

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

ON IMPROVED LOCAL WATER GOVERNANCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA



2005



Acknowledgements

The recommendations in this publication are the fruit of collaborative work during and after the EMPOWERS Regional Symposium that was held in Cairo in November, 2005. The Symposium was co-organized by the Inter-Islamic Network on Water Resources Development and Management (INWRDAM/Jordan) and CARE Egypt, both partners in the EMPOWERS partnership. The symposium was co-funded by the European Commission and CARE International.

The recommendations drafting committee members were: Hassan Abu-Bakr (Cairo University/Egypt), Patrick Moriarty (IRC/The Netherlands), Ayman Rabi (PHG/Palestine), Rania Abdel-Khaleq (Ministry of Water and Irrigation/Jordan), Doaa' Arafa (IDRC/Egypt), Peter Laban (CARE/Palestine), Firas T. Abd-Alhadi (INWRDAM/Jordan). The committee would like to thank:

Particularly: the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) for co-sponsoring the symposium; the International Water and Sanitation Centre (IRC), in particular Dr. Patrick Moriarty, and Peter Laban, EMPOWERS Regional Coordinator, for the efforts in developing the contents of the symposium; CARE International/Egypt office for the budgeting and logistics procedures, (especially Samir Abdel Sattar and Nermine Mohamad); and Rasha Moustafa.

Symposium chair: Dr. Murad Jabay Bino, Executive Director of INWRDAM/Jordan.

Symposium organizing committee: Peter Laban, Mona Barghout, Hazem Fahmy, May Abu-Elseoud, Firas T. Abd-Alhadi.

Symposium scientific committee: Dr. Murad Jabay Bino (INWRDAM), Dr. Patrick Moriarty (IRC), Mr. Peter Laban (CARE/Palestine), Dr. Mohammad El-Manadely (DRTPC/Cairo University), Dr. Ayman Rabi (PHG), Ms. Lorra Thompson (IDRC), Dr. Manar Fayyad (University of Jordan), Ms. Mona Barghout (INWRDAM/EMPOWERS).

Opening session speakers: H.E. Dr. Nadia Makram Ebeid (CEDARE/Egypt), H.E. Dr. Issam El-Khateeb (Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation/Egypt), H.E. Dr. Murad Jabay Bino (INWRDAM/Jordan).

Keynote session speakers: Dr. Diaa' El-Qousy, Dr. Smita Mishra-Panda, Dr. Patrick Moriarty.

Symposium facilitator: Dr. Hassan Abu-Bakr.

Working groups facilitators: Sameeh Nueimat, Jalal Moawad, Mufleh Abbadi, Mohammad El-Manadely, Shihab Beiruti, Sayel Wishahi, Fidaa Haddad, Falasteen Abu-Bakr, Smita Mishra-Panda, Ismail Al-Baz, Hazem Fahmy, Kate Rowntree, Ayman Rabi, Eman Ismail, Cynthia Carlson, Sameera Rifai, Moayad Shehada, Rhodante Ahlers, Fadi Shraideh, Mona Barghout.

Symposium rapporteur: Firas T. Abd-Alhadi.

Communications and website: Mona Barghout and Firas T. Abd-Alhadi.

Editorial committee: May Abu-Elseoud, Buthaina Mizyed, Rania Al-Zoubi, Firas T. Abd-Alhadi.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

ON IMPROVED LOCAL WATER GOVERNANCE

IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Introduction

The countries of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) are home to 5% of the world's population but have less than 1% of the world's renewable fresh water. While conventional water availability (within country and regionally) remains relatively constant, the absence of adequate pricing policy and institutional reforms, population growth, migration from rural to urban areas, and increases in household incomes, have resulted in water demand increasing sharply beyond sustainable levels in these countries. The region's per capita supply, for example, stands at only one-third of its 1960 level, and water availability is expected to halve over the next 25 years if the present pattern of use continues (World Bank, 2005).

