

Building Links between Local Governments and IWRM

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1 Introduction

LoGo Water¹ is a research project that aims to significantly improve the capacity of local governments to fulfill their role in the adoption of sound integrated water resources management solutions and to contribute to the achievement of the water-related Millennium Development Goals. The project focuses specifically on the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region and particularly on the countries of the Limpopo river basin, involving eight associated local governments from the basin countries of Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe².

Specific activities of the LoGo Water project include:

- 1. Reviewing existing knowledge and experience on the role of local governments in water resources management, especially in SADC countries and the European Union (EU)
- 2. Identifying an effective role for local government in IWRM in SADC countries;
- 3. Supporting the implementation of local government actions contributing to IWRM in SADC countries through the development of an implementation strategy.

These activities are being carried out collaboratively by a consortium of African and European research institutes, resource centres and local governments³.

The focus of the Logo Water Project is on the Limpopo basin, which along with the Zambezi, is one of Southern Africa's most important shared river basin. Flowing between Botswana, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, it is a critical shared resource for the populations living along it. The basin occupies 420,000 km2 and has a population of around 15 million people including 10 major cities and numerous towns and local communities. The river is estimated to provide water for around 250,000 ha of irrigation in the riparian countries, mainly being in South Africa (200,000ha) with another 40,000 in Mozambique.

² The associated local governments are: Selebi-Phikwe Town Council and Serowe/Palapye District Council in Botswana; the Municipality of Chokwé and the Municipality of Xai-Xai in Mozambique; Makhado Local Municipality and Tshwane Metropolitan Council in South Africa; and Beitbridge Rural District Council and the City of Bulawayo in Zimbabwe.

¹ LoGo Water: Towards effective involvement of local government in Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) in river basins of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, EC Contract 003717.

³ The partners are: ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, European Secretariat, Germany; Oxford University Centre for the Environment (OUCE), United Kingdom; Foundation for a New Water Culture (FNCA), Spain; IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, the Netherlands; ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, Africa Secretariat, South Africa; Institute for Natural Resources (INR), South Africa; Institute for Water and Sanitation Development (IWSD), Zimbabwe; International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Mozambique Office; and the Kalahari Conservation Society (KCS), Botswana.

2 Integrated Water Resources Management

The concept of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) has evolved over several decades, and has become popularised since the early 1990s. IWRM seeks to tackle some of the root causes of the management crisis, namely the inefficiencies and conflicts that arise from un-coordinated development and use of water resources. IWRM is being promoted by many organisations, implemented in some areas and piloted in others. A huge effort involving the reform of water laws, institutions and capacity building is underway based upon the IWRM 'recipe'. In most southern African countries new laws have been enacted to develop catchment level authorities to plan and manage water resources, and the EU Water Framework Directive now requires European states to adopt catchment level planning based upon IWRM principles.

There are many definitions of IWRM, but the most commonly used is that "IWRM is a process which promotes the co-ordinated development and management of water, land and related resources, in order to maximize the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems" (Global Water Partnership, 2000). IWRM means a move away from traditional sub-sector based approaches (water and sanitation, irrigation, industry, etc.) to a more holistic or integrated approach to water management based upon a set of agreed key principles. Taken together, the principles offer a framework for analysing, and subsequently managing multiple uses of water in situations of increasing competition and conflict and where water resources are scarce (or polluted).

Three key concepts which in one form or another are present in all definitions of IWRM are: equity, efficiency and sustainability. IWRM aims to:

- promote more equitable access to water resources and the benefits that are derived from water in order to tackle poverty;
- ensure that scarce water is used efficiently and for the greatest benefit of the greatest number of people; and
- achieve more sustainable utilisation of water, including for a better environment⁴.

There is no doubt that the concept of IWRM is an attractive and logical one, as clearly hydrological conditions dictate that water in the hydrological cycle collects in basins and aquifers, and as such, should be managed as a whole. While much has been written on the subject, some authors (Biswas, 2004), challenge its legitimacy. The difficulty with IWRM often is that in practice, water is usually managed nationally, and hydrological boundaries do not correspond with national ones. Furthermore, water is very site specific, and as a result, even national level water management can be problematic.

⁴ Smits, S., and Butterworth, J., (2006), Literature review: Local government and Integrated Water Resources Management. Available at: http://www.iclei-europe.org/index.php?id=1587

3 The Southern African Development Community (SADC)

SADC is an organization which has been created to link the 14 countries of Southern Africa to facilitate a more integrated approach to development across the region. First established in 1992, this initiative calls upon all countries and people of Southern Africa to develop 'a vision of a shared future that will ensure economic well-being, improvement of the standards of living and quality for life, freedom and social justice, peace and security for the people of Southern Africa⁵'. This was formalized under the SADC Common Agenda⁶, and the SADC revised Protocol on Shared Water Courses (SADC 2001)⁷ which has been developed to implement Agenda 21 at a policy level, and includes the promotion of sustainable utilisation of natural resources.

