

EXPLORING ESTABLISHING A FRESHWATER CONSERVATION-WASH COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE



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AFRICA BIODIVERSITY COLLABORATIVE GROUP

Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group

Exploring Establishing a Freshwater Conservation-WASH Community of Practice

Report on first meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya October 21, 2016

Program Title: USAID Technical Office: Author: Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group (ABCG II) Bureau for Africa /Office of Sustainable Development Jimmiel J Mandima COVER PHOTO: Participants to the first ABCG Community of Practice meeting at African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) headquarter, Nairobi, Kenya. October 2016.

PHOTO CREDIT: The African Wildlife Foundation

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II. ACRONYMS

ABCG AWF	Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group African Wildlife Foundation
CI	Conservation International
СоР	Community of Practice
FW-WASH	Freshwater Conservation and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
Kenya RAPID	Kenya Resilient Arid Lands Partnership for Integrated Development
KEWASNET	Kenya Water and Sanitation Civil Society Network
KWAHO	Kenya Water and Health Organization
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MWA	Millennium Water Alliance
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WI	Wetlands International
WRI	World Resources Institute
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

I. INTRODUCTION

The Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group (ABCG) is supported by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) to advance understanding of critical biodiversity conservation challenges and their solutions in sub-Saharan Africa. ABCG is hosted by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), in coalition with the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), Conservation International (CI), the Jane Goodall Institute (JGI), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), World Resources Institute (WRI) and World Wildlife Fund (WWF). These US-based international conservation organizations with extensive field programs in Africa, as well as their African-based partners, act as thought leaders in identifying and constructing strategies to address emerging and high-priority threats to biodiversity in Africa. ABCG members generate new knowledge, foster communities of practice, and share best practices with stakeholders that include local communities, conservation professionals, and decision makers in Africa, the US, and beyond. In so doing, ABCG promotes the best in integrated conservation and development programing to protect biodiversity in Africa.

2. BACKGROUND

From 2015-2018, ABCG partners are focusing on four key issues that strongly influence the effectiveness of biodiversity conservation efforts: a) land and resource tenure rights, b) land use management, c) understanding the impacts on biodiversity of change processes operating at a global scale, and d) understanding the linkages between global health and biodiversity. This report contributes to (d) Global Health and Biodiversity linkages, relating to the Integration of Freshwater Conservation and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (FW-WASH). The main goal of the WASH component is to generate knowledge on the impacts of infrastructure developments on watersheds in Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as the impacts of freshwater conservation in meeting WASH goals. By linking freshwater conservation and WASH, ABCG expects reduced watershed degradation and pollution will improve the health of freshwater ecosystems. This builds upon earlier work that began in 2012 and culminated in an inaugural workshop held in July 2014 on *Integrated Indicators for Freshwater Conservation and WASH Programming*. Several knowledge products (reports, white papers, etc.) resulted from this workshop and a notable point of agreement was that integration of Freshwater Conservation and WASH programs is *ad hoc*, yet there is good rationale for the two components to work as one Community of Practice (CoP).

Based on the enthusiastic support of the FW-WASH practitioners that attended the 2014 workshop, ABCG set out to explore the creation of a FW-WASH CoP based in Africa as part of Phase II activities. To kick start the process for establishing the CoP, the task team members developed a checklist outlining the purpose of the CoP, who should be part of the CoP, issues to be discussed, format of meetings, and a platform for meeting virtually. This brief was used as the basis for a Scope of Work for the CoP members and circulated to select targeted participants drawn from practitioners that participated in the 2014 workshop to enlist their inputs and buy-in. Feedback was received from the technical leadership of Kenya WASH Alliance, Millennium Water Alliance (Kenya RAPID- Kenya Resilient Arid Lands Partnership for Integrated Development), Wetlands International Kenya, Kenya Water and Sanitation Civil Society Network (KEWASNET) and a few other practitioners in this space within Kenya. Consultative exchanges via email

and Skype calls to brainstorm the need for a dedicated CoP were carried out in the last quarter of Year 1 and there was consensus that the CoP would add value to creating integrated learning between freshwater conservation and WASH practitioners.

3. RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVE OF THE COMMUINTY OF PRACTICE

he CoP will provide a friendly and supportive environment in which diverse professionals can come together to share their knowledge and expertise. The focus of the platform is to share practical front line on-the-job experiences and the applicability of implementation and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tools. ABCG believes that by developing a collective 'know-how' among practitioners in the field, knowledge sharing will improve and will better inform integrated approaches to freshwater conservation and WASH.

