.



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