In addressing this situation, there is an increasing recognition of the need to enhance the influence of the different stakeholders on the planning and decision-making process for the use and management of (scarce) water resources. In other words, the global movement in the field of water resources management is in the direction of enabling a systematic approach of stakeholders dialogue and concerted action as a means to improve local water governance.

The Policy and Practice Recommendations in this booklet advocate that stakeholders, and especially at the community levels, assume a leading role in local water governance in the MENA region. These recommendations, proposed by the participants in the regional symposium on local ownership and involvement in integrated water resources management (IWRM) (facilitated by EMPOWERS in Cairo, November 2005), shall be an important input in the Regional Policy Workshop on Participatory IWRM that is scheduled to take place in Jordan early 2007. This regional policy workshop will involve policy makers, donors, and regional networks in the field of water management. They also set the scene for developing practical guidelines for improving water management at the intermediate (district, governorate) and local (village, town) levels.

The recommendations that are seen as a basis for further efforts towards the achievement of improved local water governance in the MENA region are distilled from the working groups' discussions on the symposium's following themes:

- Key issues related to local ownership and governance in local-level IWRM.
- Community participation in local IWRM.
- Capacity building and information sharing.
- Innovations in water and wastewater management.
- New insights in decision support systems at local level.

General Recommendations

Improving local water governance, which we understand to include all aspects of management, decision making and planning around integrated water resources management, water demand management, and water service delivery, is crucial to sustainable and equitable development and management of the MENA region's scarce water resources.

Many different actors, particularly national governments, have an important role to play in creating the necessary enabling environment (policy, legislations, financing, capacity development) to allow for the necessary improvements in local water governance. The recommendations set out below are aimed at creating such an enabling environment. They include that:

- Local water governance be based upon the participation of all stakeholders and end-users.
- Capacity to enable end-user involvement be developed in relevant stakeholders at intermediate level (media, local government, NGOs, CBOs).
- In particular, capacity for communication and facilitation be developed to enable full end-user participation and to narrow the gap between policy and practice.
- Water information be considered a public good; and access to information be enabled for all citizens.
- Special efforts be made to:
 - ensure that marginalized groups (men and women) are not excluded from water governance; and
 - build upon the special knowledge and role of women in water management.
- Locally appropriate solutions and tools (IT, PRA, participatory planning) be developed through the use of participatory research and action.
- Educational materials and resources be created for all levels and sectors (mass media, children, youth, local government, etc.).



Detailed Recommendations

1. Creating an enabling environment of participatory local water governance:

- 1.1. Given that local ownership and control¹ over the use and management of water resources by end-users is a prerequisite for sustainable IWRM and good water governance, it is recommended that ownership and control be enabled through participation in management and governance related activities (planning, decision-making, monitoring and evaluation).
- 1.2. That access to, transparency of, and sharing of information (both basic data and results of analysis) between vertical and horizontal levels² should be ensured by:
 - 1.2.1. establishing feedback mechanisms between intermediate level institutions and end-users;
 - 1.2.2. promoting a culture and ethics of providing feedback vertically and horizontally; and
 - 1.2.3. requiring inter-agency/inter-departmental information sharing.
- 1.3. That a culture of participatory water planning and management be developed within intermediate level institutions, through mainstreaming of participatory approaches, methodologies and guidelines; the development of appropriate programmes and practices; and the allocation of adequate budgets.
- 1.4. That resources be allocated for capacity building and awareness raising programmes on issues like decentralization and local water governance, especially targeting mid-level and low-level management of governorate and district institutions.
- 1.5. That a regional network be established to enhance participatory and local-level approaches to water governance.
- 1.6. That policy and institutional frameworks be provided to support improved local water governance.
- 1.7. That capacity be developed to allow the effective facilitation of local water governance processes.

1 It is emphasized that the term 'ownership and control' refers to processes by which the use and management of water resources and services are practiced; not to legal ownership of the water resource base itself.