4 Water management in the SADC region

Water in Southern Africa is characterised by large rivers shared between a number of countries. In the last few decades, action has been taken to develop a more integrated approach to the management of these water resources through the establishment of *River Basin Commissions*. These are seen to be key development institutions for regional water management initiatives, but in the SADC region, most are still in their infancy, and are unable as yet to fulfill their mandates. A concerted effort is now being made across the region to enhance capacity to undertake water resources planning, development and management within these organizations. A complete list of these commissions is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: International Basin Commissions

NAME / TYPE	DATE	COUNTRIES
Joint Water Commission	1979/ 1992	South Africa, Swaziland
Permanent Commission of Cooperation	1981	Zambia, Malawi
Joint Water Commission	1983/1995	Botswana, South Africa
Joint Water Commission (Lesotho Highlands Water Project)	1986	Lesotho, South Africa
Limpopo River Commission (LIMCOM)	1986 / 2004	Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa, Zimbabwe
Permanent Joint Technical Commission	1990	Angola, Namibia
Joint Permanent Technical Commission	1990	Botswana, Namibia
Joint Water Commission	1991/1999	Mozambique, Swaziland
Commission of Cooperation	1992	Malawi and Tanzania

⁵ SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP), Chapter 1. Available at: http://www.sadc.int/english/about/vision/index.php

⁶ SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP), Chapter 1. Available at: http://www.sadc.int/english/documents/risdp/chapter1.php

¹ This Protocol complements the framework provided by other instruments of international water law such as the Helsinki Rules on the use of the Water of International Rivers and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses.

Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM)	1994	Angola, Botswana, Namibia
Joint Water Commission	1996	South Africa, Mozambique
Permanent Joint Water Commission	1992	Namibia, South Africa
Phungwe River Basin Commission	2002	Mozambique and Zimbabwe
Orange-Senqu River Commission (ORASECOM)	2002	Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, South Africa
Joint Water Commission	2003	Malawi and Mozambique

Source: SADC Water Commission

In addition to these Basin Commissions, there has been an attempt to promote the development of Basin Fora, involving a wide range of stakeholders. The success of the involvement of these fora in the development of strategic water plans has been varied, and there is still much room for improvement.

The challenges faced by countries in the SADC region with respect to water management are significant. Variation in water provision in the SADC partner countries are shown in Table 2. These figures highlight the urgent need for local governments to be involved in addressing water management issues, and it is clear that their involvement could make a serious contribution to national efforts towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Table 2: Water Provision in the SADC countries

Country	Nº of people	Nº of people	Nº of people	Nº of people	Target to reduce
	served (rural)	unserved	served (urban)	unserved	backlog by 50%
		(rural)		(urban)	
Angola	Figures not available				
Botswana	1 354 935				
DR. of Congo	5 616 000	29 481 000	13 413 000	6 903 000	18 192 000
Leshoto	982 100	627 990	355 180	246 820	437 405
Madagascar					
Malawi	4 457 000	4 457 000	1 332 000	254 000	2 355 500
Mauritius		0		0	0
Mozambique	4 467 284	8 296 461	1 212 593	2 427 208	50 361 834
Namibia	844 000	434 800	537 100	10 900	222 850
South Africa	10 230 000	9 900 000	22 000 000	1 300 000	5 600 000
Swaziland	400 000	370 000	220 000	0	185 000
Tanzania	12 375 000	12 375 000	5 775 000	2 475 000	7 425 000
Zambia	2 830 000	3 600 000	2 811 000	1 200 000	2 400 000
Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe Figures not available				

Source: Hollingworth and Chambira, 2005

A number of strategic areas and activities have been defined (SADC, 2005) to support the SADC Regional Strategic Action Plan. These are:

A) Regional water resources planning and management, including:

- Resource assessment and monitoring for surface and ground water.
- Development of planning mechanisms and support to utilize the collected data.
- Resource planning based on sound and common resource assessment methods, taking into account major developmental and environmental issues.
- Development of operational procedures for managing water infrastructure and the resource.

