

Cap-Net

Capacity Building in Water to support the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Programme Strategy 2006-2010.

Vision: Capacity to achieve the Millennium Development Goals on Water is in place, efficiently and effectively supported by actions of local capacity builders cooperating in networks and sharing their tools, experience and skills internationally.

The strategy:

- recognises the value and contribution of networks of professional capacity builders and their institutions
- builds on their strengths and skills;
- recognises the depth and importance of local knowledge;
- allows the full expression of local needs and priorities;
- supplements this with targeted and appropriate external support and current internationally accepted knowledge; and
- supports the efficient cooperation of these networks in a Global Network to contribute to the MDGs.

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Foreword

UNDP plays an operational role in assisting countries to build cross-sectoral capacities and put in place effective and sound policies and institutions to manage and develop water resources in a sustainable way. Through the global strategic project Cap-Net (International Network for Capacity Building in Integrated Water Resources Management), executed in close collaboration with the Global Water Partnership, UNDP is in a lead position to coordinate and support capacity building for integrated water resources management, transboundary waters, and gender mainstreaming in water resources management.

Cap-Net was established in 2002 to support capacity building in pursuit of the new agenda for sustainable management of water resources. The focus on capacity building institutions and individuals and the adoption of clear principles of local ownership, partnership approach and demand responsiveness resulted in a successful project which built a strong global network of capacity builders. Partner networks at local and regional level provided a powerful framework for cooperation and synergy to address the persistent problems of lack of capacity. As Cap-Net moves into a second phase and expands its focus of attention the guiding strategy for the first phase (Cap-Net, 2002) has been revisited to provide a clear basis for decision making and action in the programme.

This strategy is focused on achievement of the Millennium Development Goals through a global programme of actions to ensure that knowledge and capacity is in place for implementation. The strategy relies on capacity building networks as an effective instrument for scaling up cooperative action.

Paul Taylor

Some definitions

Cap-Net is an international project addressing capacity building for sustainable management and development of water resources.

Cap-Net Global Network: is a partnership of networks (of individuals and institutions) committed to capacity building located in different countries and regions around the world.

Cap-Net secretariat: is the facilitating unit of the project and the Global Network.

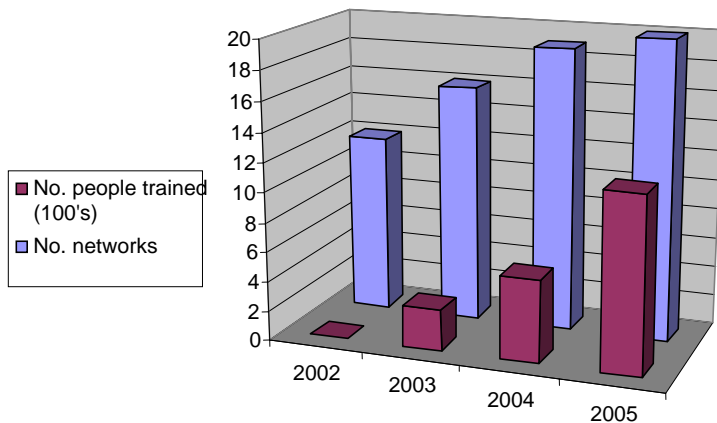
Contents

1. The Cap-Net project.
 2. Capacity building challenges.
 3. From Vision to Action.
 4. Strategy.
 - 4.1 Effective networks.
 - 4.2 Developing Capacity.
 5. Conclusion.
- Selected references.

1. The Cap-Net project.

Cap-Net has been in place for 4 years as a UNDP project to address capacity constraints surrounding the need for a more sustainable approach to management and development of water resources. Key international partners have been the Global Water Partnership and UNESCO-IHE and the project has had one funding source – the Netherlands.

Figure 1. Cumulative progress with networks and capacity building delivery.



The main strategy used has been to work with networks of capacity builders on the underlying assumption that together they can overcome constraints of resources, skills and critical mass whilst the network provides a framework for achieving efficiency benefits.

The project has been successful in its strategy to improve knowledge and understanding of IWRM and to gain commitment and cooperation to address the capacity constraints.

