



Report of the seminar held at NCVO,
All Saints Street, London,
on 14 and 15 December 2000

Editors: Cathy Watson and Belinda Calaguas

making waves

civil society advocacy on international water policy

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Cathy Watson
Seminar Organiser

1. Introduction

The voice of development NGOs in policy discussions and decision-making in the freshwater sector is generally considered to be weak and fragmented. This fragmentation is partly the result of a lack of communication and co-ordination between the freshwater sub-sectors such as dams, irrigation, water supply and sanitation, and environmental issues. It is also due to a failure to link with those working on broader development issues such as poverty reduction, good governance, sustainable development and the quality of aid and trade. At the Second World Water Forum at the Hague in March 2000, NGO representatives from the main freshwater sub-sectors were only able to achieve agreement on a few fundamental points, such as the assertion that access to water and sanitation is a basic human right.

What was also apparent at the Second World Water Forum, was the multitude of international institutions and agencies that shape global policy on freshwater. In order to engage in water policy-making processes, NGOs and other civil society actors need to understand these institutions, the roles they play and the opportunities for policy influence.

In a global environment witnessing massive changes in the way freshwater resources and services are managed, and where new policy actors are emerging, NGO and civil society voices need to be strengthened. They can then offer an alternative perspective on developments in the freshwater sector – based on poor people's experiences, and hold governments and experts to account.

The Seminar *Making Waves: civil society advocacy on international water policy* took place on 14 and 15 December 2000, at the NCVO Offices, All Saints Street, London. It was organised by WaterAid, on behalf of the UK Water Network¹, in response to the need for a greater understanding of freshwater policy making institutions, and to strengthen the NGO voice in the policy debate. The aim of the Seminar was to provide information on key institutions that shape freshwater policy globally, regionally and nationally, and to share experiences and knowledge of ways to influence them.

The Seminar brought together representatives from UK NGOs involved in water development and environment work in the South, policy staff from academic institutions, trade union and UK water industry representatives, together with some NGO representatives from Africa, South Asia and South America. The Seminar consisted of sessions focusing on selected key institutions and processes, followed by group discussions and plenary feedback. It concentrated on the role of the institutions in policy making and on the opportunities for civil society influence, rather than on the advocacy issues themselves. The institutions and processes covered included: The Bonn Freshwater Conference and the Earth Summit; the General Agreement on Trade in Services; the World Bank; The Global Water Partnership; The European Union; the UK Department for International Development; and Southern Governments. The Seminar closed with group discussions on the way forward for civil society advocacy on freshwater, and a summary of the key issues arising from the Seminar.

This report presents a summary of the presentations, together with a synthesis of the group discussions from the two days. Key website addresses for the relevant institutions are included at the end of each section. Brief biographical notes on the speakers are presented in the Appendices, together with the names and addresses of the Seminar participants.

¹ The UK Water Network is a forum for international development NGOs in the UK, research and academic institutions to share lessons from field practice and share analysis of policy initiatives in the freshwater sector. Network aims to increase the impact of its members through enhancing policy analysis and advocacy work and to contribute to an NGO voice to UK policy making in the freshwater sector.

2. Keynote Presentation: A critical overview of international water policy processes and the challenges for civil society

Alan Nicol, Research Fellow - Water Resources, Overseas Development Institute²

This presentation begins with a brief historical overview of water management paradigms over the last two centuries. It then considers the question of why civil society should be involved in water policy making and the consequent challenges of that involvement. Finally, some of the implications for policy are outlined.

2.1 Water management paradigms

Water management in the last 150 years can be considered in terms of five dominant, sequential paradigms:

1. Pre-modern: little control over water resources
2. Industrial modernity: water supplies were developed, with the emphasis on controlling water and providing greater quantities
3. Environmental movement: a reflexive reaction to the industrial modernity phase
4. Economic value approach: the introduction of the concept of water as an economic good
5. Political process view: recognising the political nature of water management.

Different parts of the world are currently found at different stages of this progression. Many countries of the South are still in the second stage of industrial modernity, while in some Northern countries the environmental and economic reactions are still dominant. The political process view is gaining ground in the international policy arena, giving rise to statements of civil society inclusion and involvement such as:

- Towards water security
- Making water everyone's business
- A shared vision for hygiene, sanitation and water supply.

However, this inclusion is not as straightforward in practice as the theory would imply. For example, the World Water Forum at The Hague in 2000 was a Northern-led process, funded and convened by a group of Northern governments. Only at the Forum itself did civil society organisations become prominent, and then the heterogeneity of this grouping contributed to the conflict over the civil society position in the debates. The World Water Council's Vision involved thousands of professionals world-wide, but did not actively seek to involve civil society or NGOs representing human and environmental rights of society. Although the process of inclusion is still in its infancy, the international water policy debate has reached the 5th paradigm and the political aspects of participation, and questions of legitimacy and accountability are increasingly under consideration.

2.2 Why involve civil society?

There are a number of views on why civil society should be involved in water policy making:

2.2.1 The pragmatic view

From a pragmatic point of view, civil society is already involved in much water policy making – through user groups, consumer groups and so on. This needs to be recognised by water policy makers. In addition, the involvement of civil society is increasingly being recognised as a factor in the success or failure in the implementation of policy. Third, the distinction between some civil society institutions and government or private sector organisations is not always clear. For example, NGO Boards usually consist of people representing a range of interests, probably including government and the private sector. Finally, civil society organisations may have skills and weaknesses that complement those of other bodies, to increase the effectiveness of policy making and its implementation.

2.2.2 Rights-based approaches

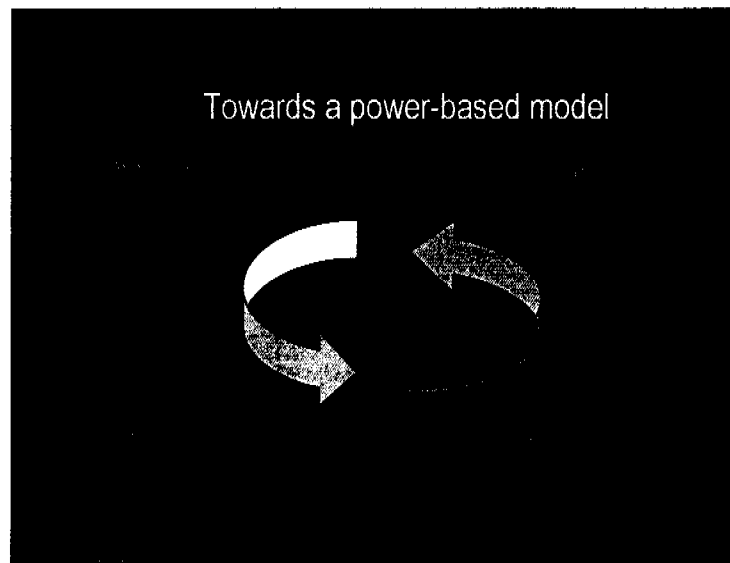
It is possible to support civil society involvement in policy making from the point of view of rights. In many cases the money used for the implementation of policy is drawn from taxes paid by civil society members as individuals. In addition, many believe that society automatically has a right to a say in policy which affects them.

² This presentation incorporates material by Professor Tony Allan of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

2.2.3 Governance and legitimacy

Some approach this issue from the point of view of governance and legitimacy. For example, that the involvement of civil society leads to low levels of management and therefore more effective governance. Increased participation conveys legitimacy and can lead to a more responsive relationship between state and society, reduced transaction costs and greater ability to respond to demand.

If the relationship between policy processes and civil society is seen as one of power, then the need for civil society organisations to be actors and not just recipients of policy becomes clearer. In the diagram below, the links between the different roles that civil society plays with respect to policy are linked to each other. Civil society has a constituency interest in policy making, as part of the wider political process. Policy is then received and when implemented impacts on civil society at the local level. Networks can play an important role in disseminating and increasing understanding of information on policy. If civil society organisations are also seen as actors in policy making, they then become part of the policy process from the beginning:



2.3 The challenges for civil society involvement in the freshwater sector

2.3.1 Power and control

Some of the challenges for civil society involvement in the freshwater sector centre on issues of power and control. First, civil society needs to be clear on the terms of engagement with the institutions and processes involved in water policy, and on the importance of monitoring its inputs and impact. Second, civil society needs to maintain, or establish the ability to introduce wider narratives into the debate. Third, there is the challenge of equity: how can we ensure that there is an even playing field for those civil society groups who wish to be involved in policy making?

2.3.2 Legitimacy and accountability

A key challenge for civil society involvement in the freshwater sector is that of legitimacy: who is involved and how, and hence on whose behalf do they speak? This is particularly the case for NGOs. At the Second World Water Forum at The Hague in 2000, the focus of the NGO discourse was the crisis of legitimacy. On the other hand, the World Commission on Dams process was considered by most to have been more participatory (when compared to some of the consultations leading up to The Hague Forum, for example). However, even this participation had a Northern bias: there was not extensive involvement by Southern organisations.

2.3.3 Timing and cost

There are also some more practical challenges facing civil society involvement in freshwater policy making, for example the timing. When should groups become involved: should they wait for the large international meetings such as the World Water Forum, or look for other smaller opportunities? There is also the question of how much time and money should be given to this type of work. The opportunity costs of time devoted to policy involvement

need to be taken into account. For example, many NGOs and other civil society bodies are operational as well as campaigning organisations, and need to balance these two strands.

2.3.4 Information and media

There is a challenge for civil society in carrying out or obtaining the research and information necessary to achieve policy influence. Without a solid research base and alternative policy solutions, civil society proposals are unlikely to be taken seriously. The media also presents a challenge for civil society: how to make the most of opportunities the media presents for achieving policy influence. This also extends to wider society: a multi-track approach involving other institutions in addition to the key policy making bodies may help to bring about ultimate policy change.

2.3.5 The challenge of the fifth paradigm

The example of the World Commission on Dams shows that the inspirations of the fifth paradigm – inclusive and participatory institutions for policy making and integrated water allocation and management, are gaining ground. However, this is only the beginning of the process, as the fifth paradigm is not yet part of the thinking of those managing the water sector in the North or the South.

2.4 Implications for new policy directions

The involvement of civil society has implications for policy in a number of areas:

- **Implications for water security:** it is becoming clear that social adaptive capacity (the ability to do something about water deficit, for example to shift from agricultural to industrial or domestic use) is a key factor in water security which goes beyond the simple equation of cubic metres per person
- **Implications for participation:** the nature and structure of policy institutions themselves hinders or facilitates civil society participation at different levels. Civil society involvement should take place at all levels, from the local to the international. It is also vital to ensure that it is not simply a rubber stamp of policy made and directed by others
- **Implications for policy content:** civil society needs to have a voice in policy making, but in fact it currently speaks with many different voices. In order to have effective participation in policy making, civil society institutions need to seek a more coherent voice.

In response to these challenges, civil society organisations need to have a greater understanding of the political processes involved in policy making so that they address the policy making context from a political standpoint, and thus challenge the embedded power relations in civil society policy relationships.

3. The Bonn Conference and the Earth Summit 2002: an introduction to the preparatory processes

Rosalie Gardiner, International Policy Co-ordinator UNED Forum

This presentation describes the Bonn Conference and the Earth Summit 2002 and explains the processes for involvement. Links are made with other international processes and the key challenges for civil society involvement are outlined.