B) Infrastructure development and support

- Promote and support strategic infrastructure development for regional integration and development and poverty alleviation with particular emphasis on energy generation, agriculture, food security, and water and sanitation.
- Support financial mobilisation efforts for joint infrastructure development

C) Water governance

- Maintain and sustain an enabling environment as represented by the Protocol on Shared Water Courses to ensure levelling the playing field between Member States.
- Developing, promoting and implementing best practices regarding effective participation by various stakeholders in water resources development and management, including women, youth and other disadvantaged groups.

D) Capacity building

- Equip various actors in the water and related sectors with the requisite competencies (technical, managerial and negotiation skills) to be able to adequately deliver the expected goods and services for the benefit of individuals, communities and Member States.
- Build and strengthen human and institutional capacity for sustainable management of water resources at local, national and regional levels

5 Current functions of local government

The current functions of local governments in southern Africa are predominantly dominated by political prerogatives as reflected in most of the mandates of the eight selected municipalities within the Limpopo basin. Constituted as basic cells for the electoral processes in the context of current decentralization and democratization discourse, the services delivery mechanisms is pivotal for the elections campaigns.

The structural construct and subsequent functioning mechanism are, therefore, limited in scope resulting in a certain level of marginalisation of critical functions such as local government's involvement in IWRM. This is further hampered (with few exceptions, e.g. in South Africa) by limited resources allocation in financial, technical and human capital terms.

As a result of the impacts of extreme events (e.g. droughts and floods) in the recent past, there is a growing movement to expand local authorities' involvement in water resources management issues.

6 Actors in IWRM

In present terms, it can be said that IWRM is predominantly perceived as a purely hydrological problem. In this regard, it is noted that the key agencies driving the water resource management agenda, are basically the National Water Management Agencies/Directorates linked with the other entities directly dealing with water issues either from a research perspective (e.g. water research agencies) or as water users (e.g. commercial farming sector). Local government and the public at large are basically marginalised in the conceptualization of water resources management approaches, being relegated to a simple recipient of water services or provider of simple support systems in cases of water crises (e.g. floods and droughts).

6.1 Water authorities

At a regional level there is a growing recognition of the need to develop a more holistic approach to water resources management. As a result, the concept of IWRM has become increasingly adopted with different levels of progress and practical implementation on the ground. Region wide, water policy reforms are taking place that have led to new institutional arrangements, in particular the establishment of water resources management agencies. At catchment level, the catchment management authority model has basically been applied by all SADC countries. For trans-boundary river basins, this model is being framed in the context of the River Basin Commissions (e.g. OKACOM, ZIMCOM, LIMCOM, etc.).

It should, however, be noted that structure and functionality of those models of water resources management institutions are still biased to hydrological issues. This is substantiated by the fact that most of those catchment management authorities are dominated by water engineers, hydrologist and the like, with little or nil representation of social scientists and/or economists. The operational focus tends to be skewed to water in the rivers themselves, and associated meteorological parameters with little consideration of water on land.

6.2 Private sector involvement

Private sector involvement in IWRM is, reflected from the water use perspective, associated with water application in large farming systems or intensive industrial water user systems (e.g. aluminium industry). Linked to the commercialization of water services delivery, the region is growingly experiencing private sector involvement in water supply systems. For example, as a way of increasing efficiency in water supply systems for major cities in Mozambique, the delivery services are being subcontracted to

parastatal companies that enter in partnerships with specialized European private water supply companies (e.g. Vintenge from the Netherlands).

There are different levels of responses to this approach: some in favour, associated with the perceived increase in efficiency and coverage outreach and; other against, associated with the perceived impacts on water pricing preventing access, particularly by the poorest of the poor.

6.3 Strengthening the functionality of local governments

There is a need to take advantage of knowledge on local dynamics to inform planning and decision making at the highest level. In this respect, local governments can provide an incredible value added to IWRM if well equipped and integrated by making use of their comparative advantage (think globally, act locally).

The scope of the mandate of local governments should go beyond political prerogatives and move into more technical and issue-based approaches. This calls for effective devolution of planning and decision power, support by adequate transfer of authority and capacity development at skills and systemic levels with adequate enabling environment.

6.4 Linking water authorities to local governments

The new institutional arrangements for improved water resources management, in the form of catchment management authorities/committees, have a great potential to move one step further towards optimal implementation of IWRM. The intrinsic notion of catchment management committees and river basin fora has all what is required for a more inclusive, transparent and consultative process of planning, management and decision making on water resources at a catchment level.

This raises the question of what mechanisms need to be put in place to make this happen?

6.5 Potential role of private sector actions in IWRM

The private sector has the potential to bring in its entrepreneurial skills to enhance efficiency and cost effectiveness in IWRM. The key challenges would eventually be on how to move beyond service delivery.