Individual networks have

made great progress and in most cases significantly scaled up capacity building actions on water (Fig. 1).

The success of these networks and their collaboration in the Cap-Net Global Network has stimulated increased support to the programme over the period from 2006-1010 from several funding sources. The programme now has the opportunity to build upon the experiences gained and to make a significant contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. This document describes the strategy guiding the execution of the Cap-Net programme in the coming period.

The strategy of the partnership that makes up the Cap-Net Global Network, established during the first phase of the programme (Cap-Net, 2002), has three basic guiding principles:

- Local Ownership. To the extent possible, capacity building must be delivered from local resource centres. This achieves social and environmental relevance as well as sustainability.
- Partnership among capacity builders. Partnerships between capacity builders improves access to knowledge and skills, assembles the mix of disciplines necessary for an IWRM approach, overcomes resource constraints and can increase efficiency.
- Demand for capacity building. Responding to capacity building demands from water managers increases the relevance and impact of capacity building services. Scaling up capacity building is necessary to respond to the MDG challenge and requires improved linkages between implementers and capacity builders to ensure that demands and needs are being met.

These guiding principles have proved to be effective and will continue to form the basis for action within the Cap-Net programme. Operational strategies for the second phase, described below, further deepen commitment to these core principles.

Networks

- 20 networks
- 800+ members
- 2000+ people trained
- 3 MSc programmes
- c. 100 short courses

At the end of the first 4 years of the Cap-Net project the Global Network consisted of 20 networks in various regions and countries of the world. Several hundred trainers had been trained in various aspects of IWRM and over 1,500 water professionals trained. A website was established that contains training material, resource centre and training course information amongst other resources.

2. Capacity building challenges.

Water sector reform

There is a major lack of capacity to achieve sustainable management of water resources and to meet the management and infrastructure requirements of the Millennium Development Goals. The adoption of IWRM marks a shift from a supply driven approach, emphasising sectoral interests and investment in infrastructure, to one in which multi-stakeholder interests and the goal of environmental sustainability are achieved through a balance of improved water governance alongside continuing investment.

Widespread recognition of the need for water sector reform to embrace the principles of integrated water resources management has resulted in restructured water laws and institutions in many countries (GWP, 2006). Others are still in the process of adaptation to meet the challenges of sustainable management of their limited water resources.

Bringing together various stakeholders into the decision making process, addressing poverty, gender issues and targeting environmental sustainability each raise challenging problems for water resources management.

The extensive nature of these reforms and the incremental process by which they are likely to be achieved makes sustained attention important. The stage established by most countries is still an early one (GWP, 2006) and capacity building is essential. In particular, capacity development priorities now lie in the implementation of IWRM principles within the main water use/generating sectors (Water supply and sanitation, agriculture and environment) whilst at the same time maintaining attention to governance of water resources at basin level.

Water and sanitation services

Millions of people, especially the poor, lack access to clean drinking water and acceptable sanitation with consequent high disease risk and mortality rates. Targets to increase service coverage in the coming decade are high and as a result there are increasing financial investments for infrastructure development. Lessons from the last Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade and new developments in IWRM and ecological sanitation are not adequately incorporated into water sector planning and decision making systems. Awareness raising and capacity building are necessary to make these bridges and to bring practitioners up to date. The lack of linkage between infrastructure development and capacity building has resulted in installations not being used, not being maintained or falling into disuse after construction.

Both women and men have decisive roles in domestic water supply as well as in various ways in productive water use. Therefore water managers need to be aware of the benefits of incorporating gender considerations in water management practices and decision making.

Scaling up capacity building is required to match the increase in investment, to increase access to state of the art knowledge, and to ensure that investment results in sustainable water and sanitation infrastructure. To obtain the full benefit capacity building should also address hygiene in the context of water supply and sanitation services.

Linking water, poverty and the environment

Poor people depend on their natural resources to survive, are often negatively affected by current water management systems and may not benefit optimally from water sector reforms. The poor are also more adversely affected by high or low extremes of water availability therefore building capacity to cope with climate variability is inextricably linked to effective management of water resources.