3.1 Bonn 2001

The International Conference on Freshwater will be held in Bonn, Germany, from 3 to 7 December 2001, with the title: 'Water: Key to Sustainable Development'. The core themes of the Conference are: to review progress of Agenda 21, Chapter 18 (Freshwater) since the first Earth Summit in Rio in 1992; and the Millennium Summit targets – access to drinking water targets and action plans for sustainable and equitable use.

Sub-themes include: innovative strategies for water and sanitation for the poor, access and affordability, protecting water resources, pollution prevention, ecosystem protection, transboundary water issues, floods and droughts. There are also a number of cross-cutting themes, as follows: governance and stakeholder participation, new partnerships between the public and private sector, and between civil society and the scientific community, mobilising financial resources, technology transfer, capacity building, education and awareness raising, and gender perspectives.

The anticipated outcomes are forward-looking national, regional and international strategies for freshwater crisis prevention, in preparation for the Earth Summit 2002. The preparation process is based on a multi-stakeholder dialogue, using the experiences of the UN CSD (Commission for Sustainable Development) and the international ministerial dialogue on the environment at Bergen. One of the challenges for the Conference is to deal with the controversial issues without letting them dominate the discussion. Such issues are likely to include: transboundary agreements at various levels, affordability; and topics such as cost recovery and public/private partnerships in water provision³.

3.2 Earth Summit 2002

The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), commonly known as the Earth Summit 2002, will take place in Johannesburg, South Africa from 2 to 11 September 2002. One objective is to renegotiate Agenda 21, drawn up at the first UN Conference of Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992. Another is to focus on forward-looking strategies. A review of progress in sustainable development will therefore be carried out before the Summit as part of the preparation. The preparatory process for the summit will take place at three levels:

1. National Preparatory Committees (Prep. Comm.): up to summer 2001. To develop National Strategies for Sustainable Development; national reviews of progress, obstacles and action to be taken; selection of four or five key issues to take forward at the national level. In the UK, this process is co-ordinated by the UK Commission for Sustainable Development and UNED-Forum using a multi-stakeholder dialogue approach
2. Regional Preparatory Committees: June-December 2001. To select priority issues and examples of good practice, using inputs from regional expert round tables on particular themes. Co-ordinated by the regional UN Economic Commissions (eg Africa, Asia, Europe, etc). Feeding into these will be sub-regional Preparatory Committees.
3. Global Preparatory Committee meetings (GPC), co-ordinated by the UN Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD), as follows:
 - GPC 1, May 2001: organisational issues, setting framework for remainder of GPCs
 - GPC 2, January 2002: review of national and regional Prep. Comm. reports; global report by UN Secretary General
 - GPC 3, March 2002: finalising review
 - GPC 4, May 2002: selection of priority issues based on review process.

³ This topic links with the debate on the General Agreement on Trade and Services, which is discussed in the following presentation.

NGO involvement in the preparatory process is facilitated by the NGO Freshwater Caucus of the CSD⁴. In order to gain entrance to the UN, NGOs need to be accredited. Contact: UN ECOSOC NGO Unit, Hanifa Mezoui, Room DC2 2340, United Nations, New York, NY 10017, USA. Tel: +1 21 2963 4843.

3.3 Other related international processes

There are a number of international processes that feed into or are related to the Bonn Conference and the Earth Summit 2002.

- The Global Water Partnership has set the target date of August 2001 for the production of programmes of action for Integrated Water Resource Management at regional and national level; and January 2002 (ie after the Bonn Conference) for the setting of national water targets, in preparation for the Earth Summit 2002
- The World Water Development Report will be presented to the Bonn Conference by UNESCO and the UN ACC Subcommittee in draft form for consultation. The final report will be produced for the Earth Summit 2002
- In March 2001, the World Trade Organisation will be discussing the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), which will include issues relating to freshwater such as public service providers and government procurement
- The UN Conference on Financing for Development 2001, will focus on mobilising and strengthening international finance particularly for developing countries, and will include water within this topic.

3.4 Challenges

It is intended that the results of the Bonn Conference should feed into and inform the Earth Summit process. However, there is some question as to whether this will happen in practice, given the experience of the Dublin Freshwater meeting 10 years ago when few binding commitments were made. Also, the Bonn Conference is not part of the officially recognised preparation process for the Earth Summit 2002. The level of ministerial presence at the Bonn Conference may be a key indicator of the degree of political will to support the outcomes of the meeting, and take them forward to the Earth Summit 2002.

A second challenge is to ensure that the Bonn Conference produces a commitment to realistic, financially viable and time-bound strategies that target key freshwater issues. Each level of preparatory committee meetings will produce different priorities, both across the range of issues and within the topic of freshwater. Some of the issues on the agenda at Bonn are linked to commitments made under previous international development targets, which may provide opportunities for prioritising. For example the production of National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSDs), into which water issues such as Integrated Water Resources Management can be fed, by 2002; and the target to reduce poverty by 50% by 2015, which encompasses access to basic services such as drinking water and sanitation.

3.5 A strategy for effective involvement

These events provide a key opportunity to advocate for freshwater issues to be on the agenda of the Earth Summit 2002. In order to grasp this opportunity, civil society groups need to:

- Identify target issues related to water and identify which level to campaign at (national, regional, global)
- Establish an active dialogue with governments to ensure they are working towards the preparatory process targets (eg national action plans etc); take the opportunity to engage directly in the debate through the multi-stakeholder dialogue process at various levels
- Support other NGOs and partner NGOs to become involved
- Collaborate with other sectors, eg local authorities, women's groups, trade unions.

Finally, civil society groups need to consider how they can constructively assist the process of implementation after the summit, to ensure that whatever strategies are agreed are in fact put in place and implemented effectively.

Further information

UNED Forum Earth Summit 2002 website: www.earthsummit2002.org

UN Earth Summit 2002 website: www.johannesburg.org

CSD website: www.un.org/esa/sustdev

Bonn Conference website: www.water-2001.de

⁴ To date, the freshwater Caucus has mainly operated a list service to inform interested organisations about the WSSD. On the other hand, the Freshwater Action Network is active at providing information to NGOs and seeking this engagement in the processes leading up to the International Freshwater Conference, the WSSD and the 3rd World Water Forum.

4. The General Agreement on Trade in Services: impacts on water delivery and the need for a civil society response

Clare Joy, Campaigns Officer, World Development Movement

This presentation first situates the General Agreement on Trade in Services within the World Trade Organisation's policy processes, then highlights some key issues and concerns relating to freshwater. Finally, there are some suggestions for ways in which civil society can influence this process.

4.1 The World Trade Organisation and the General Agreement on Trade in Services

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) first attracted the world's notice in November 1999, when talks in Seattle were brought to a standstill by public demonstrations. Since then, discussions on key international policy issues have continued in Geneva at WTO Headquarters, in spite of the Seattle breakdown. There are four main processes underway: two involve the review of existing agreements, the other two are what WTO calls the 'built-in agenda', ie new negotiations. One of these is the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS); the other is an agreement on agriculture. It is important to note here that WTO agreements 'have teeth', that is, they are enforceable policies.

GATS, which aims to liberalise services through the opening up of national markets, is considered one of the most important agreements by the world's most significant powers (US, Japan etc). This is in part because of the enormous scope of the agreement, which includes a wide range of service sectors such as transport, tourism, construction, postal services, water delivery and health provision. The remit of GATS changes the definition of trade. Historically, trade agreements defined trade relations across national borders, whereas an agreement on services will have considerable implications for what happens within a country's borders. GATS is therefore an attempt to get governments to open up their service sectors (including the provision of basic services such as water) to the international market, which means removing the restrictions on multinational companies operating within a country. The enormous scope of the agreement is acknowledged by the Secretary General of the WTO, who stated that parts of the agreement 'extend into areas never recognised as trade policy. I suspect that neither governments nor industry have fully appreciated the scope of this agreement.' All WTO member countries are committed to progressive liberalisation under this agreement.

The negotiations are based on requests and offers from each country. At present they are in the very early stages. However, some Southern negotiators are beginning to question the benefits to their countries if they have no service industry themselves to offer.

4.2 Freshwater issues and GATS

An increasing number of privatised public utilities in Europe are keen to extend their international operations. Water is therefore one of the key areas of negotiation by the European bodies, in particular to open up water markets in Southern countries. The aim of the current draft European proposal is to achieve further liberalisation by removing current obstacles to trade, such as:

- National restrictions which require companies to form joint ventures with domestic firms
- Restrictions on legal form (eg that workers become shareholders)
- Laws which only allow companies access to a certain percentage of the market
- Monopolies or exclusive service supplier rights.

The draft European proposal also encourages more countries to commit their environmental services (which include water) to the GATS rules. In addition to these general requests, the draft proposal targets those countries with particularly restrictive (from the point of view of trade liberalisation) water delivery practices, such as Argentina, Brazil, Malaysia, India, Mexico and the Philippines.

4.3 Civil society involvement

There is a clear lack of knowledge of the potential impact of GATS, particularly on poor people in Southern countries, which highlights the need for research. Some of the key gaps are:

- Why governments might want to restrict service sector markets, in particular water services
- How services differ from goods

- The impact of unlimited liberalisation on people's access to basic services in some of the world's poorest countries
- Evidence of positive alternatives with which to counter the WTO position that there are no alternatives to progressive liberalisation of markets.

Civil society organisations involved in the water sector may already have some of this evidence; hence there is a need for collaboration and cross-fertilisation of information.

The key advocacy message can be summarised as follows:⁵

- Basic services cannot be subjected to market forces (as GATS aims to do)
- It is crucial that governments are able to restrict investment in the services sector, in order to pursue non-business related aims, such as social, community and environmental objectives. GATS aims to prevent this
- GATS is effectively irreversible

As the GATS negotiations are currently in the very early stages, it is a good time to act and try to influence Southern governments, who may be open to questions about the potential for positive impacts in their countries. Furthermore, there is scope – (as the demonstration in Seattle showed) for impact at the international level when groups work together in coalition. Water, as one of the key basic services that will be affected by GATS, is a priority area for action.

Further information

World Trade Organisation: www.wto.org

World Development Movement: www.wdm.org.uk

⁵ This is WDM's current campaign demand.

THE WORLD BANK

5. Policy making in the World Bank and how civil society can influence it

John Clark, Lead Social Development Specialist, World Bank/Visiting Fellow, London School of Economics

This paper covers the different levels at which policy is made in the World Bank, suggestions on how to navigate the maze; the importance of partnerships that work; the need for a holistic view; and finally some questions of ethics and responsibility.

5.1 Policy making at different levels

Policy is made in the World Bank at a minimum of three different levels. The formal process involves the Board of Executive Directors, who represent the Governors. However, there is also an informal process of policy and strategy development involving high level managers who carry out occasional strategy reviews and produce guidance notes for staff, with a focus on mainstreaming good practice and learning lessons from bad practice. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, policy is also made at country level, based on lessons drawn from particular projects and experience. It is in this arena that developing country NGOs have made a large impact on the World Bank, particularly in the development of new innovations.

At this level, it is increasingly important that the World Bank includes government in its discussions with NGOs - to create a 'policy triologue', so that government is fully informed and participates in the process.

5.2 Navigating the maze

There are a number of key factors that will assist in navigating the maze of policy making in the World Bank, as follows:

- Reaching the right person
- Obtaining the right documents
- Identifying key timetables and relevant structures.