ABCG's vision over time is for the CoP to be open to anyone with an interest in this practice area. The ABCG task group would like this CoP to be owned and driven by the members in the field - hence the deliberate call to co-design the Scope of Work after the maiden workshop that was held at the AWF Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya on October 21, 2016.

4. AGENDA FOR THE WORKSHOP

- 8:00 8:30 Arrival, Greetings, and Introductions
- 8:30 9:00 Why We Are Here: History of integration efforts and ongoing initiatives (to include recap of 2014 workshop)
- 9:00 10:30 Sharing Our Experience: Short (5 minutes) lightning talks by each institution on trends, current practices and successes/challenges

- 10:30 11:00 BREAK and networking
- 11:00 11:30 Demo of CoP web platforms
- 11:30 1:00 Community Directions: Facilitated discussion on frequency of meetings, guidelines for sharing content, webinar topics, CP activities, etc.
- 1:00 2:00 LUNCH
- 2:00 2:30 Way Forward: Next steps and all other business

5. MEETING PROCEEDINGS AND HIGHLIGHTS OF DISCUSSIONS

5.1 PURPOSE OF WORKSHOP AND RECAP OF EARLIER DISCUSSIONS ABOUT INTEGRATION EFFORTS AND ONGOING INITIATIVES

Jimmiel Mandima represented the ABCG task group members and moderated the meeting. He highlighted past discussions on this subject with the following points emphasized.

- June 2012: "Linking Biodiversity Conservation and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene: Experiences from sub-Saharan Africa" Report which noted that the integration of the two sectors is ad hoc.
- Led to 2013 follow up engagement with development organizations specializing in WASH to develop guidelines for the design and implementation of integrated projects to improve freshwater conservation and human well-being
- December 2013 Report on "Freshwater Conservation and WASH Integration Guidelines: A Framework for Implementation in sub-Saharan Africa,"
- July 2014: Inaugural Workshop on Integrated Indicators for Freshwater Conservation and WASH Programming. This workshop recommended the creation of a CoP that would allow field practitioners to keep in touch and share experiences using a web-based online platform.

Reflections

Participants affirmed their commitment to establishing the CoP but sought clarification on the reason for the nearly 2-year lull from when agreement to set up the CoP was reached. ABCG explained that an evaluation of Phase 1, ending in September 2014, had to be completed and then a new proposal developed for Phase 2 support before FW-WASH activities could resume.

5.2 SHARING HIGHLIGHTS OF INSTITUTIONAL EXPERIENCES: TRENDS, CURRENT PRACTICES AND SUCCESSES/CHALLENGES

5.2.1 Highlights on KEWASNET by Samson Shivaji, CEO

The Kenya Water and Sanitation Civil Societies Network (KEWASNET) is a national membership organization formed in 2007 consisting of Civil Society Organizations working in the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene sector to improve governance. KEWASNET is registered as a civil society organization under the Societies Act cap 108, Laws of Kenya. Their work encompasses four pillars:

- Enhance the capacity of members and partners in WASH and Water Resources Management Sector;
- Improve policy environment and practices in WASH and Water Resources Management sectors;
- Coordinate and strengthen civil societies for effective engagement in the sector, and;
- Enhance institutional development and sustainability.

Samson emphasized that as a network, they recognize the need for watershed programming for effective water resource management and sustainable water delivery strategy development as demand for clean water increases. Integration is a priority for them and details of what the Network does can be found on http://www.kewasnet.co.ke/. Other areas of concern identified by KEWASNET include:

- Conflict between counties as result of a policy vacuum despite now having a Water Act in place;
- Because of the transboundary context of catchments, KEWASNET is promoting cross interjurisdictional engagement to avoid conflicts;
- Approach to water issues to date have been 'access and use' without looking at sustainability;
- In KEWASNET, partnerships are key and primary ones are (1) GIZ funded International Water Stewardship Program focused on capacity building for catchment level management, and (2) 2030 water Resource Group that brings together government, private sector and the civil society organizations. The later initiative led to the formation of Kenya Industrial Water Alliance.
- Gaps that remain to be addressed include:
 - Developing a virtual resource center for knowledge management, including a repository for documents from across the CoP. <u>This noted as a role potentially to be served by the</u> <u>ABCG CoP</u>. Target beneficiaries will be 'online' users accessing an open data source. KEWASNET's idea is to establish a CoP platform, which should be explored in collaboration with ABCG.

