

URAdapt

Managing Water at the Urban-Rural Interface: The key to climate change resilient cities

MEETING REPORT

URAdapt 4th Consultative Group Meeting.

Tuesday, February 28th, 2012



URAdapt 4th Consultative Group Meeting
Friday, March 2nd, 2012
International Water Management Institute (IWMI), Accra

Introduction

The meeting was held in the Conference Room of IWMI on the 2nd of March, 2012 with the objective of discussing the strategic agenda for adaptation to urban water mediated impacts of climate change. It was aimed at developing concrete recommendations of a strategic nature which could fit into an agenda for easy implementation.

The meeting commenced at 9:25am with Liqa Raschid-Sally welcoming the members. She then gave brief background on the development of the document and stating the objectives of the present meeting which was to share the first draft of the document for their advice on the format and structure of the document and the eventual content to be included. In conclusion she said that the document should strike a balance between being strategic and functional, whilst also being vivid, but concise and calling for action.

A Strategic Agenda for Adaptation to Urban Water Mediated Impact of Climate Change

A Strategic Agenda for Adaptation to Urban Water Mediated Impact of Climate Change was the title of the document and hence was the first issue discussed. The title comprised the words – strategic, agenda, adaptation, urban and climate change. The key words of importance were noted to be *Adaptation* and *Climate Change*. According to Liqa, the focus is meant to be on water resource management and its related impact, whilst adaptation on the other hand draws attention to resilience of cities.

Delali Dovie asked why the word agenda is used and cautioned that others might misconstrue it instead of comprehending it as a report on the project and what has been done. He suggested the use of either framework or guideline because within the agenda, other issues such as way forward could become the agenda. He cited the Qualitative Microbial Risk Analysis (QMRA), which was an afterthought as an example of a gap becoming agenda in the future.

Ohene Sarfo suggested activities of research should be separated from the bigger picture. Delali Dovie simplified the idea being put across by querying about “how to use the agenda to draw an

action plan?” Barnabas Amisigo in agreement stated that recommendations should not be presented to be too theoretical but rather in adaptable forms.

Discussion on the development of the Strategic Agenda

Delali Dovie and Ohene Sarfoh suggested that the background/executive summary should give information on when and how the project started and why it was initiated. He further suggested that there should be no references since it does not encourage people to read the document. Liqa Raschid-Sally summed up the ideas raised as amending the background taking into consideration of the why and what, and stating the project as an IWRM issue linking water resources management in a basin to the demands of cities feeding off those basins. Delali Dovie proposed ‘case study to support decision making’ and a few sentences on it should replace ‘research studies undertaken for evidence based decision making’. He added that Ghana has the best action plans but most of them cannot be implemented!

Strategic Recommendations

Moving into the discussion on the strategic recommendations themselves and the form they should take, Liqa said that these were formulated from findings from the various studies. Explaining the process of arriving at strategic objectives, she added that the original research framework had defined the context and the individual case/research studies produced findings. These findings give direction to the strategic objectives that are developed.

Charlotte Engmann suggested an inclusion of glossary of terms to explain technical terms. Delali Dovie added footnotes could also be used. Ohene Sarfoh reminded the meeting that, some issues require national policy reforms whilst others require grassroots reforms. Strategic objectives should therefore be bulleted, clearly defining national and local levels actions and the responsible organization(s). The meeting finally agreed on differentiating issues requiring national level and district level actions and the responsibilities of organizations or stakeholders.

Charlotte Engmann noted that the coordination activity for some of the recommendation might be best placed under one Ministry, possibly Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology with dedicated personnel. J. Wellens-Mensah suggested recommendations falling under urban water for example could be anchored in the Water Directorate of the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing. The suggestion of the Water Directorate was agreed by all with the reason that ministerial mandates can change but technical agencies usually survive ensuring institutional memory.

In order to brainstorm on possible recommendations Liqa Raschid-Sally explained that these should be based on the understanding of the studies that had been done to generate the evidence for the recommendation. As a starting point the discussion session could be centred around concerns that members have on various research aspects of the project. Philip Amoah suggested that concerns raised should be followed by strategic recommendations where possible.

Christian Siawor raised an issue concerning the scope of the issues being developed in the draft strategic agenda as limited since other associated factors may evolve with time. Wellens-Mensah added to this by referring to the issue of runoff. He substantiated, that two aspects of concern in relation to run-off was the increase in impervious areas, leading to more floods and early peaks which cause floods. He further explained that the main issue is the inability of current infrastructure to contain water. As an example of further concerns, he cited the inability of the Meteorological Services Department to forecast flood volumes. Liqa Raschid-Sally agreed that more research has to be done and a detailed study on run-off has not been conducted by the project in order to give more recommendations. She defined the issue of run-off and inadequate capacity to manage floods as knowledge gaps and suggested that these could be condensed in the document as issues requiring further studies. To complement what had been said, Charlotte Engmann stated that in conveying the above mentioned ideas, statements should be apt and concise.

Delali Dovie suggested that an annex stating the relevant issues that were not addressed could be included in the document. Liqa Raschid-Sally, in accordance with the point Delali raised stated the attached annex would capture all the research gaps.

Generating Knowledge for Decision Making

Liqa Raschid-Sally, explained that this section of the document would describe the research framework, the selection and role of stakeholders at various levels, and the rich experience of processes within the project leading to knowledge generation and assimilation. She added that the word “research” should be replaced with “findings” to simplify things for the non-technical reader. She also suggested that study topics and main findings of each study had to be mentioned to substantiate recommendations.

Charlotte Engmann contributed by saying the document is a good one and had more room for bright ideas. Wellens-Mensah referred to the study on storage capacity and suggested production should be linked to storage. Oppong Boadi in explaining the issue of enforcement and regulation with

regards to watersheds requested that, it should be found out why communities cease to comply with laws and regulations on watersheds. Liqa Raschid-Sally commented on this saying in designing strategies to enforce regulations, an involvement of more stakeholders would aid implementation of the regulations. Barnabas Amisigo added the benefits of projects should be known to communities.

Ohene Sarfoh wanted to know if the stakeholders would be privy to the document after development. Liqa Raschid-Sally responded by saying the document will be circulated to the directorate of relevant ministries and the expectation would be that it filters down to the different levels. She added that, as part of the process of uptake, a Policy Round Table would be held where the next steps could be discussed. She also noted that, there is a vast scope for dissemination through involvement of media.

CLOSING REMARKS

In closing the discussion, the meeting agreed that the strategic agenda for Accra is satisfactory. Liqa Raschid-Sally thanked the participants for their time and ideas, and the meeting came to a close at 11:15am

List of participants

No	NAME	ORGANISATION
1	Barnabas Amisigo	CSIR-Water Research Institute
2	K.Y Oppong-Boadi	Environmental Protection Agency
3	K. Ohene-Sarfoh	Institute of Local Government Studies (I LGS)
4	Delali B. Dovie	Regional Institute of Population Studies (UG)/ Researcher
5	Philip Amoah	International Water Management Institute (IWMI)
6	Liqa Raschid-Sally	International Water Management Institute (IWMI)
7	Edmund K. Akoto-Danso	International Water Management Institute (IWMI)
8	Delali A. Osei-Boateng	International Water Management Institute (IWMI)
9	J. Wellens-Mensah	Ministry of Water Resources Works and Housing
10	Charlotte Engmann	Community Water and Sanitation Agency
11	Christian Siawor	Ghana Urban Water Company
12	Bernard Owusu-Appiah	International Water Management Institute (IWMI)