The World Bank website may be a useful starting point for this, as may be the World Bank phone book, which also contains organisational charts and departmental structures. A key question to ask is: who would be the best person to talk to? It is also important to recognise that there will be key allies within the World Bank itself, as it is not a homogenous structure but has a diversity of staff.

Working with NGOs who know the World Bank well is a useful way of navigating the maze. These may include the Bretton Woods Project in the UK, and the Bank Information Centre in Washington.

It is also important to know how a particular issue is structured within the Bank. For example water is divided into four separate topics: hydroelectric; water supply and sanitation; the water environment; and irrigation and drainage. Historically there have been varied levels of NGO interaction with the Bank on these different topics. For example, dams have drawn the most controversial debate with advocacy groups, although few operational NGOs have been involved. In contrast, in the water supply and sanitation sector, the World Bank has been in dialogue with operational NGOs for many years. Environmental NGOs and large environmental organisations are involved in discussions with the World Bank on the water environment topic, but there has been little dialogue between NGOs and the Bank on irrigation and drainage, even though this topic is of particular interest for grassroots and community-based organisations.

At present there is a review of the Water Resource Management Strategy, a consultative process that is being channelled through the Web, with a strategy paper to be presented to the Board in July/August 2001.

5.3 Forming partnerships that work

Unfortunately, it is not sufficient only to have right on your side. At times, NGOs have gained access to the World Bank and obtained a hearing, but nothing has changed. Three possible strategies for getting the message across the Bank are:

- Being somewhat threatening, so the Bank cannot afford not to listen

- Developing a relationship in which the NGO is considered an important ally, for example through operational collaboration with the Bank
- Becoming an unquestionable and leading authority on the topic, through writing papers, links with academics and so on.

Although the World Bank deserves much of the criticism it has received in recent years, there are two concerns about being over-threatening. The first is the threat to multi-lateralism in the current, post-cold war era, when many powerful governments are becoming less committed to a multi-lateral approach. The second is the potential backlash by the Board and others in response to demonstrations such as those at Prague and Nice, who are questioning the legitimacy of such representations of public opinion.

5.4 The need for a holistic view

It is important in dialogue with the World Bank to understand the potential implications beyond the particular topic under discussion. For example, in 1982 the author (not then employed by the Bank) raised the first questions about the Namada Dam in India, which was the beginning of a global campaign. Those questions also started a process that resulted not only in changes in the design and legal framework of that particular project, but also in the development of the Bank's operational policy on involuntary resettlement. It also brought about changes in the Bank's disclosure policy and gave birth to the pilot for the now Inspection Panel. It is important therefore to understand the wider ramifications and implications of policy change in a particular area.

5.5 Ethics and responsibility

One of the major challenges facing the World Bank today is the gap between policy and practice. There are many fine policies that have yet to be translated into operations on the ground.

It is also important for NGOs to question their own accountability and establish exactly what right they have to speak on a topic on behalf of poor people. This question of legitimacy is becoming increasingly significant for NGOs. In this context, one of the most critical lessons for civil society is the importance of strong partnerships with Southern NGOs – not only Southern national NGOs, but also Community-Based Organisations in developing countries.

Finally, it is important for NGOs to grasp the complexity of the issues on which they are advocating. For example, a large dam will have ardent opposition among the communities it may displace. However, there may be thousands more who need the water it will supply for drinking, irrigation or hydro power, whose needs may not be so passionately expressed. The more NGOs can listen to the diversity of views among the poor in developing countries and understand the multiple realities of the issue, the more effective they will be as policy advocates.

6. Working with the World Bank: the experiences of Public Services International

David Hall, Director, Public Services International Research Unit, University of Greenwich

This presentation outlines the role of Trade Union organisations, their objectives and their advantages in undertaking advocacy work; then presents some of the activities of PSI in influencing the World Bank; and finally discusses some of the difficulties of measuring the effectiveness of these activities.

6.1 Trade union organisations and advocacy

Public Services International (PSI) is an international confederation of trade unions with members working in public services. It has affiliates in over 150 countries whose membership totals over 20 million. It is one of a number of international confederations covering different sectors, which are all linked under the umbrella federation, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU).

Trade Unions have a number of advantages in the advocacy arena, compared to NGOs:

- They are based on organised membership, which means they can represent and speak for their members while being accountable to them
- They are financed almost entirely by members' contributions, and thus retain financial independence from employers, governments and organisations such as the World Bank
- They are continually involved in educating, organising and agitating for change at the local level, and are therefore experienced in advocacy and negotiation.

With regard to public services such as water, health and education, trade unions have a double interest: to represent the employees in the sector, and to promote the provision of public services for all workers and their communities.

There is a potential contradiction in the role of trade unions in the water sector on the issue of privatisation. For example, in countries such as England where all water services have already been privatised, the trade unions are in dialogue with private sector companies in the interests of the workers. However, in countries such as South Africa where privatisation has been proposed but not yet introduced, the trade unions are campaigning vigorously to prevent the same private sector companies from entering the country. An international confederation such as PSI has to operate in support of both these policies.

Through its international role, PSI has experience of interaction with various international institutions, such as the ILO, the World Trade Organisation, OECD, and regional banks. This experience is useful in dealing with the World Bank.

6.2 How PSI tries to influence the World Bank

PSI is involved in a number of activities aimed at influencing the World Bank, as follows:

- **Public debate:** PSI contributes to current public debates about the role of the World Bank, for example through public letters (eg on corruption in the Lesotho Highlands Water Project); the production of a cartoon booklet on the World Bank; educational materials; articles and publications
- **Private contacts:** PSI officials maintain contact with key World Bank officials
- **Formal or informal meetings and discussions:** individual PSI officials participate in meetings and the organisation is invited to present union positions at internal Bank seminars. PSI is also involved in the PERL-NET consultation (Public Enterprise Reform and Labour Network) under the Public-Private Infrastructure Advisory Facility of the World Bank, which provides a forum for discussion and carries out research.
- **World Water Forum:** PSI participated in the World Water Forum by preparing briefings and by sending a small delegation (approximately one person from each continent) to make contributions to the workshops and discussions, particularly on the issue of privatisation. This initiative appeared to have a positive impact on the private rhetoric of some World Bank personnel, but failed to alter the course of the Bank's policy on privatisation.
- **Support to local affiliates:** where affiliated trade unions are in dialogue or conflict with the World Bank, PSI can offer support, information, research, action and publicity.
- **Support to wider group pressure:** PSI also aims to influence the World Bank through supporting the campaigns of other organisations, such as the initiatives of the ICFTU to influence the Bank on labour clauses.

6.3 Measuring effectiveness

In attempting to influence the World Bank, PSI has a number of objectives:

- To have an impact on global issues
- To have an impact on local issues
- To raise the profile of PSI.

The advocacy activities listed above contribute to these objectives in different ways:

	<i>Public debate</i>	<i>Private contacts</i>	<i>Formal/informal meetings</i>	<i>World Water Forum etc.</i>	<i>Support to local organisations</i>	<i>Wider group pressure</i>
Impact on global issues	X	X		X		X
Impact on local issues			X		X	
Raising profile of PSI	X		X	X	X	

The World Bank is a complex organisation with many different parts. One of the challenges of assessing the impact of influencing activities is that some initiatives may yield small gains within a particular programme or among particular staff, but other staff in other programmes may continue to pursue different practices and policies. Such multiplicity can seriously hamper the implementation of any apparent advocacy gains within any one sector of the World Bank.

This complexity is illustrated by the Joint Advisory Services Facility, which brings more than half the Bank Group's advisory services under single management. This means that the International Finance Corporation division of the World Bank, which is openly committed to privatisation of the water sector, is now a '50% player' in advice given to governments. Successful advocacy initiatives against privatisation policy, targeted at water sector specialists for example, may have a limited impact in the longer-term.

7. Advocating to the World Bank: NGO perspectives

Alex Wilks Co-ordinator, Bretton Woods Project⁶

This presentation first considers the activities in which the World Bank is engaged that are of interest to NGOs; then presents some of the findings of the Bank evaluation of participation in its projects; makes some suggestions for NGOs; and finally outlines some of the opportunities for advocacy action.

7.1 Introduction

Sam Joseph, of ActionAid, was invited by the World Bank to visit Washington to teach World Bank staff about participatory approaches. After some reflection and discussion with colleagues, Sam declined the invitation, but invited Bank staff to visit ActionAid's projects and meet with communities on the ground, to learn more about participation that way. This invitation was eventually accepted and joint initiatives established to expose Bank staff to village communities.

One of the lessons we can learn from Sam Joseph's experience is not to take such invitations at face value, but to consider carefully what acceptance will achieve, who it will empower, and whether there are opportunities for turning the process around.

The World Bank is involved in a number of key activities that are of interest to many NGOs:

- Projects
- National economic plans
- Sector strategies (eg debt, environment, water resources, civil society)
- Economic and sector analysis
- Global think tank
- Global diplomacy.

It is difficult to summarise how decisions are taken in the World Bank, but some key levels can be noted:

- The Boards (in which Northern governments play a strong role)
- Management
- Staff
- Networks/sector families
- Evaluation and complaints mechanisms.

7.2 Lessons from the recent review of participation in the World Bank

The Bank's Operations Evaluation Department carried out a review of participation and came to a number of interesting conclusions. There was a significant increase in stakeholder participation in Bank-assisted projects between 1994 and 1998. However, participation was less advanced in the area of infrastructure and adjustment loans, and the 'quality has not kept pace with the quantity'. The report recommends a more systematic, governance approach to participation, including the development of a participation strategy and action plan.

A number of lessons can be drawn from this review:

- Publicise positive approaches from NGO or Bank experiences (the review cites a Bank project that built on the success of a model developed previously by Oxfam in the same area)
- Allow plenty of time for participation
- Avoid automatic acceptance of Bank invitations to meetings (which may lead to 'ticking box participation')
- Civil society meetings should be situated within a clear process, including opportunities for follow up
- Press for documentation in relevant languages ahead of time
- If possible have a neutral chair and facilitator
- Agree outcome of meetings and follow-up steps
- Appraisal techniques should be based on positive experiences in the area
- Build trust and a working relationship gradually
- Identify the range and number of stakeholders carefully.

⁶ The Bretton Woods Project works with a network of NGOs, researchers and officials to monitor the World Bank and IMF, and produces information materials such as the Bretton Woods Update.

7.3 Suggestions for NGOs

Some suggestions for NGOs working on water issues for ways of engaging with the World Bank include:

- Find out more about your rights to information; policies; participation
- Know the rhetoric: eg announcements in AGM speeches, conclusions of the World Development Report, sector strategies etc
- Build loose collaborative networks between NGOs in one country, internationally and with researchers and sympathetic officials
- Emphasise communication and information sharing so common fronts are adopted
- Get involved in the production of case studies of World Bank/NGO interaction
- Produce an analysis of water issues which can feed into sectoral and other planning evaluations
- Target forthcoming high level think pieces, e.g. 2002 World Development Report, which will be used by the World Bank to influence thinking around the Earth Summit 2002.

7.4 Current opportunities for advocacy action

Use the findings of the World Commission on Dams:

This high-level, multi-stakeholder report, endorsed by the World Bank and IUCN, concludes that participation should mean 'free, prior informed consent', or 'demonstrable public acceptance' of affected people, expressed in binding formal agreements 'negotiated in an open and transparent process'.