Through the appropriate application of the notion of *Corporate Social Responsibility*, the private sector has the opportunity to add practical value in imparting effective and efficient water resources management and conservation practices to associated subsistence farmers and increase their agricultural produce, while conserving water resources and promoting long term sustainability.

Through proper community, public and private partnerships, a solid and genuine coalition can be established, and has the potential to outperform the impacts of water crisis in southern Africa, in a win-win situation.

6.6 Building an effective role for local government actions

The bottom up approach to planning and management is increasingly being recognised. Effective integration of local governments in IWRM can certainly help better planning, management and decision making. This, however, needs to be done not as a cosmetic process or as a way of promoting the "illusion of inclusion". For it to be effective, local governments need to be equipped with an appropriate skills mix, have adequate institutional and organizational set ups and be backed with a supportive enabling environment and finance.

The ultimate goal of local governments' involvement in IWRM should not be that of successfully demonstrating the applicability of the concept *per se*, but rather that of contribution to the provision of effective responses to water related MDG's. We should note that water is ultimately a human right, no matter what aridity condition we might be facing.

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6.7 Dealing with floods and droughts

Under this topic it is important to analyze the levels of preparation of local governments to times of periodic floods and the answer that they are ready to provide. It is important to develop processes and actions to minimize flood impact by more effective integrated spatial planning and management at local level (e.g. housing in flood plains, location of sewerage treatment plants, land fills, etc.) And it is also very important to build flood preparedness action and response plans with associated public awareness rising.

7 Proposed research themes

The following research themes proposals have been adopted after a process of revision and internal debates among the partners involved in its preparations⁸. They have been achieved after a deep revision of published literature, research programmes conducted by international and national institutions (see also Appendix 1), analysis of research gaps made by regional institutions in the region and the internal documents produced by the Logo Water project. We consider those topics as being some of the most relevant topics concerning IWRM and local governments' participation, although we assume that the present list does not include all the different possibilities of research.

Towards improving functionality/performance of Local Governments

- Comparative analysis of local versus national responsibilities over water issues.
- Review and development of legal frameworks to provide a mandate for Local Government involvement in IWRM processes.

⁸ The partners involved in this process have been: Oxford University Centre for the Environment (OUCE), United Kingdom; International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Mozambique Office; The Kalahari Conservation Society (KCS), Botswana; and Foundation for a New Water Culture (FNCA), Spain.

- Develop mechanisms to ensure that power is devolved with authority, accountability and responsibility
- Provision of mechanisms for financial support
- Support the development of skills and appropriate/relevant capacity at the local level
- Identify and develop mechanisms by which institutional memories can be strengthened (in the context of rapid staff turn-over)
 - Develop a municipality/council focused database to support existing municipal responsibilities (e.g. water provision, water quality monitoring, etc.)
 - Building capacity to develop and manage municipal databases to support decision making
- Documenting and formalizing all existing policies which are currently utilized for decision making
 - Harmonizing policies across department at local government levels
 - Production of easy-to-use support materials for local government officials

Towards improved performance of water resources management authorities

- Investigate mechanisms by which local government can be involved in IWRM
- Investigate and develop a formalized vertical and horizontal feedback mechanism between catchment management authorities and local governments
 - To develop a mechanism to promote a two-way feedback between the relevant institutions
- Investigate the advantages and disadvantages of legalizing catchment management committees/authorities; basin fora, etc.
 - Evaluate the need for/and benefits from the establishment of legal entities
 - Investigate the potential for the creation of locally driven basin for aand associated benefits from this
- Develop effective skills in conflict management (prevention and resolution) at the local, national and international levels and across sectors.
- Develop effective strategies to deal with water service coverage (backlogs).

Towards improved private sector involvement in IWRM

- Investigate how and to what extent the private sector can play a role in local water service delivery and other water related activities and support services
- Promotion of the development of genuine joint venture partnerships between local government and private sector entities relevant to the locality

- Put in place an agreed code of conduct to promote the development of a scheme for skills transfer, benefit sharing, joint responsibility, effective cost recovery
- Clarify and highlight the full meaning of Corporate Social Responsibility and how it should be applied in the context of local governance
 - Examining how private sector activities are influencing rights over environmental resources and how local governments can contribute to a more equitable process

