

Water Governance

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What is Water Governance?

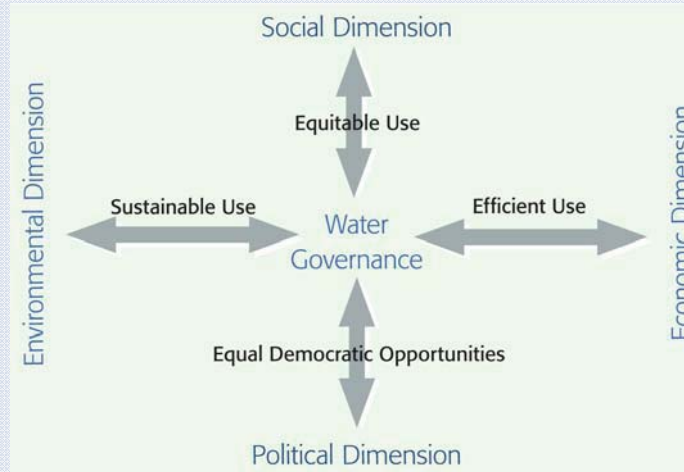
UNDP defines water governance as:

The range of **political, social, economic and administrative systems** that are in place to develop and manage (i) water resources, (ii) water services, at different **levels** of society.

- The water crisis is essentially a crisis of governance
- Governance in water is about how we as individuals and as a society use and allocate a common and shared resource
- It's about politics, power and decision-making on who gets what water, when and how!
- Governance can be seen as the quality of institutions and processes of interactions and relations



Why Water and Governance? Four Dimensions of Improved Water Governance



Source: Tropp, 2006



Water governance realities

- Water moves around the landscape (Over, on and under land)
- Seasonal variations of water quantity – Availability uncertain. Increasing uncertainty due to climate change!
- Multiple water uses – Bundles of rights (irrigation, hydropower, households, religion, tourism, ecosystem services, land etc)
- Legal pluralism – formal water rights/customary water rights
- International trans-boundary water dimensions
- Water supply acknowledged as a human right
- Capital intensive – Large complex infra-structure projects
- Fragmented institutions
- Water services is a natural monopoly



State-centric & Polycentric Governance Architectures

Old Governance – State-centric New Governance - Polycentric

Typical Water Reform Elements:

- Decentralization
- Participation
- Privatization, PPPs
- Integration, IWRM
- Basin Wide Mgmt
- Clarifying institutional roles and responsibilities

Polycentric challenges:

- Formal and informal water rights clashing
- Lack of financing and human capacity
- Governance remain weak
- Weak implementation!

Making Water reform Work -- Need for researching and applying governance measures on:

- Transparency
- Accountability
- Trust
- Anti-corruption
- Vested interests
- More.....

St. ...opp, 2007



Corruption an over-looked governance dimension Corruption: Water development dimensions

- ✓ Poverty reduction / development in jeopardy ---- Corruption is increasing investment risks and makes it harder to raise much required financial resources for water services and IWRM
- ✓ Environmental sustainability compromised --- over-abstraction of water and water pollution leading to eco-system and livelihood losses,
- ✓ Social equity is at risk due to skewed water resources allocation and unequal distribution of water services
- ✓ Makes it more difficult to meet challenges of climate change, food and water security
- ✓ Impacts of corruption are much broader than on economic growth and service delivery. It undermines social capital, human and democratic rights and the rule of law



Water Governance: Demystify and Apply!

- ✓ **Critical for development:** Governance is critical for long-term and day-to-day water management and critical for citizens/water consumers to exercise their rights - partnership formation, networking, investments, negotiation and mediation
- ✓ **Too generic:** Governance tends to be treated in a too generic way. It is used in a rather loose way in many development circles without providing it with meaningful content and guidance of how it can be applied
- ✓ **Increase application:** The application of improved governance should be intensified and more systematic in water – Water Governance Assessment as a tool for increased application
- ✓ **Strengthen governance – technology nexus:** The water sector is to a large extent driven by technocrats with a strong focus on water supply driven infrastructure development – governance poorly understood – Need more multi-disciplinary approaches!



Water Governance: Demystify and Apply!

- ✓ **Strengthen research and application on governance and finance nexus:** Improved governance is important for economic growth and for attracting public and private investments
- ✓ **Strengthen research and application on water governance and security:** Improved governance is critical for water, food and energy security within and between countries
- ✓ **Strengthen research and application on critical governance elements:** Accountability (social, political, administrative and vertical/horizontal), Access to information (transparency), anti-corruption, Trust-building.....