Use the World Development Report:

There are many useful points that can be used from the September 2000 Poverty World Development Report, such as: a view of poverty that goes beyond simply income and accepts the political dimensions; looking at outcomes on particular groups, not only an aggregate view; and issues of empowerment and security.

Use the PRSP/CDF/NSSD processes⁷:

There should be openings for NGOs to become involved in national economic planning processes linked with the above initiatives.

Identify who you need to talk to in the Bank and whether you can work with them:

The contact point within the Bank for advocacy initiatives will vary depending on the topic (a particular project, a country strategy, or a research report/issue strategy). The relevant contact could include: the Task Manager for a project; the Country Economist or Country Director for a national economic strategy; the Sector Board/network specialists for generic policy work, ie on water. These staff may be located in borrower country capitals, where many country teams dealing with operations are now based. These offices usually have civil society liaison officers who should be able to help identify the best contact. Most of the sector teams are based in Washington. See how helpful the key contact appears and whether you can collaborate with them. If not, you may have to work round them by:

- Joining with other NGOs to make a broad front to support your aims
- Using 'insider-outsider' strategies
- Using the media
- Working with Northern advocacy NGOs that can put pressure directly on the Bank and via Northern governments active on the Bank's Board
- Using one of the Bank's complaint mechanisms, such as the Inspection Panel.

⁷ Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper; Comprehensive Development Framework; National Strategies for Sustainable Development.

8. Influencing the World Bank: summary of group discussions

The group discussions following the session on the World Bank focused on sharing experiences of working with the Bank, and identifying lessons learned and strategies for influence in the future.

The World Bank has a very complex structure. However, for the purposes of the discussion, the groups considered the Bank from the point of view of its two main functions: *knowledge management/policy* and *programme lending*. The Water and Sanitation Programme (WSP) is the key part of the knowledge management function with regard to water and sanitation, and can be accessed at national or international level. Access to the programme lending function may be via Bank country offices, national governments, or (more rarely) centrally.

Participants at the Seminar had a range of experience of working with the World Bank, much of it through the Water and Sanitation Programme, but also some through the Business Partners for Development outreach group and links with the Water Sector Co-ordination Unit (John Briscoe). Based on these experiences, strategies were identified for working with the World Bank in the future, some of which are summarised below:

With regard to influencing the World Bank at international level:

- Seek high profile allies and contacts
- Get in at the right level
- Know key individuals personally (identify gatekeeper insider the Bank).

With regard to influencing the World Bank at national level (considered to be easier than international level):

- Become an authority on your topic
- Document and evaluate project work – make information, especially on alternatives, available to the Bank
- Carry out joint/comparative evaluations with the World Bank
- Be aware that informal dialogue can lay the basis for later formal discussions
- Work on a regional basis where possible: sometimes a national focus needs to be expanded into regional or wider brief, to avoid documentation/arguments being seen as simply 'case studies' rather than more widely relevant
- Use alliances where possible: in countries where NGOs are fewer, it is easier to speak with one voice and therefore have more impact.

With regard to the programme lending function of the Bank:

- Work as a contractor on a World Bank or government project (although this may lead to conflict)
- Indirect influence: for example through alliances with other NGOs.

General strategies:

- Make available case studies/research on the social aspects of water, and use the Bank for dissemination of the results
- Use networks for targeting the Bank on particular issues
- There may be scope for NGOs acting as consultants to influence Bank policy
- The Business Partners for Development policy initiatives provide a means of access to the Bank
- There may be opportunities for influencing World Bank Board members.

Further information on the World Bank

The following websites provide additional information on the Bank's activities:

www.worldbank.org (World Bank)
www.dams.org (World Commission on Dams)
www.brettonwoodsproject.org (Bretton Woods Project)
www.bicusa.org (Bank Information Project)
www.irn.org (International Rivers Network)
www.challengeglobalization.org (Globalization Challenge Initiative)

See also: *Masters of Illusion: the World Bank and the poverty of nations* Catherine Caufield, MacMillan, 1997.

THE GLOBAL WATER PARTNERSHIP

9. The future role of the Global Water Partnership

Torkil Jønch-Clausen, Chair, GWP Technical Advisory Committee

This paper presents the case for Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) promoted by the Global Water Partnership, then goes on to describe the involvement of the GWP in the Hague process, the general role of the GWP, and finally the future plans of the Partnership.

9.1 Integrated Water Resources Management

The Ministerial Declaration from The Hague, March 2000, outlined some of the major challenges for water managers:

- Meeting basic needs
- Securing the food supply
- Protecting ecosystems
- Sharing water resources
- Managing risks
- Valuing water
- Governing water wisely

This list implies that water cannot be considered in sectoral isolation. For example, water and poverty are closely interlinked: water is most scarce and most polluted for the poor, so water management must be linked to poverty alleviation. Water also cannot be managed outside of the river basin/aquifer otherwise the conflicts between different water users cannot be addressed.

Traditional supply management has focused on technical solutions, supply rather than demand focus, with little attention to environmental and social impacts and little involvement of civil society, as the recent World Commission on Dams report attests. As water becomes increasingly scarce, the different sub-sectors need to discuss and work together towards solutions. This holistic management through cross-sector integration and dialogue is what the GWP seeks to promote as Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM).

The 'integration' in IWRM involves:

- The natural system for example integration between land and water management
- 'Blue water' (renewable water resources ie rainfall that enters streams and recharges groundwater)
- Unseen 'green water' (rainfall that is stored in the soil and then evaporates or is incorporated in plants and organisms)
- Freshwater
- The coastal zone.

However, it also involves integration of the human system. For example: economic, food and energy policies; integration between all major users and the involvement of all stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, gender and youth considerations.

The GWP has therefore defined IWRM in the following way: 'IWRM is a process which promotes the co-ordinated development and management of water, land and related resources, in order to maximise the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems.'

The GWP attempts to achieve a balance between the principles of economic efficiency, social equity and environmental sustainability. It does this through the creation of three structures: an enabling environment; the institutional framework necessary for implementation at various levels; and the management instruments (information, assessment, allocation instruments), and thus to balance 'water for livelihood' and 'water as a resource.'

9.2 The Hague World Water Forum and the role of the GWP

In preparation for the World Water Forum at the Hague, a number of consultations and documents were produced, including the *Vision for Water, Life and the Environment in the 21st Century*, prepared by the World Water Commission. The GWP was responsible for preparing the Framework for Action document, outlining how the vision could be achieved. The Framework describes four key areas for action:

- Making water governance effective: to ensure the implementation of IWRM

- Generating water wisdom: creating knowledge, capacity and awareness
- Investing for a secure water future: doubling the investment in the water sector from US\$75 billion/year to US\$175 billion/year
- Tackling urgent priorities.

These urgent priorities include the following:

- Protecting and restoring water resources and ecosystems
- Achieving water-food security
- Extending sanitation coverage and hygiene education
- Meeting the challenge of urbanisation
- Improving flood management.

9.3 The Global Water Partnership

The GWP is an international network set up to promote and facilitate integrated water resources management. It was established four years ago by the World Bank, UNDP (United Nations Development Program) and various northern governments, and now receives the majority of its support from the UK Department of International Development, together with the Dutch, French, Swedish, Danish, and Swiss governments, and the development banks. Its main aim is to bring together stakeholders not only across sectors and disciplines (hydrology, water supply, sanitation, agriculture, environment, economics, social planning etc), but also across institutional roles (central and local government, private sector, academia, civil society and NGOs).

It operates through three main activities:

- Associated programmes
- Framework for Action
- Regional water partnerships.

The Associated Programmes include among others: the Gender Alliance, IWRM capacity building, risk management, water supply and sanitation, and the Water Utilities Partnership. The regional partnerships are centred on regional Technical Advisory Committees, now operating in eight regions. The Southern African Water Partnership was formed in July 2000, three years after the establishment of the regional Technical Advisory Committee, while other regional partnerships are still in formation.

9.4 The future role of the GWP

The GWP's involvement in The Hague World Water Forum was through the regional Technical Advisory Committees, organising national and regional stakeholder meetings, and regional Vision to Action documents. Following some criticism during the Forum that there was inadequate participation, the GWP is responding by working towards broader dialogue and increased participation in its processes in the aftermath of the Forum.

The GWP sees its future role as bringing together the different actors, both primary actors (governments, civil society and the private sector), and the supporting actors (financiers, UN agencies, NGOs, research networks, professional associations, and the GWP itself), to promote IWRM. The post-Hague work programme for the GWP is therefore:

- To establish partnerships: mobilising political will among all stakeholders
- To build strategic alliances for action at all levels
- To promote good practice in IWRM
- To develop and implement regional activities.

Within these activities, there are a number of key issues on which the GWP will focus:

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Institutional development for IWRM | • Risk management |
| • Water, food and environmental security | • Options for better service delivery |
| • Water and poverty | • Looking for partners and 'champions.' |

GWP recognises the importance of participation as outlined in the Dublin principles, and sees its particular role in bringing together all stakeholders, especially civil society, to work together towards integrated water resources management.

10. Civil society and the Global Water Partnership: lessons and challenges

Stephen Turner, Head of Planning and Development, WaterAid

This presentation focuses on a personal overview of the activities of the GWP. It then considers two of these activities – the Associate Programmes and IWRM promotion – in more detail, before finally outlining some of the challenges facing the GWP in the future.

10.1 Some initial concerns

The Hague process was complicated and it was difficult to understand how the many large documents and their associated processes fit together. This volume of paper may in fact be a barrier to participation, rather than serving to inform and involve people.

There is a tendency to use terms such as 'the private sector' and 'privatisation' without having established a clear and common definition. This can also lead to confusion and hinder progress.

10.2 What does the GWP do? A personal view⁸

The public image of the GWP is that it is involved in three key activities:

1. Providing technical advice: for example through the Regional Technical Advisory Committees
2. Acting as a donors' club: for example through the endorsement of Associate Programmes (although it was not founded as such, this is how it is commonly perceived)
3. Promoting IWRM: for example through the Framework for Action

However, it must also be borne in mind that:

- The GWP is new
- The regional work is only now being established in most areas
- The GWP is in the process of clarifying its role. This is particularly important with regard to the perceived Northern domination of the Partnership; the uncertainty on how civil society participation will be implemented in practice; and the need to present IWRM issues in terms that communities and practitioners, not just experts, can understand).

10.3 The Associate Programmes

The GWP has a number of Associate Programmes (APs) covering IWRM, gender, water supply and sanitation, and agriculture, among others. However, it is not clear what an Associate Programme is exactly, and most importantly what the criteria are for selection of APs. They are not GWP-funded programmes – although some outsiders are under that impression. They are a way of presenting work that is already taking place, with the endorsement of GWP. This lack of clarity can hinder the work of the GWP.

For example, the Gender and Water Alliance, part of the Associate Programmes, tackles a priority issue for several organisations, has energetic leadership, uses a campaigning style (through the Gender Ambassadors) and lobbies donors. All of these attributes may have contributed to its selection, but there is no way of confirming this, and hence a lack of transparency and accountability in the selection process.

The Gender Alliance itself scores highly on accountability, transparency and a participatory approach, according to a personal view, whereas the Associate Programme process does not:

10.4 Promoting Integrated Water Resource Management

The GWP was central to most of the documents (visions, action plans etc) produced for The Hague Forum, although it was directly responsible for only one, the Framework for Action, which describes how a vision for IWRM can be implemented.