2 Vertical: between stakeholders at different institutional levels. Horizontal: between stakeholders at similar institutional levels (or "of the same institutional level").

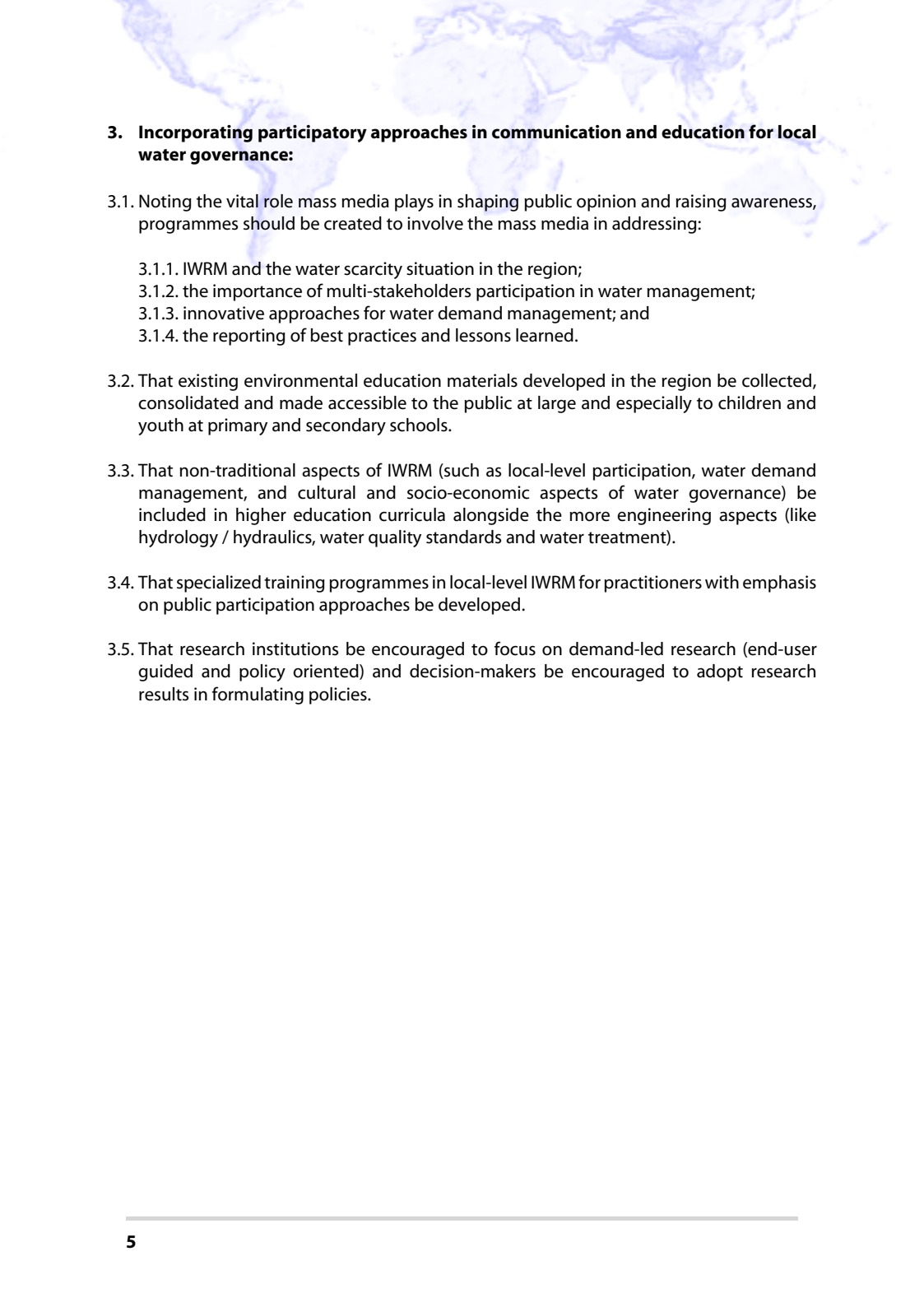
2. Ensuring the involvement of marginalized groups and women in local water governance:

2.1. With the increased trend towards privatization, already marginalized³ groups and individuals (men, women and children) may suffer additional burdens and become more marginalized. Therefore, central and local governments should maintain their responsibility for ensuring that those groups do not suffer from additional burdens.