Samson emphasized the need to look at the changing development context and the need to streamline and synchronize our programs with the Sustainable Development Goalse (e.g. targets 6.1 on Water Access and target 6.2 on Sanitation & Hygiene, as well as targets focused on freshwater conservation issues).

5.2.2 Kenya WASH Alliance by Tobias Omufwoko, Country Director

The Alliance focuses on water abstraction and service provision (access) and not on conservation of the freshwater resources. He sees this as an imbalance of investments.

Some notable patterns in the sector include:

- Boreholes are drying up
- Sand dams can result in environmental recovery due to improved water holding capacity

The Alliance has embarked on a 4-year program vision that focuses on 'A Catchment Approach' and will convene an "Environmental Sustainability Workshop" to communicate the new vision to partners.

Tobias noted that focus areas in improving sanitation include community sensitization and Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) with a goal of making communities 100% Open-Defecation Free by 2020. There have been no assessments on toilet construction and water table interactions.

Questions/Discussion/Comments

- In terms of clarification on institutions involved for governance, Tobias noted that county government buy-in is key to success.
- It was also asked if there were any water point mapping programs to assess status, and recharge potential. Spongy city in Kajiado county, where underground water conservation and recharge is an issue, was given as an example.

5.2.3 Millennium Water Alliance Kenya by Job Kitetu, WASH Advisor

Job gave a synopsis of the new 5-Year MWA Partnership in Kenya, in which the Kenya Resilient Arid Lands Partnership for Integrated Development (Kenya RAPID) focuses on five Northern Counties with high poverty rates, chronic food and water insecurity, and low access to basic services: Garissa, Isiolo, Marsabit, Turkana and Wajir. He also reckoned that integration is key for sustainability and is keen to see the CoP operational to serve as a platform for lesson learning and exchange. Details can be found at:

http://www.mwawater.org/programs/kenya-program-background/

Other points shared include:

The Alliance has 14 members including CARE, Catholic Relief Services, and others, refer to

 <u>http://www.mwawater.org/about/members/</u> for details;

- There are several private companies involved (e.g. IBM for pumps; Sweetsands for sensors; and Acacia water for mapping location of boreholes);
- Governance modalities in the field include co-location within the county government offices to foster interagency joint planning;
- Engaging the private sector including Davis and Shirtliff that provides solar powered pumps and recoup their investment later;
- The Alliance notes the competition for water access among people and livestock and other animals including wildlife, which complicates process and emphasizes the need for catchment conservation, a role that is done by other partners in these counties (e.g. Northern Rangelands Trust), and;
- The Alliance also engages in sanitation to improve access to latrines, and monitors latrines per household and latrines in institutions (health centers and schools), ensuring the use of durable materials.

Key challenges / problems noted include:

- Lack of monitoring on the impact of pit latrines on groundwater quality;
- Sustainability of sandy dams are questionable as the Swiss Development Corporation-supported sandy dams in Isiolo were damaged because of water pressure;
- Human-wildlife conflict is a cross-cutting issue that needs to be addressed.

5.2.4 Wetlands International (WI) Kenya Program by Lilian Nyaega, Program Officer

The Kenya Program is part of Wetlands International (WI) Africa - the African branch of Wetlands International which is the only global non-profit NGO dedicated to the restoration and conservation of wetlands. Lilian reinforced the need for coordinating program implementation with the WASH community as WI's efforts to conserve wetlands is futile in the face of increasing water demand and ground water abstraction. The global brief of WI is outlined on <u>www.wetlands.org/africa</u>, and the Kenya program operates within these broad parameters with activities focused on Laikipia, Kajiado, Samburu areas. In Kenya, WI is engaging with the government and is active on various network platforms as a way of ensuring that there is improved coordination among different players. Main issues from WI's point are as follows:

- Sustainable water use cannot work without investing in water conservation;
- Minority groups that are marginalized have to participate meaningfully in the discourse to engender co-ownership and accountability;
- WI partnering with AKVO, a Dutch funded initiative, with a 5-year program focused on improvements of governance systems in the water/WASH sector (www.akvo.org/rsr/project/171/), and;
- Lobbying and advocacy through RUWAs as platforms is a priority.

The main challenge is that the majority of the large scale water users shun participation in meetings with small water users to discuss abstraction and water management issues.

5.2.5 Kenya Meteorological Department by Peter M. Macharia, Assistant Director

Peter provided background on how he has consulted for the water sector in Kenya for many years focusing on Integrated Water Resources Management. The consultations were always done with a view to develop a plan for full stakeholder engagement in Kenya. He made reference to a compendium of manuals for water and sanitation that were co-developed and expressed frustration that no one seems to be using them. Participants expressed ignorance about the existence of such materials and Peter shared the documents with ABCG for sharing with the CoP members in the future.