Following the same criteria of accountability, transparency and participatory approach used above, the Framework for Action process scores somewhat better than the World Water Council's visioning process:

⁸ GWP website: www.gwpforum.org

The discussions that took place at The Hague Forum have been taken on board by the GWP, which is responding with greater participation in the Framework process. However, participation is complex, and not only a question of the numbers of people involved. Several key issues remain:

- **Lack of co-ordination:** for example there were several different processes taking place in the same country; over-use of similar terms (eg vision)
- **Stakeholder representation:** there were questions about the legitimacy of the final documents
- **Impact for the World Water Forum:** for example a willingness to understand the dynamics.

10.5 Challenges: a new international process?

In order for the GWP to move forward on IWRM, its image as a 'donor club' may have to be tackled, and a new international process defined. There are a number of existing international mechanisms, such as: the UN General Assembly; the G7 meetings; Rio, Beijing, Istanbul (then Rio+10, Istanbul+5); International Development Targets (and development reports); and Expert Commissions.

However, while these mechanisms may be necessary, they are not sufficient on their own to discuss and develop international policy. There is a need for an additional international process, along the lines of the World Commission on Dams, which links government, the private sector and civil society from the outset, based on three phases.

Phase I: constituent forming, around the issue (eg IWRM)

Phase II: norm-producing phase – what is the problem and what are the options

Phase III: implementation.

If GWP wishes to move into this new paradigm, it will need to tackle these challenges:

- **Popularise IWRM:** making it real for ordinary people
- **Represent stakeholders:** thinking more seriously about how stakeholders are represented
- **Work through Country Water Partnerships:** building on the positive example of the GWP Southern Africa Partnership.

There are also challenges for UK NGOs:

- **Campaign on water resource issues:** and inform supporters about IWRM
- **Support GWP:** get involved and contribute to GWP's policies
- **Support partners to engage in GWP** at country and international levels.

THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE UK DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

11. Policy making for development aid in the European Community and the role of member states

David Hallam, Desk Officer for Development Council/Cotonou/EC reform, European Union Department, DFID

This presentation begins with a brief overview of how policy (including water policy) is made in the European Community and how member states contribute. Secondly, it looks at the ways in which civil society can become involved in this process, and finally describes some forthcoming opportunities for influencing policy.

11.1 How water policy is made in the European Community

There are four main planks of EC policy:

- **The European Treaty:** this provides the legal basis for development assistance and outlines broad objectives – sustainable social and economic development, regional integration, campaign against poverty
- **Declaration on EC Development Policy:** finalised in November 2000, with the ultimate goal of eliminating poverty. The Policy contains six focal areas for the EC's development assistance:
 - Links between trade and development
 - Support for regional integration and co-operation
 - Support for macro-economic policies
 - Transport
 - Food security and sustainable rural development
 - Institutional capacity building, particularly good governance and the rule of law.
- **Regulations:** these include geographical regulations like the Asia/Latin America agreement, the new Cotonou Agreement for ACP countries, and 'horizontal' regulations eg for HIV/AIDS
- **Sector strategies and guidelines.**

The Treaty is not open to amendment, and the Policy Declaration has only recently been completed, so the main policy processes open to influence are the regulations, and most particularly the sector strategies and guidelines. Sector guidelines, such as the recent 'Guidelines for water resources development co-operation' (available on the EU website) are developed by the European Commission following discussions with member states and others. There is no formal consultation for this process. The Commission similarly develops sector strategies, but through a more formal process than the guidelines, using expert groups and formal negotiation in working groups before a proposal is made to and agreed by the Development Council. Regulations follow a similar but much longer process – for example the Cotonou Agreement was initiated in 1997 and only agreed in 2000.

It is also important to note that the Commission, through its *right of initiation* (ie the sole right to propose legislation) is a powerful institution in EC policy making, and thus a key influencing point.

11.2 How member states contribute to EC policy making

Member states contribute to EC policy making through both formal and informal processes. The formal processes include *expert groups*, where member states and the Commission work to prepare recommendations for guidelines/strategies; and *working groups*, which prepare for each biannual Development Council. Member states are represented on the working groups by their permanent representations in Brussels, with briefing and support from central policy departments (eg DFID's European Union Department) and sector specialists (e.g. DFID's Infrastructure and Urban Development Department, where water is situated).

The informal processes take place in parallel with the formal, and probably offer more significant influencing opportunities. The informal processes include: *establishing relationships* with key individuals in the Commission, the EU presidency and other member states to identify forthcoming opportunities; producing *non-papers* to guide discussions; and *technical assistance* eg seconded experts and consultancies.

It is clear that 'upstream' influencing is most effective: once the agenda is set and the papers produced, it is difficult to change the content of policy.

11.3 How civil society can get involved

There are two key constraints to civil society involvement in European Community policy making:

- **Information:** it is difficult to become involved in policy processes - particularly in the early stages - when they are not publicised. Informal activities such as regular contact with others working on EC issues and with the Commission itself can help to identify opportunities
- **Mechanisms:** there are no formal mechanisms for civil society consultation on EC strategies. However, individual staff are often open to and indeed welcome ideas, particularly early on in the process.

A number of key influencing points provide opportunities for involvement:

- **The Commission:** the Commission sets the agenda and produces the key documents and is therefore a significant influencing target. Direct contact with key individuals is a useful tactic, while in-country contact with EC delegations is an important way of influencing country strategies. The water policy contact is André Liebaert in DG Dev (andre.liebaert@cec.eu.int)
- **LC/CLONG (EU Liaison Committee of Development NGOs):** the UK Platform EC-NGO Network, which feeds into LC/CLONG, is currently strengthening its capacity to help UK NGOs become better informed about and have a stronger voice on EC policy. This work is now carried forward under the auspices of BOND (British Overseas NGOs for Development).
- **DFID:** has formal and informal ways in which it seeks to influence EC policy. Ian Curtis, the Senior Water Advisor in the Infrastructure and Urban Development Department, is the key water contact
- **The Presidency:** plays an important role in getting results. It rotates every six months, so the best time for influence is before rather than during the presidency. The forthcoming presidencies are: Jan-June 2001 - Sweden; July-Dec 2001 - Belgium; Jan-June 2002 - Spain; July-Dec 2002 - Denmark
- **Other member states:** decisions are made by consensus in Development Council, but a momentum can be built up by a majority position, hence building alliances is important for shaping debate
- **European Parliament:** plays a key role in EC legislation, e.g. new development regulations. The EP Development Committee members (which include several UK MEPs) are influential in shaping the Parliament's approach.

11.4 Forthcoming opportunities

There are a number of opportunities for civil society influence in the coming year:

- **Strategy for Integration of the Environment into EC development policy:** this is about to be discussed formally by member states, in preparation for the Gothenburg Summit in June 2001, so there may be limited opportunity to influence at this stage. The strategy may however contain significant implications for water resources
- **Rural Development Strategy:** rural development is one of the EC focal areas, where resources will be channelled and strategies developed. It will probably be developed during 2001
- **Possible Water Strategy?** The Commission may seek political endorsement from the member states in the Development Council of the current guidelines on water resources and how they feed into the new EC Development Policy
- **Possible new Regulations for EC aid to Asia and Latin America:** momentum is building for new legal bases to replace the old ALA Regulation.

12. Water policy making in DFID

Ian Curtis, Senior Water Advisor, Infrastructure and Urban Development Department, DFID

This presentation begins with an introduction to policy processes in general and how policy influence works, followed by an outline of the different influences on DFID's policies over the last 15-20 years. Finally, some suggestions for influencing policy are given.

12.1 How does policy influence work?

Three key influences on policy can be defined:

- **Political space:** is necessary to develop policy; it may be granted, or at times must be created
- **Position:** networks, contacts, where organisations stand affects their ability to influence
- **Opportunism:** the ability to grasp opportunities as they arise.

Policy can be seen to carry out two functions: first to legitimise actions that are already taking place; and second leading into a charter for further/additional action. Policy processes are complex social phenomena, linked with social and economic space and articulated through relations of power. They can be a competition between specialisms, perspectives, and relations. In DFID, as in most other organisations, policy processes have at times all of these characteristics.

12.2 Influences on DFID's policies

There are four main ways in which DFID policy has been influenced over the last 15-20 years:

- **Evaluations:** both internal and external evaluations, have had a significant impact on DFID policy. For example, a 1983 evaluation of DFID's project work highlighted the narrow focus of projects, the need to focus on poverty and whether the poor are really benefiting, and the lack of attention to social development issues. This document has had considerable impact on DFID policy since then, for example, in the increased attention paid to social development issues and the expansion of social development staff
- **International processes:** in the 1980s, DFID (then called ODA) was not very engaged in international dialogue and debate. Infrastructure projects at that time were technically led, and focused on irrigation rather than water and sanitation. However, by the end of the 1980s/beginning of the 1990s, ODA had begun to join this discourse, so that by the time of the Dublin and Rio processes, they were fully engaged. As a result of these two processes, an internal conference was held which brought together different parts of the organisation to discuss the implications for policy. This practice has continued: for example DFID is now planning an issues paper on the implications of the World Commission on Dams report recently released, together with their Norwegian, Dutch and German counterparts
- **Dialogue with NGOs:** dialogue with NGOs is a significant factor in policy influence for DFID, in particular - though not only - the close relationship with WaterAid. Co-operation between NGOs and DFID in practical matters can lead to policy influence through maintaining an open dialogue
- **The internal (DFID) environment:** Any policy development is a complex process of negotiation within the organisation. The *White Paper* written three years ago provided a helpful vision for DFID, and included three outcome objectives: promoting sustainable livelihoods; better health and education for poor people; and protection and better management of the environment. This document, which included two significant references to water, helped to provide the political space for DFID's water specialists to develop the organisation's water policy. The resultant paper '*Water Matters*' gave fresh impetus to DFID's water work, and inspired the *Guidance Manual* produced in collaboration with WELL⁹ - this is not a policy document, but rather a manual on the operationalisation of policy
- In 1999, DFID embarked on the production of *Target Strategy Papers*, which define sectoral strategies for achieving the eight development targets outlined in the White Paper. Finally, there are *Country Strategy Papers*, which have changed from being internal, restricted access papers to being in the public domain, and into which the Target Strategy Papers feed. The Country Programme teams feel that the Target Strategy Paper on water provides them with a charter for action as well as legitimising their current activities. There is also within DFID a strong commitment to '*joined up working*', i.e. collaboration with other government departments, such as the Department for Trade and Industry, and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, both of which have an interest in water issues.

⁹ *Guidance manual on water supply and sanitation programmes* DFID and WELL, 1998

12.3 The potential for NGO involvement in policy development

The three key influences on policy outlined at the beginning of this presentation remain significant for NGO involvement in policy development:

- Creating and/or benefiting from political space
- Position, networks and contacts
- Opportunism

DFID welcomes the increasing emphasis on civil society involvement in policy making. What has perhaps yet to be clarified is the role of NGOs (and DFID itself) in influencing policy in-country, in such a way to benefit poor people through improved access to water and sanitation and better management of water resources.