Improving water management towards more environmentally sustainable use has been shown not only to contribute to poverty reduction but in many cases to wealth generation (PEP, 2006). Water is considered a key input to livelihoods for many people in underprivileged conditions. An adequate water supply for productive use in agriculture is often the conditioning factor for the rural poor. Equally, secured domestic water supply will help to develop alternative occupations, improving people's productivity and reducing their vulnerability to health threats.

More attention needs to be given in IWRM to decisions that specifically address poverty reduction. It has been recognised that appropriately targeted investment in water management will have positive impacts on poverty and are beneficial in social, environmental and economic terms (PEP, 2006).

Increased capacity building effort needs to be directed towards poverty considerations in integrated water management planning and practices. Introducing IWRM concepts and principles in water supply and sanitation capacity building will improve sustainability of the service.

3. From Vision to Action.

Vision: Capacity to achieve the Millennium Development Goals on Water is in place, efficiently and effectively supported by actions of local capacity builders cooperating in networks and sharing their tools, experience and skills internationally.

To translate the vision into action it is helpful to present some statements which unpack the elements of the vision:

Capacity is:

- being developed to address the country specific needs, situations and constraints to achieve the MDGs on water;
- resulting from scaled up actions of the networks and their members;
- being developed for sustainable water and sanitation services, incorporating the principles of IWRM.

Networks are:

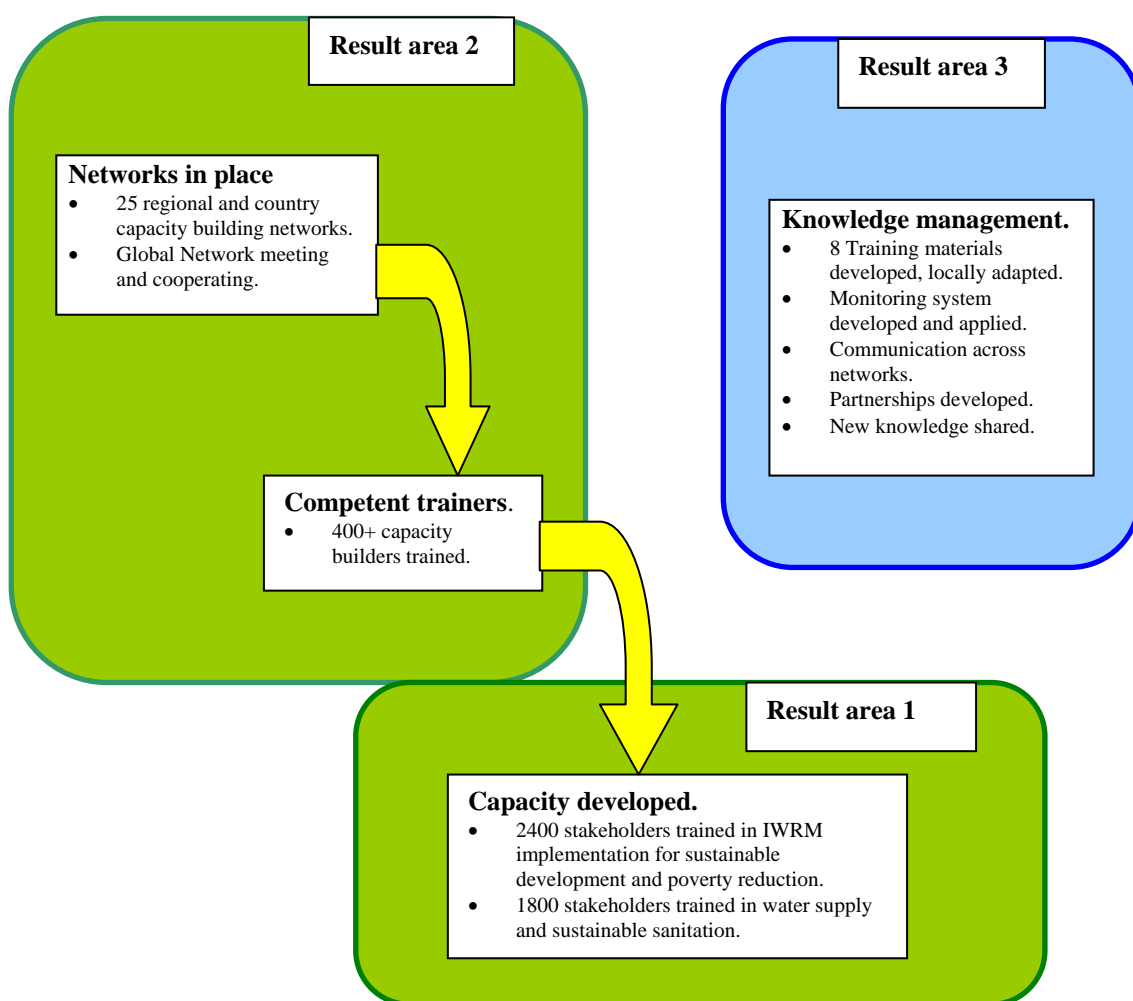
- groupings of capable and skilled professionals cooperating together to develop capacity for sustainable management of water resources;
- locally owned, transparent, financially accountable, well managed and reporting regularly to members;
- an efficient entry point to resolve local capacity problems with local capacity building solutions.