- 2.2. That advocacy programmes be implemented by civil society and intellectual groups to improve/enhance the involvement of women and other marginalized groups in the processes of water governance.
- 2.3. That existing forms of organization and decision making be taken into account and respected while introducing the issue of women's participation.
- 2.4. That the positive role(s) of women in the region be highlighted as an entry point to involving them in the decision-making process, emphasizing the knowledge they have in water use and management practices.
- 2.5. That the economic status of women and other marginalized groups be enhanced through encouraging the implementation of (water-based) income generating projects and the establishment of women's associations.
- 2.6. That lessons learned (success and failure stories) be compiled and disseminated to all levels.

3 While this term needs further explanation and definition in each local community, it refers in general to those people or groups in local communities that have very little influence on decision processes, are often poor, have little or no access to water and are often "not heard" in a community.



3. Incorporating participatory approaches in communication and education for local water governance:

- 3.1. Noting the vital role mass media plays in shaping public opinion and raising awareness, programmes should be created to involve the mass media in addressing:
 - 3.1.1. IWRM and the water scarcity situation in the region;
 - 3.1.2. the importance of multi-stakeholders participation in water management;
 - 3.1.3. innovative approaches for water demand management; and
 - 3.1.4. the reporting of best practices and lessons learned.
- 3.2. That existing environmental education materials developed in the region be collected, consolidated and made accessible to the public at large and especially to children and youth at primary and secondary schools.
- 3.3. That non-traditional aspects of IWRM (such as local-level participation, water demand management, and cultural and socio-economic aspects of water governance) be included in higher education curricula alongside the more engineering aspects (like hydrology / hydraulics, water quality standards and water treatment).
- 3.4. That specialized training programmes in local-level IWRM for practitioners with emphasis on public participation approaches be developed.
- 3.5. That research institutions be encouraged to focus on demand-led research (end-user guided and policy oriented) and decision-makers be encouraged to adopt research results in formulating policies.

4. Creating an enabling environment for scaling up innovations in local-level water and wastewater management:

- 4.1. That local communities and NGOs be involved in the development, appropriation and adaptation of innovations⁴ in water and wastewater management.
- 4.2. That participatory research approaches be adopted which involve different stakeholders including researchers, end-users, NGOs, policy-makers and the private sector.
- 4.3. That implementation of low cost technology especially in wastewater reuse be enhanced and the relevant experiences (in operation and maintenance) and lessons learned from end-user involvement be documented and disseminated widely.

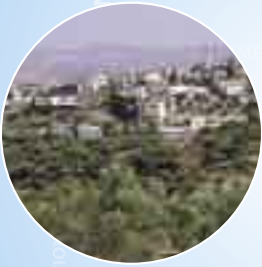


5. Using decision support systems (DSS) to support improved local water governance:

- 5.1. That DSS for participatory and local water governance be appropriate and relevant to available local resources, capacities and to the existing environment.
- 5.2. That DSS be feasible in terms of user friendliness, cost, time requirement, etc., and be accompanied by strong facilitation and communication support to ensure transparency in use.
- 5.3. That development of these tools allows for testing and validation by the community to enhance their appropriation and use, and to address communities' needs and opinions.
- 5.4. That government and non-government institutions strengthen their capacities in using IT and other tools for participatory innovation and development.

4. *By innovations we mean efficiency improvement in use of water for irrigation, treatment and re-use of wastewater, as well as innovations that relate to organizational set-up and participatory approaches.*

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