13. Influencing the EU on aid effectiveness and impact: a case study on aid untying

Louise Hilditch, EU Policy Advisor, ActionAid

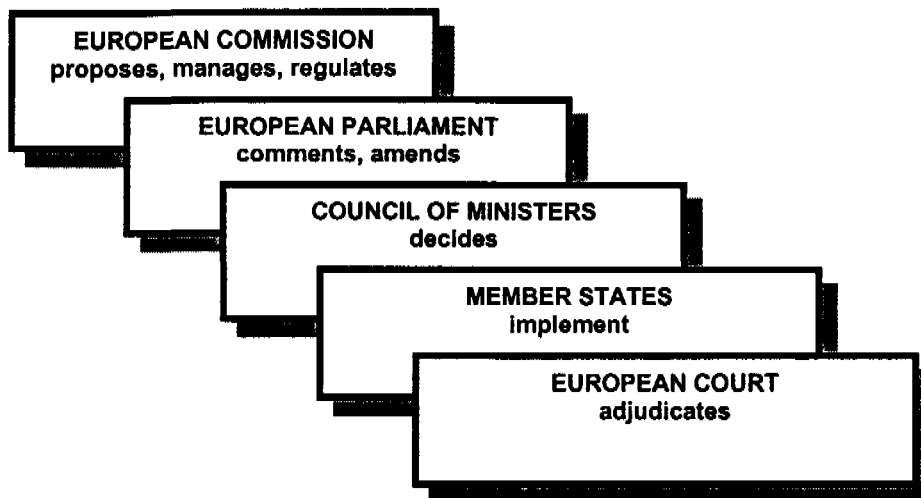
This presentation begins with an overview of the decision-making processes within the European Union. This is followed by a description of the objectives and strategy followed by ActionAid in the case study - a campaign against tied aid. Finally, some key points for lobbying the EU are summarised.

13.1 Decision making in the European Union

In order to develop a strategy for lobbying on EU policy, it is necessary first to understand the decision-making processes within the EU. Some of the key actors are as follows:

- Member states: each member state has permanent representation through a team of civil servants based in Brussels for three to five years on a rotating basis
- Council of Ministers
- European Commission
- Parliament
- European Court: adjudicates on legal matters (relevant to the ActionAid case study, which questioned the legality of adopted legislation).

The process of decision making between these institutions can be summarised as follows:



In addition to the formal EU structures above, there are also many other actors and institutions in Brussels, many of whom are involved in lobbying, and who need to be taken into account:

- Industry and trade organisations
- The media: the most important media target is the European edition of the *Financial Times*, followed by the *European Voice*, both of which are distributed free to Commission officials and MEPs
- NGOs
- Trade Unions.

In all there are approximately 50,000 people in Brussels either being influenced on, or seeking to influence, the policy process.

13.2 The case study: objectives and strategy

This case study is an example of ActionAid's lobbying work within the European Union on a particular topic, targeted procurement and tied aid. Before deciding on the strategy to be adopted, it is important in any campaign to have defined clearly the concepts involved. ActionAid used the following definitions of the key terms of their campaign:

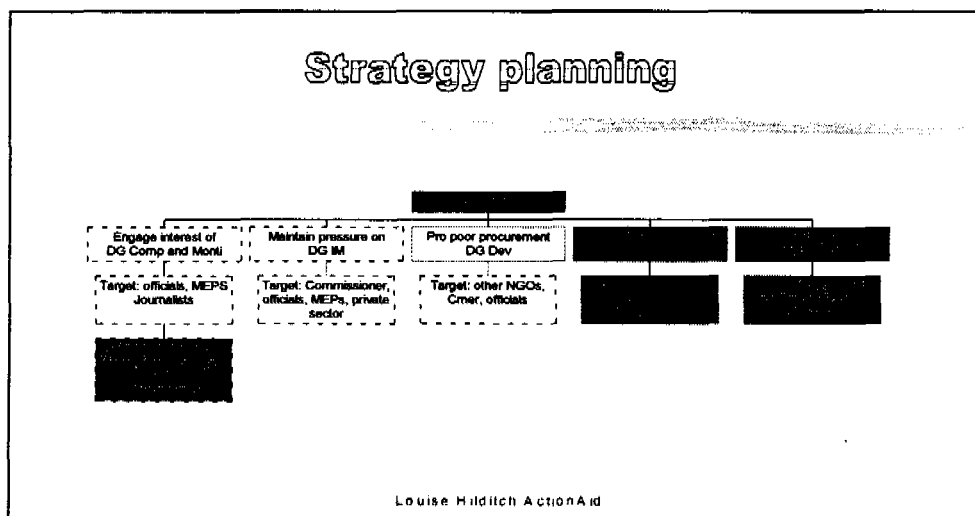
- Targeted procurement is ensuring that aid is used more effectively as a resource for development and poverty eradication
- Tied aid refers to the practice of granting aid on the condition that the beneficiary country uses it to buy goods and services in the country granting that aid.

ActionAid then defined the following overall objective for the campaign: 'to put pressure on OECD Governments to untie all aid and to use aid procurement and contracting to support and enhance local development and southern ownership.'

The original strategy was to tackle the OECD/DAC process itself, but this proved to be very slow. More success was gained through working on a unilateral basis in the UK. The campaign is now consequently focusing on all the other EU member states in order to untie all OECD aid. This could have been achieved through a number of routes: legislative; moral/political pressure (high-profile public campaign); or contravention of EU law (which is supreme over member states law).

ActionAid decided to follow the latter route, and drew up the following EU objective: Aid tying by EU member states is declared illegal by the European Court of Justice acting on a series of infringement cases brought by the Commission

After putting together the legal case, ActionAid then needed a strategy to ensure that the issue remained on the agenda of the Commission, which receives many complaints each day. The following plan was drawn up:



The key actors who are affected by the objective were listed in the first line of the strategy (relevant parts of the Commission, Parliament, member states etc), and underneath them all the others who might be affected, or able to influence the issue. Different people and institutions are responsive to different arguments, so a number of approaches may be necessary. It is advantageous if the campaign issue can be linked to the mainstream of EU ideas, notably the issue of free market for business (as was possible in the aid untying campaign), as this brings it to the centre of EU debate.

The MEPs are on various committees, but the location and nature of their constituency may also affect their position. Much of this information is available in the public domain on the EU website. All MEPs also employ assistants, who unlike the MEPs themselves are based permanently in Brussels. Each committee also has 10-15 staff, one of whom will be dealing full-time with any issue.

At present there are only 87 votes in the Council (although following the Nice Conference this will change in the future). Each member state has a certain number of votes, so it is currently easy to calculate which states should be targeted to obtain the 62 votes required for a qualified majority.

Alliances with other NGOs can be particularly useful when targeting other member states. ActionAid's experience has shown that a German official, for example, is more likely to be positively influenced by a group including a German NGO than a British NGO working alone. Journalists are also crucial players in EU lobbying, particularly through the European edition of the *Financial Times* and the *European Voice* mentioned above.

A range of methods and materials can be useful. MEPs are usually willing to forward letters to the Commission based on drafts from lobbyists (*model letters*) as they may agree with the issue but have limited time to write themselves. Short *briefings* (maximum two pages for MEPs, although specialist desk officers in the Commission would need more) are also useful. These can be followed up by *meetings* and *written questions*.

13.3 Summary of key points

- identify your objective and target audiences
- identify the full range of those who are affected by your issue (to define 'enemies' and 'allies')
- know the timetable (use the website and friendly officials)
- identify and create opportunities
- don't be disheartened by the (very slow) pace of change!

14. Influencing the EU and DFID: summary of group discussions

The group discussions following the session on the EU and DFID focused on sharing experiences of working with the two institutions, exploring the links between the EU and DFID and identifying targets and strategies for the future.

The links between the institutions of the EU, the bilateral donors and national governments were explored in the groups. Both the EU and bilateral donors such as DFID have country offices or country delegations, with their own country strategies. These may or may not conflict with the strategies developed by the host national government (although the EU and bilateral donors are supposed to co-ordinate their efforts in country through working groups). NGOs may have relationships with each of these levels and also with the parliamentarians (in the EU and donor countries) and the political assistants and civil servants who work with them.

It was noted that the EU Development Fund has a very politicised funding agenda, and that the selection process is bureaucratic and lengthy. However, it was also noted that EU delegations should have more decision-making power over project proposals in future, as a result of proposed decentralisation.

The differences between the Lomé Convention and its successor, the Cotonou Agreement, were discussed. According to the Cotonou Agreement, civil society including Southern civil society, should be more closely involved in its implementation than its predecessor. Civil society actors should be consulted on policies, strategies and priorities, and on political dialogue between the EU and ACP countries. They are eligible to receive finance for local development processes, including promoting human rights, democratisation, the rule of law and good governance, and should be involved in the implementation of development projects and programmes. They should also receive support for capacity building.

Two research programmes based at the central level in DFID were noted: KAR and ESCOR. KAR (Knowledge and Research) provides limited advocacy opportunities, as it does not feed directly into DFID policy. However, ESCOR (the research arm of the Social Development Division) provides more scope for policy influence, for example through the Sustainable Livelihoods Research Programme, and is less constrained than KAR with regard to criticism of DFID.

The following strategies for future advocacy work with the EU were suggested:

- Develop relationships with MEPs (who are generally approachable, and able to push proposals through), and with their political special assistants and secretaries
- Joint lobbying is more powerful
- Use the Cotonou Agreement to promote civil society involvement to EU delegations; and disseminate information on the Agreement (use the website as a source).

Additional strategies were suggested for advocacy work with DFID and other bilateral donors:

- Share information with DFID and other donors: for example NGO's own country strategies, project evaluations and reports, in particular practical examples that work
- Develop person to person contacts with DFID and other donor country representatives in country
- Create opportunities to communicate the grassroots perspective on policies (this may require providing mental and financial space for field NGOs to contribute and comment on policies and guidelines)
- Be aware of the need to create legitimacy of representation
- Alliances of Southern NGOs with Northern NGOs may enable Southern NGOs to gain greater influence over Northern donors

Two general points were emphasised in all the group discussions:

- The need for research and information
- The importance of networking/alliances/co-ordination between advocacy actors

Further information

EU website: europa.eu.int

DFID website: www.dfid.gov.uk

SOUTHERN GOVERNMENTS

15. National policy making in the water sector

Len Abrams, Consultant, Water Policy International

This presentation is based on the author's experience in working with Southern Governments, including those of South Africa, Swaziland, Namibia, Rwanda, Sudan, Nigeria, and to a lesser extent, China. It begins with a description of the new policy climate in many African countries and considers the pre-conditions for policy reform in those cases. Some key lessons that have emerged are outlined, followed by a discussion on policy processes and the example of the Nile Basin Initiative.

15.1 Policy reform: pre-conditions and opportunities

Although some theory of public administration and policy development exists, much of the policy reform currently taking place in many African countries is new ground for those involved. It is occurring in response to a number of factors:

- The failure of many previous rolling strategic plans to have any real impact
- The increasing realisation of the political nature of development, previously ignored, which resulted in attempts to pursue development outside the political context without the mandate of the government
- The emerging understanding of the interdependency between sectors: water policy for example cannot be considered in isolation from other sectors; a broad decentralisation policy will have significant effects on other sectors such as water, agriculture, and industry. The uni-sectoral nature of previous plans contributed to their failure.