The Cap-Net Global Network is:

- an effective, sustainable and dynamic partnership providing an efficient entry point to address existing and emerging capacity needs and demands;
- made up of networks and other partners committed to capacity development and committed to sharing skills, experience and information bringing efficiency and effectiveness to addressing capacity constraints;
- leveraging financial support at local and international levels for investment in capacity building.

The planned outputs of the Cap-Net programme 2006-2010 are described in the project document and summarised in Figure 2.

Fig 2. Cap-Net programme result areas for 2006-2010



4. Strategy.

The strategy for the Cap-Net capacity building programme grows from the experiences of the past and aims for a realistic and sustained impact on a global scale, not just in limited project and programme areas.

The strategy:

- recognises the value and contribution of networks of professional capacity builders and their institutions
- builds on their strengths and skills;
- recognises the depth and importance of local knowledge;
- allows the full expression of local needs and priorities;

- supplements this with targeted and appropriate external support and current internationally accepted knowledge; and
- supports the efficient cooperation of these networks in a Global Network to contribute to the MDGs.

4.1 Effective networks.

The experience of Cap-Net in the first phase showed that networks can be effective tools for capacity building. Open and inclusive networks brought together experienced capacity builders to share and develop their knowledge and skills. The second phase will build on these positive features and will aim to deepen and strengthen them. Inevitably this will involve more formalisation of the network structures in efforts to ensure transparency and accountability as well as ownership.

Strengthening Local ownership.

1. Support will be given to implementation of capacity building actions by local capacity building institutions, strengthening over time their responsiveness to local needs and demands, and addressing their own capacity constraints. Recognition of these institutions as the key players for sustained delivery of capacity building services and their role as information and knowledge centres will have increased prospect for achieving long term impact. Contributing to this, the Cap-Net secretariat will decentralise responsibilities and actions to an appropriate level consistent with efficient programme implementation and strengthening the leadership role of networks.
2. Skills and knowledge of local capacity builders will be strengthened through training of trainers, exchange, international exposure, improved access to information materials and local adaptation of training materials. This will empower delivery of capacity building services from the local level, increasing sustainability and relevance. International or regional support will be channelled to fill skills gaps and build quality.

Experience so far:

Cap-Net has already accumulated positive experience of training trainers and accountability of trainers to their regional networks. The scaling up of capacity building that has taken place to date has benefited from trainers trained in the programme. Local ownership requires constant attention, and efforts have to be committed to ensure quality of delivery and effective management.

Building Partnerships in networks

3. To achieve benefits of scale and efficiency the Cap-Net programme will promote global linkages and exchange across networks, remaining open and inclusive. These global network linkages, bringing in international partners, will bring coherence to capacity building actions maximising relevance, impact and sustainability.
4. The Cap-Net programme will enter into formal agreements with networks to build the Global Network and to establish basic principles for cooperation. Good governance will be promoted in the global network. In particular emphasis will be given to strengthening accountability to members through improved communication, reporting and decentralisation. The Global Network will remain an open network welcoming cooperation with networks at any level committed to capacity building in water.
5. The development of networks as reliable and accountable partners for the channelling of development funding will assume high priority. Financial risk will be reduced through emphasis on financial reporting to members, host institution commitment, and counterpart funding. Recognising that capacity building is mainly a service provided by network

members, cost recovery and raising financial support will be important elements of the programme.