He noted that in 2007 tools were developed to help in equipment maintenance (boreholes, etc), an initiative that was supported by the International Red Cross Federation. Several capacity building initiatives were commissioned through KAPSET and WASNET which focus on catchment management. He noted that the main issue to be addressed is building capacity at the county level as this is critical in view of the constitutional devolution of decision making powers to this governance level.

5.2.6 Kenya Water and Health Organization (KWAHO) by Catherine Mwango, Executive Director

Catherine emphasized the need for water governance and management capacity building through the RUWAS, a need and role that is provided for in the constitution. Other points of emphasis include:

- Need to mainstream rights based approaches to WASH and Freshwater Conservation;
- Informed decision to be made on choice of technology to be used to guarantee sustainability. It
 was noted that some programs promote technologies that cannot work well and/or be sustained
 in the rural contexts of Africa;
- Need to provide incentives for water conservation to the rural poor such as developing sustainable agriculture systems;
- Need to be clear on ownership of the resource;
- Introduce professional management models, which are often led by external entities with no connection or adequate mentorship of locals to take over;
- Noted and emphasized that SANITATION and HYGIENE are the forgotten TWO when water programs are undertaken, and;
- Catherine emphasized the need for integrated WASH to avoid focus on water access only and ensure inclusion of Sanitation & Hygiene.

5.2.7 African Wildlife Foundation by Dr. Nakedi Maputla, Landscape Ecologist and Grace Wairima, Senior Field Communications Officer

Dr. Maputla and Ms. Wairima pointed out how AWF's landscape level approach to conservation seeks to have a holistic integrated strategy of addressing all aspects of conservation and rural livelihoods at the

landscape level. Its application focuses on day to day issues for local people, recognizing that water is a big piece of that. AWF has completed programs to enhance 'catchment / watershed conservation' to conserve 'water towers', and has participated in dialogues for Integrated Water Resources Management. In the process, they witness and encounter conflict issues over access to water for livestock, domestic use, and agriculture. In discussing this, AWF referenced the Nanyuki dam construction, which has been contentious.

Overall Discussion / Questions / Gaps

- The extent that Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) are used in the field was asked. There may be a need to demystify PES and distinguish it from co-financing a program;
- The usefulness of environmental impact assessments was questioned, including discussion of whether or not EIAs objectively follow expected free prior informed consent protocols, and;
- The reasons as to why freshwater conservation is often left out of water programs was discussed.
 One theory mentioned was that freshwater conservation is a long term goal and does not allow for immediate achievements to be included in short to medium term projects (3-5 years long).

5.3 WEB BASED PLATFORM OPTIONS FOR CoP ONLINE DISCUSSIONS

Jimmiel discussed the factors to be considered when planning the creation of a web-based CoP platform:

- Accessibility,
- Hosting logistics
- User friendliness

He then asked all participants what they are familiar with, preferences, and what hosting support respective institutions can offer. Options under consideration included LinkedIn Groups, Facebook Groups, the Google+ Community, Skype Groups, WhatsApp Groups, Twitter Groups, among others. A presentation was made on the pros and cons of each option (see Appendix 7.1). The participants unanimously agreed to use LinkedIn Groups, as it is more professional while others tend to be more social. However, it was noted that because of limited bandwidth in some remote areas, the group should include a complementary WhatsApp Group platform for easy exchanges, as smart phones with these capabilities are commonly available.

The meeting also discussed Platform Group ownership, management and moderation and agreed that for now, ABCG should serve as Secretariat until after the CoP has formally constituted and members select their management structure, with possibly one of the member institutions hosting the platform (e.g. KEWASNET which is already planning a comparable initiative).

5.4 NEXT STEPS

- Meeting notes are to be circulated for participants' review for correctness and then to be shared broadly with potential CoP members across Sub-Saharan Africa;
- Participants of the maiden meeting agreed to provide lists of other potential members from their listservs, to be pan-African not just East Africa.

6. CONCLUSIONS

he institutions represented at the maiden ABCG FW-WASH CoP meeting affirmed the need for such a CoP platform to promote learning. Several benefits of integrating these two sectors and maintaining regular online discussions were noted during the discussions and the institutional program summaries attested to this gap and need.