There are several pre-conditions that can facilitate policy change and reform:

- **Political change external to the water sector:** for example the abolition of Apartheid in South Africa, before which any policy reform would not have been possible; in the Democratic Republic of Congo, government staff attending a water policy workshop had not been paid for three months – effective policy reform is not possible until such circumstances change
- **Change in the status quo:** for example, after many years on the outside of the Nile Basin debates, Egypt is now becoming involved, largely because it can now gain access to private sector financing. Previously, downstream riparians could operate a veto on funding for upstream development.
- **Crisis:** for example, following severe water crises in Mozambique (flooding) and Namibia (water scarcity), both countries are now involved in water policy development and reform

These pre-conditions create windows of opportunity, which civil society needs to recognise and respond to, in order to influence policy processes. They are usually short-lived, so a quick response is necessary. However, they do provide the opportunity to create a legacy (for example through legislation) for future equity and sustainability.

15.2 Some lessons learned for policy engagement

- Policy reform is a political process, not a technical one, and therefore cannot be approached from a technical viewpoint
- The politics involved often have nothing to do with water, hence a broader range of skills are required to engage in the policy debate
- We need to be aware of the politics and financial interests of other sectors that might influence water. For example, the primary user of freshwater is agriculture. Developments in agricultural policy will probably therefore have a greater effect on freshwater than water and sanitation policies
- We need to understand the realities of the internal politics within a country, between the executive (Ministries), administrations (eg Departments of Water Resources, Public Works etc) and the legislature. We need to understand the issues and tensions between these different groups, so that we can use them creatively if possible for advocacy purposes
- Although policy reform involves large government bodies and bureaucracies, there is usually a champion. It is important for influence to identify this person, and find out what their motives are (which may not in fact be water-related), so that we can work most effectively with them.

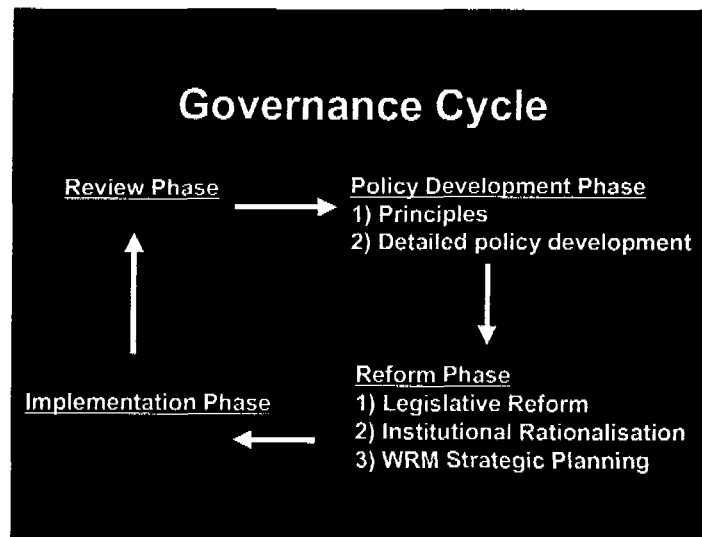
In many cases, government staff are undertaking this type of policy reform for the first time, and therefore lack experience and in nearly all cases have a severe lack of capacity. This provides the opportunity for useful input from outsiders from a range of sectors (NGOs, private sector etc) if it is seen to be politically relevant. It is also

important to remember that single operators, with a useful and relevant input, can be equally or more effective than large organisations and groupings – the 'power of one'.

15.3 Understanding policy processes

We need to understand that policy reform involves finding a political framework for progress and for the commitment of resources. There may be considerable discrepancy between written and delivering of policy. For example, the South African White Paper on water and sanitation was a positive document with commitments to community involvement and so on, but there were problems with delivery and with the speed of delivery. The mechanism for delivery, developed in combination with the private sector, is consequently very different from the White Paper.

It is also important to understand that policy is only a part of the Governance Cycle (see diagram below), and not a solution in itself. Policy provides the mandate for legislative reform, for the rationalisation of institutions and for the development of strategic plans, which can then be implemented. It is important to understand which part of the Governance Cycle the country has reached with regard to any particular sector.



It is also important to remember that policy must be 'home-grown'. It should be appropriate and rooted in the experience of the country. For example, a group of Sudanese officials who had spent little time in discussion with civil society were taken to the field for several days' discussion, after which one commented: 'if we spoke to enough people, the policy would write itself'. Careful use of outside resources and expertise can enhance this process, but should leave no 'footprints' behind, since the people who live with the problems and constraints themselves have to own and understand the policy.

The Nile Basin Initiative provides an interesting example of an attempt to develop an international discourse, similar to the World Commission on Dams process, to enable civil society from within the countries of the Nile Basin and internationally to become engaged in the process of policy making. This is an experiment which will continue to be developed over the coming months that aims to create the right environment for civil society involvement in a complex development process.

16. Influencing policy at the national level: the case of the Ugandan Water and Sanitation NGO Network

Monica Kunihiro, Uganda Water and Sanitation NGO Co-ordination Task Force

This presentation begins with an overview of the national policy framework in Uganda and the policy implementation structure. This is followed by an outline of the water and sanitation sector policies and key policy concerns. The process of establishing the Uganda Water and Sanitation Network is described, and finally key lessons and challenges from this experience are presented.

16.1 The national policy framework in Uganda

A number of key documents provide the framework for policy in Uganda:

- The Constitution: developed in 1995, declared that everyone is entitled to safe water
- The 1996 Presidential election manifesto: mentioned water
- The Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP): a Participatory Assessment Project was carried out (with funding from Oxfam and the Government of Uganda) in 10 out of 35 districts to find out the priorities and concerns of the poor. The final report formed the basis of the PEAP, in which water and sanitation is one of the key priorities
- The Local Government Act: this Act outlines the decentralisation policy undertaken by the government to shift power to district authorities
- The Privatisation policy: this policy is aimed not only at selling off some public companies, but also at encouraging private sector involvement

These policies are implemented through a hierarchical structure, beginning with central government, including line ministries, at which level donors, bi-laterals and multi-laterals are also found. At the local government level there are three forms of leadership: political leaders (elected at all levels from village to district); civil leaders specialising in different fields; and a presidential appointee at district level. NGOs and CBOs are also found at district level. The districts are divided into Counties and Sub-counties, which are further sub-divided into parishes and finally villages. Decisions on resource allocation are made at District level, in accordance with the decentralisation policy.

16.2 The water and sanitation sector in Uganda

The water and sanitation sector in Uganda has undergone several reforms, to bring some of the previous policies that had been drawn up in the 1950s and 1960s up to date. The three key policies that set out the regulations, standards and principles for the Government of Uganda in the sector are:

- National Water Action Plan
- Water Statute
- National Water Policy.

In addition, there is a National Sanitation Policy, which is located within the Ministry of Health.

Although these policies are drawn up and in place, there are a number of issues and concerns regarding their implementation:

- The role of NGOs is implied, rather than specified, unlike that of local and central government, donors and the private sector, whose roles are clearly defined in the policies. As a result, NGOs are involved to varying degrees depending on the whim of the individual districts
- Although there is plenty of rhetoric regarding community participation in the Water Statute and the National Water Policy, the emphasis in these policies on physical targets compromises community participation, particularly given the absence of a clear definition of what that participation should mean in practice. For example, the target of universal access to safe water and sanitation for all by the year 2015 is interpreted as an average coverage of 20%, which is further interpreted to mean the sinking of 200 boreholes
- Hygiene and sanitation are only occasionally mentioned in the policies and consequently marginalised
- There is great emphasis on private sector participation, linked to the emphasis on targets: only registered contractors can bid for contracts

- There is a conflict between the principles of DRA¹⁰ and poverty eradication: poor people often live far from their district headquarters and they cannot demand what they do not know about
- There are concerns about equity, as the response to targets is based on averages and does not take into account the poorest sub-counties and villages.

16.3 The Uganda Water and Sanitation NGO Network: experiences, lessons and challenges

The Uganda Water and Sanitation NGO Network was initiated in response to these policy concerns, building on WaterAid's experience of working with government and NGOs to advocate for increased NGO involvement in the sector. With support from government and donors, the following steps were taken:

- Carried out preparatory survey
- Generated support/consensus
- Held consultative conference
- Built alliances with Uganda Debt Network, Oxfam, Deniva (the national alliance of development NGOs in Uganda)
- Facilitated regional workshops to establish dialogue with local governments (particularly with regard to the HIPC funds, which are to be allocated by Districts on the basis of their District Development Plans – if NGOs or others do not feature in the plan, they will not be able to access the funds)
- Facilitated formation of a database of NGOs: numbers, interests, capacity, experience
- Participated in the revision of the PEAP
- Launched the Network

As a result of these early experiences, a number of lessons for advocating to government through such a network can be defined:

- Relationships must be defined in a Memorandum of Understanding or a Letter of Understanding
- There is a need to understand government policies and processes (how, when, who, where)
- Access to both public and 'confidential' information should be ensured
- The need to work with others (in this case, Uganda Debt Network, Deniva)
- The need to identify key people, both 'big' and 'small', in all departments,
- The importance of a mandate: on whose behalf does the network speak; does it have a legal status recognised by the government
- The importance of flexibility (willingness to attend meetings at very short notice; re-issuing relevant documents to the same official, etc)
- The need for continuous provision of information to relevant government departments
- The need to work on NGO-NGO relationships first (a united front is necessary if the network is to speak to government on behalf of NGOs)
- The importance of having a 'champion', a lead agency with credibility in the field and sufficient capacity.

However, a number of challenges remain:

- How to ensure and maintain independence from government and donors, whose support may imply expectations of collaboration or co-option
- How to deal with power struggles and hidden agenda
- How to cope with the diversity of NGOs – differences in size, vision etc
- How to maintain effective communication in spite of the cost, time and effort involved
- How to work as a central network within a decentralised system.

17. Key issues for freshwater advocacy: summary of group discussions

Although the main focus of the Seminar was on policy institutions and how to influence them, rather than on the advocacy issues themselves, a workshop session was held early on the first day to allow participants to share

¹⁰ DRA (Demand Responsive Approach) has been promoted by the World Bank since 1988: demand is measured in willingness and ability to pay (for services) usually through cash and in kind contributions towards the capital and operating costs; to gain access to services, communities need to demand the service (to express and somehow make their demand heard by government); communities are offered technological options related to the design of the service and their choice is contingent on their willingness and ability to pay for those choices.

their priority concerns about freshwater. Participants were given the following list of freshwater advocacy issues¹¹ as a basis for their discussions and asked to select up to three priority topics from the list or elsewhere:

1. Transparency and accountability in international policy institutions
2. Access to water and sanitation as universal rights, not commodities
3. Food and water insecurity links to unfair global trade system
4. Community participation
5. Ecological integrity of ecosystems
6. Need for increased spending on water and sanitation
7. Debt cancellation
8. Privatisation of water and sanitation services
9. Gender

During the feedback from the different groups four common themes emerged:

Universal right to water/access to water:

- Access to water supply
- Access to sanitation
- Access to information
- Community participation
- Capacity building
- Community management
- Gender issues.

Resources/financing:

- Need for increased spending on the freshwater sector
- Link with PRSPs and debt relief programmes
- Recognition that the poor pay more; need for pro-poor markets.

Sustainability/the environment:

- Sustainable management of the environment and hydrological cycle
- Ecological impact of large projects
- Water quality
- Land use planning.