6. Increased visibility and promotion of the capacity building networks as a vehicle for action is a priority. Raising awareness of the potential of the capacity building networks for local impact will be done through promotional materials, exposure at international events and demonstrated effectiveness in actions on the ground.

Experience so far:

Many networks are in place representing hundreds of capacity building institutions but at various stages of development and performance. Documented experience has been compiled on network management, the planning and delivery of capacity building. Network assessment tools have been compiled and used to improve performance.

Responding to Demand

7. Support will be given to networks to carry out capacity assessments in order to direct capacity building action. This is expected to reduce the risk of unfocused action and provide a framework to channel external support.
8. Increased attention will be given to linking the activities of the programme to the activities and expressed needs of UNDP and key partners such as the GWP, GEF and implementation initiatives for the MDGs.
9. Measuring impact of capacity building has proven challenging. Therefore increased attention will be given to monitoring and assessment tools as a basis for determining the effectiveness, relevance and impact of capacity building action.

Experience so far:

UNDP has developed capacity assessment tools and Cap-Net has been working closely with partners such as GWP to identify capacity gaps and priorities. Networks have been increasing the number of activities with partners on the ground and showing the actual scaling up of action is possible.

4.2 Developing Capacity.

In the first phase networks demonstrated their ability to address specific local needs and demands for capacity development whilst also bringing on board international concepts of sustainable management, equity and gender. These strengths will be reinforced. There is potential for considerable scaling up of action to match the great need for appropriate capacity to apply IWRM principles and for the sustainable management and development of water and sanitation services.

Sustainable management of water resources

10. Priority will be given to capacity building actions that address the implementation of IWRM. In particular, the application of principles of sustainable management of water resources in water use (water supply, sanitation, agriculture) and the natural environment will be addressed.
11. The Cap-Net programme will give prominence to water management strategies that contribute to the reduction of poverty.
12. Capacity building will emphasise methodologies and approaches that contribute to effective water management institutions, especially at the river basin level.

Experience so far:

Considerable progress has been made in training trainers, development of materials and the delivery of capacity building on IWRM. Many networks are in a position to scale up action and many countries are moving into IWRM implementation. The experience and networks are in place for the successful implementation of the strategy.

Sustainable water and sanitation services

13. Cap-Net is committed to the Global Network as a means to scale up capacity building actions on water supply and sanitation. A partnership approach between capacity building initiatives and implementation programmes will be taken to achieve this and to identify priority areas where the capacity building networks can bring added value.
14. Emphasis will be placed on sustainable water and sanitation services, especially for the poor and the unserved. Principles of ecological sanitation and IWRM will be incorporated into decision making tools, management instruments and capacity building materials. Sustainability will be addressed in terms of water resources, technology choice, payment and management systems whilst focusing on the development of knowledge centres at the appropriate local level.
15. An important component of the strategy is to improve access to existing state of the art training materials and draw more capacity building institutions into water and sanitation. The development of these local knowledge centres is considered critical for sustainability and impact.

Experience so far:

The network structure and experience with IWRM provides a good basis for action on water and sanitation. Member networks with water and sanitation experience have had little cooperation to date but a new partnership is in the early stages of development to bring together capacity builders and implementers.

5. Conclusion.

The Cap-Net programme seeks to build cooperation among all players committed to the development of the capacities needed for sustainable management and development of our limited water resources. We believe that there are significant efficiency gains to be made from cooperation. But even more important than this is the long term benefit that comes from anchoring knowledge within respected resource institutions at national and regional levels. UNDP's global development network on the ground in 166 countries will also contribute to this strengthening of network partners.

The strategy defined above is intended to guide the Cap-Net programme and its interaction with its partners. It is to be hoped that our partners at the global level will identify with many of these principles and support them through their own programmes.

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