Promoting effective local government roles in IWRM in general

- How can local governments be better prepared for periodic floods?
 - How to minimize flood impact by more effective integrated spatial planning and management at local level (e.g. housing in flood plains, location of sewerage treatment plants, land fills, etc.)
 - Building flood preparedness action and response plans with associated public awareness raising
- Building awareness of local governments rights and responsibilities concerning environmental flows and how this can be integrated into the existing local governments mandate
- Based on existing scientific knowledge, generate a suite of documents designed for effective management purposes at the local level (e.g. summaries, diagrams, practical examples, policy briefs, use of appropriate language, etc.)
- Re-assessment of the frequency of droughts and the implications this may have on water resources availability in short and medium term
 - Investigate the differential impacts of droughts at local and basin scales
 - Identification of drought mitigation schemes (e.g. local emergency water storage; farming systems appropriate to dryer conditions)
 - Build better communication between meteorological agencies and local governments
- Investigate optimal water resources management options
 - Rain water harvesting
 - Water conservation technologies
 - Water demand management
 - Storm water management
- Cross- cutting issues
 - Gender mainstreaming
 - HIV & AIDs

- Addressing tribal lands issues
- Education
 - Water syllabus for schools
 - Environmental education

8 References

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Some examples of research involving local governments in the SADC region

Project Name	Funding	Objectives	Duration
Local Government	Partnership between various	To decentralise provision of water and	3 phases,
Capacity Building through Knowledge Sharing. The	government departments in South Africa, the South	sanitation services to local government institutions. This requires collaboration,	Phase 1, 2001-04
'Masibambane' – Water	African Local Governments	integrated planning and implementation,	Phase 2, 2005-07
Sector Services Support Project (South Africa)	Association, and the EU	as well as capacity building of all role players	Phase 3, 2007-12
WIN-SA (WIN: Water Information Network) for South Africa	Water Services Sector Leadership Group	Improving knowledge sharing in the water and sanitation sector, targeting local government and other decision makers	Ongoing since December 2002
National Community Water and Sanitation Training Institute (NCWSTI)	Independent, non-profit organisation, started up by Dept of Water Affairs and Forestry	To build capacity in the community water and sanitation sector in collaboration with other key players by the empowerment of people through development of competencies in an efficient and cost effective manner.	Ongoing since 1996
Okavango – improved management of selected river basins	USAID	 Strengthening the permanent OKACOM and member states, to provide services in accordance with its mandate. Improving information systems for biodiversity and natural resource management and use, including improved information on biologically important 	September 2004– September 2008

		areas in the upper river basin 3. Improving community management and local governance of natural resources by increasing community	
Capacity-building for Water Service Delivery	USAID	To build capacity of local government authorities to assume their newly defined responsibilities for water service provision	
Municipal Services Project (MSP)	International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada. International Labour Resource and Information Group (Cape Town), the South African Municipal Workers Union, and the Canadian Union of Public Employees.	The overall objective of the project is to investigate the impact of policy reforms on the delivery of municipal services in South Africa and to evaluate the ability of local government bodies to address basic needs in an equitable and sustainable manner.	2000 – 2003 Second phase ongoing

Appendix 2: Potential Donors on water related issues - SADC region

Name	website		
International Institutions			
European Commission	www.ec.europe.eu		
European Union, Environment Directorate- General	http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/environment		
EuropeAid	www.ec.europe.eu/europeaid		
World Bank	www.worldbank.org		
UNDP	www.undp.org		
UNDP GEF	www.undp.org/gef		
South Africa Development Fund	www.sadevelopmentfund.org		
African Development Bank	www.afdb.org		
African Ministerial Conference on Water	www.africanwater.org/amcow.htm		
African Union	www.africa-union.org		
Arab Development Bank	www.badea.org		
The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)	www.ifad.org		
National Agencies			
Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)	www.sida.se		
Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA)	www.um.dk		
Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)	www.acdi-cida.gc.ca		
The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)	www.usaid.gov		
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ)	www.gtz.de		
La Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional (AECI)	www.aeci.es		
The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad)	www.norad.no		
Austrian Development Agency (ADA)	http://www.ada.gv.at/en.html		

Irish Aid	www.irishaid.gov.ie
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)	www.jica.go.jp
Kuwait Fund For Arab Economic Development	www.kuwait-fund.org
National Governments, SADC	
Foundations and NGOS	
Global Environmental Fund	www.globalenvironmentfund.com
Ford Foundation	www.fordfound.org
Rufford Maurice Laing Foundation	www.rufforf.org
Biodiversity Foundation	www.fundacion-biodiversidad.es
Botin Foundation	www.fundacionmbotin.org
International Development Research Centre of Canada	www.idrc.ca
WWF-Netherlands	www.wwf.nl
	http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/acp/regional-cooperation/water/
Medicus Mundi	www.medicusmundi.es
Ingenieros sin fronteras	www.isf.es
HIVOS	www.hivos.nl