Governance:

- Importance of the political context; and the need for political will
- Participation: gender, marginalised groups
- Capacity building at all levels
- Transparency, accountability and monitoring of national and international institutions
- Privatisation: particularly in rural areas; how to maintain public service element within private sector participation
- Liberalisation and the trade in water services.

¹¹ Taken from: *NGO Major Group Statement to the Hague Ministerial Conference on Water Security* in Perspectives on Freshwater: issues and recommendations of NGOs Danielle Morley, Freshwater Co-ordinator, UNED Forum (ed.), UNED Forum, 2000

18. Ways forward for international and national advocacy on freshwater: summary of group discussions

The final group discussions focused on ways forward for freshwater advocacy, considering what needs to be done and how it can be done, in three different areas:

1. The forthcoming international events (eg Bonn Conference 2001, Earth Summit 2002, World Water Forum 2003)
2. The day-to-day influencing of international institutions such as those under discussion at the Seminar
3. The need for accountability and legitimacy of NGOs, in particular Northern NGOs, in their advocacy efforts

Participants were divided into three groups: Southern NGO representatives; Northern NGO representatives; and 'Others' (including researchers and consultants).

The Southern NGO group focused on the forthcoming international events such as the Bonn Freshwater Conference and the Earth Summit 2002. Such events were considered to be a positive opportunity to share experiences, but a number of negative factors were noted:

- The policy discussion is very diffuse (although relevant)
- There are a number of challenges for constructive participation: the opportunity cost of participation; the need to involve grassroots participants; the importance of strategic effectiveness; and the capacity of the participants
- The language barrier can also hinder participation, although it was noted that there are some regional language networks for consultation and preparation (eg through the CSD)
- Becoming accredited is important.

Various suggestions were identified to take these advocacy opportunities forward:

- Try to link CBOs, NGOs and International NGOs
- Clarify aims and objectives of attending the meeting beforehand
- Prepare issue/position papers and case studies
- Influence national minister
- Build the voice of local people into the NGO institution
- Join networks such as the Freshwater Action Network and the NGO Freshwater Caucus of the CSD¹²
- Co-ordinate with others requests for funding to participate
- Use networking to avoid the dominance of a single NGO at international events.

The Northern NGO group discussed first the forthcoming international events:

- Two or three NGOs should take the lead at the Bonn Conference, as in-depth consultation between all NGOs is not possible
- Bonn can be seen as an organising tool for the freshwater network
- Use the core messages from the visioning process leading up to the Hague Forum as a tool
- For the Earth Summit 2002, a tight focus is important: targeted information; limited, targeted involvement; and clear, targeted and limited messages
- Content of advocacy messages at these forums: the priorities from the Vision 21 process and the WSSCC.

On day-to-day influencing the Northern NGO group had the following suggestions:

- Need to prioritise
- Engage national governments in discussion
- Engage bilaterals in country in discussion

¹² The **Freshwater Action Network** aims to increase NGO participation in policy making and to support NGO advocacy around freshwater issues; to support cross-sectoral integration of policy and advocacy work on freshwater among NGOs; and to improve water policy and campaigning co-operation between NGOs of differing perspectives, priorities and skills. It brings together key sectors such as water supply and sanitation, food security, ecosystem conservation, dams, floods and droughts, and pollution. The **NGO Freshwater Caucus of the CSD** is a loose group of NGOs concerned about freshwater issues and involved in the UN Commission on Sustainable Development meetings. Similar NGO caucuses exist for the other themes of the CSD, e.g. Energy, Transport, Tourism. Contact details for both these networks are given in Section 19 below.

- Support national partners to find mechanisms to influence
- Advocate to other NGOs (eg European NGOs).

On accountability and transparency the Northern NGO group suggested:

- Listen and respond to action originating in the South
- Devise a quality assurance process for in-house materials.

The 'Other' group focused on the role of consultants in advocacy. After acknowledging that they may have limited ability to participate in the large international events, the group outlined some of the contributions that consultants can make to advocacy:

- The experiences of consultants from a wide range of projects and practices may be an untapped source of advocacy material
- Research is important in providing authority for advocacy messages and for making the links between poverty and root causes
- Conference papers on particular projects and cases may form a useful advocacy tool
- Build on personal contacts in key target organisations
- The gap between NGOs and consultants as 'service providers' is not as big as sometimes perceived.

19. Conclusion: key issues arising from the Seminar

Belinda Calaguas, Advocacy Manager, WaterAid

While the discussion at the Seminar covered a wide range of topics and institutions, a few key issues and challenges can be distilled for further consideration by NGOs engaging in freshwater advocacy:

1. The need for political will to overcome water insecurity, identified at the 2nd World Water Forum at the Hague, was reinforced by the Seminar's Keynote Presentation, which defined the current period as one for political action. One of the challenges for civil society is therefore to understand how political will can be generated and identify the opportunities to do so. A number of opportunities already exist: first the 'set pieces' such as the Bonn Freshwater Conference and the Earth Summit 2002, and international processes such as the GATS negotiations, provide a potential opportunity for NGOs and civil society groups to put water on the political agenda. Second, the day-to-day influencing of key policy actors such as the World Bank and the Global Water Partnership also provides an opportunity to create political will around water issues.
2. The aims of the Seminar were to increase knowledge of the international processes and key actors involved in the freshwater policy debate, and to increase understanding of the political processes surrounding policy making. These continue to be key issues - the need to know the detail involved in these processes: when policy is decided, the power relationships involved, where the opportunities lie, the best timing for inputs to avoid attempting to influence policy that is already decided, and so on. In order to develop this knowledge, NGOs need to share responsibilities, to identify where the resources are to support the necessary research, to identify who can find out the information, how it will be shared etc. These issues of time, money and effort need to be resolved in order for us to 'know the detail'.
3. Underlying the discussion at the Seminar was the conviction that we do have messages to advocate and successful approaches to promote. We need to clarify our messages, to take them beyond the starting points which we already have (the Vision 21 outcome, the results of research institutions, etc) and engage in debate at country level; so that the options we suggest and the alternatives we promote are sharp and well defined. In order to do this, we need to document and share our information. This is particularly important in the day-to-day influencing that we are engaged in, a process that requires the provision of information to key institutions as part of our relationship with them. However, this documentation needs to go beyond the presentation of our own experience to encompass the development of alternatives as well.
4. We need to develop our approaches to gain influence. Information gathering, building contacts, building relationships, and sharing information were all identified during the Seminar as useful mechanisms. The three approaches highlighted by John Clark (section 5) also form a good starting point: to make a noise that cannot be ignored; to become an unquestionable authority on a particular topic; or to build a relationship as an important ally.
5. We need to take hold of the opportunities available. This is particularly challenging for those NGOs largely involved in operational work, as the project cycle process does not necessarily mesh easily with policy cycles. Nonetheless, we need to build in flexibility and be opportunistic where necessary in order to contribute to the policy debate at the optimum time.
6. As NGOs and civil society groups we need to continue to address the legitimacy and accountability of our involvement in policy advocacy. This includes the importance of facilitating access by Southern groups to policy opportunities that tend to be dominated by Northern partners.
7. Finally, we need to bear in mind that national governments are ultimately the ones who decide on policy choices (albeit constrained by significant donor and policy conditions from outside). We need therefore to devote effort to linking international and national level advocacy effectively.

A number of networking opportunities already in existence can facilitate this process:

- The Freshwater Caucus of the CSD is a virtual network based on a list-server. To subscribe, go to the NGO Caucus website: www.igc.org/csdngo
- The Freshwater Action Network is a network of NGOs working on freshwater advocacy (see footnote 12). Contact: Danielle Morley at WaterAid: DanielleMorley@wateraid.org.uk
- The Water and Sanitation Collaborative Council provides a forum for debate and co-ordination between actors in the water and sanitation sub-sector. For further information see the website: www.wsscc.org

Appendix 1: Notes on presenters

Len Abrams is an independent consultant focusing on water policy development, through Water Policy International. His current activities include support to the Nile Basin Initiative and work in Nigeria. He edits the African Water Page (www.thewaterpage.org).

John Clark is Lead Social Development Specialist at the World Bank, having worked previously for Oxfam on similar issues. He is currently on sabbatical as a Visiting Fellow at the London School of Economics.

Ian Curtis is Senior Water Advisor in the Infrastructure and Urban Development Department of DFID, where he has worked for the last six years. Prior to joining DFID he worked in Mozambique with the Swiss Development Corporation.

Rosalie Gardiner is International Policy Co-ordinator at UN Environment and Development Forum, a UK-based NGO that facilitates and encourages engagement by civil society groups, private sector and other major stakeholders in United Nations processes, especially the UN Commission on Sustainable Development. Rosalie was involved in the organisation of the NGO Day at the 2nd World Water Forum and is currently engaged in developing briefing papers for the multi-stakeholder dialogues within the CSD process.

David Hall is Director of Public Services International Research Unit (PSIRU), the research arm of Public Services International, a coalition of public sector trade unions. Based at the University of Greenwich, PSIRU actively monitors the privatisation of water services around the world and promotes the option of public-public partnership as an alternative to private-public partnership.

David Hallam has worked at DFID for the last six years, where he is currently Desk Officer for the Development Council, Cotonou Agreement and EC reform, in the European Union Department.

Louise Hilditch has worked in Brussels for the last seven years and is currently ActionAid's European Policy Advisor. She was formerly employed in the European Parliament and as a policy advisor to both private and public sector organisations. At present her work focuses primarily on ActionAid's international education campaign aimed at ensuring free and compulsory quality education for all, and on aid.untying.

Torkil Jørch-Clausen is the Chair of the Global Water Partnership's Technical Advisory Committee. The GWP was set up in 1996 by donor agencies to promote integrated water resources management. It has been responsible for developing the Global Framework for Action to accompany the World Water Vision produced by the World Water Council and presented at the Hague 2nd World Water Forum in March 2000.

Clare Joy is Campaigns Officer with the World Development Movement, an NGO that lobbies and campaigns on issues around the World Trade Organisation, debt and structural adjustment policies of the IMF/World Bank. Clare has been responsible for researching the material for and helping to develop the WDM's recently launched campaign on the General Agreement on Trade in Services.

Monica Kunihiro is currently Executive Director of the Uganda Water and Sanitation Network (UWASNET). She was formerly Programme Manager, Advocacy and Partner Development Unit for WaterAid Uganda. She was seconded full time to the Task Force commissioned to set up the Uganda water and sanitation NGO Network.

Alan Nicol worked with Save the Children Fund UK as their water resource advisor before becoming a Research Fellow with the Overseas Development Institute, where he continues to focus on water issues within the Rural Livelihoods and Natural Resources Team. He was actively involved in drafting DFID's Target Strategy Paper on Water and Environmental Sanitation.

Stephen Turner is Head of Planning and Development at WaterAid, where he co-ordinates WaterAid's public policy. He was recently elected to the Steering Committee of the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council.

Alex Wilks is the Co-ordinator of the Bretton Woods Project, a joint initiative by a number of UK international development NGOs which monitors the Bretton Woods institutions, namely the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and helps to develop UK NGO advocacy positions vis-à-vis these institutions. The BWP are currently focusing their work on monitoring and building NGO understanding of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Process, one of the conditions for debt relief.

Appendix 2: Seminar participants

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