It was agreed that LinkedIn Groups would be used as the professional platform for interactions online. This will be complemented by WhatsApp Groups to accommodate CoP members in remote areas where bandwidth connectivity is limited. Members ended by requesting ABCG to initially host the Secretariat for the platform until a critical mass of CoP members have signed on, and agreed on a Scope of Work. Thereafter, it is hoped that one of the CoP members will become the hosting Secretariat.



Goals and Agenda

Goals

- Define Community of Practice (mission, governance and action plan)
- · Identify major topic areas for community content and exploration

Agenda

- Arrival, Greetings and Introductions
- Why We Are Here: History of integration efforts and ongoing initiatives (to include recap of 2014 workshop)
- Sharing Our Experience: Short (5 minutes) lightning talks by each institution on trends, current practices and successes/challenges

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Agenda Continued

- Discussion / Brainstorming on web platforms to use for the CoP discussions
 - LinkedIn Groups
 - Facebook Groups
 - Google+ Community, etc.
- Community Directions: Facilitated discussion on frequency of meetings, guidelines for sharing content, webinar topics, CP activities, etc.
- 1:00 2:00 LUNCH
- 2:00 2:30 Way Forward: Next steps and all other business



Background of engagement in the FW-WASH integration discussion

- June 2012: Linking Biodiversity Conservation and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene: Experiences from sub-Saharan Africa" Report which noted that:
 - Integration of the 2 sectors is ad hoc
- Led to 2013 follow up engagement with development organizations specializing in WASH to develop guidelines for the design and implementation of integrated projects to improve freshwater conservation and human well-being
- December 2013 Report on "Freshwater Conservation and WASH Integration Guidelines: A Framework for Implementation in sub-Saharan Africa,"

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• July 2014, inaugural Workshop on Integrated Indicators for Freshwater Conservation and WASH Programming



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Guiding Theory of Change for integrating the 2 sectors



Given the foregoing – WHY ARE WE HERE? (Expectations)

- CoP to provide a friendly and supportive environment for professionals to come together to share their knowledge and expertise
- The CoP to serve as a platform for sharing practical front line on-the-job experiences and the applicability of implementation and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tools.
- Develop collective 'know how' to better inform integrated approaches for Freshwater Conservation & WASH efforts.

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Mechanisms of Getting Discussions Going for the CoP

USE OF WEB BASED PLATFORMS



Options for Web platform for CoP Discussions

There are various web based platforms and the intent is to get CoP members on a platform that can be easily accessible and serviceable to post updates, new ideas, questions and have responses that will enrich the 'way we do business' in the FW-WASH space. Factors to consider include:

- Accessibility,
- Hosting logistics
- User friendliness (need all of us to express what we are familiar with, what we like, what our respective institutions can offer to host, etc.)

E.g. LinkedIn Groups; Facebook Groups; Google+ Community, etc.

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Key Roles in web based groups

- **Group owner** Has control over membership, conversations, group type, settings, rules and more. They can also transfer ownership of a group to another group manager.
- **Group manager** Has the same access to the group as the owner except they can't close or transfer ownership of the group.
- **Group moderator** Limited to monitoring conversations and comments and managing submission and moderation queues. They can also feature a conversation.
- All three roles can:
- Manage group moderation queues
- Monitor and delete group conversations and comments
- Add a featured conversation



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Guiding Theory of Change for integrating the 2 sectors

Owner / Manager	Member	
Creating a Group	Finding and Joining a Group	
Inviting People to Join Group	Sending Messages to All Group Members	
Managing a Group	Sharing Links in Groups - Best Practices	
Closing a Group	Changing the Visibility of a Group on Your Profile	
Sending Announcements to Group Members	Leaving a Group	
Approving and Pre-Approving Group Members	Organizations Using LinkedIn Groups	
Adding or Editing a Logo for Your Group	Definition of L.I.O.N.	
Editing Group Information and Group Settings	Leveraging Your Group Membership	
Merging Groups	Reporting a Group	
Using the LinkedIn Logo	Communicating with a Fellow Group Member	
Deleting Group Conversations & Comments	Withdrawing a Pending Request to Join a Group	



Google+ Communities

- Google+ communities used to find other people who share your passion for a particular hobby, interest, or organization.
- The owner or moderator of a Google+ community can create categories to organize discussions, remove offensive content, highlight great posts, add moderators to help you keep the conversation going, invite members, or edit your community.

THANK YOU

7.2 LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS FOR THE FRESHWATER CONSERVATION – WASH COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE MEETING OCTOBER 21, 2016

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