

# Knowledge Management / Research Proposal

by UNDP Water Governance Facility at SIWI  
for MDG-F on

## Towards Trans-cultural Transparency: Exploring the Interface between Modern and Traditional Institutions in Sanitation and Water Supply

2011-09-24

### *Summary:*

The purpose of this research project is to help overcome socio-cultural clashes between communities, service providers, development cooperation actors and local authorities, and the resulting ineffectiveness of the sanitation and water supply systems in selected indigenous areas. This is to be achieved by 'institutional-mapping' of the underlying rules, practices and value systems of different sanitation and water supply arrangement, making these explicit and transparently documented. Innovative for this project is the view on indigenous management systems as one type of institutions which interact with other institutions and the focus on domestic water uses and sanitation.

The research will be carried out in provisionally two areas with mainly indigenous populations or ethnic minorities facing difficult access to sanitation and water services. Research collaboration will be established with universities present in those regions. Field research activities will involve semi-structured, video-taped interviews and self-documentation, with representatives from communities, service providers, development cooperation actors and local authorities taking part in the analysis of the conflicts and complementarities between the different institutions. The four groups will be involved in the development of popular scientific reports, produced in local and national languages, on the rules, practices and values related to sanitation and water supply. Departing from this, meetings will be facilitated to devise ways for serving both traditional/indigenous needs and aspirations and the requirements of modern/bureaucratic service provision.

### *Research objectives:*

- 1) Map changing institutions: describe the present status and recent evolution of rules, practices and values relating to sanitation and water supply
- 2) Explore the transcultural interface: assess contradictions and complementarities of sanitation and water-related institutions of different groups relating to same geographic area
- 3) Suggest ways forward: analyse valuable experiences, find potential service options, management methods and behavioural changes that serve both traditional/indigenous needs and aspirations and requirements of modern/bureaucratic service provision

Implemented by WGF – the UNDP Water Governance Facility at SIWI

Programme period: 1,5 years

Total resources required: USD 300,000

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations:

CAALCA	Centro del Agua para América Latina y el Caribe
Cap-Net	Capacity Building for Integrated Water Resources Management
DEG	Democratic and Economic Governance (MDG-F thematic window)
DEG-KM	Democratic and Economic Governance Knowledge Management system
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FLACSO	Facultad Lationamericana de Ciencias Sociales
FR	Field Researcher
GoAL-WaSH	Governance, Advocacy and Leadership – Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
JP	Joint Programme
KM	Knowledge Management
LA-WETnet	Latin American Water Education & Training Network
MDG-F	Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
PM	Programme Manager
RA	Research Assistant
SIWI	Stockholm International Water Institute
SWH	Swedish Water House
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
WaSH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WGF	UNDP Water Governance Facility at SIWI

## I. Introduction and Situation Analysis

### *Background and Justification*

Why is the water supply and sanitation coverage so low in indigenous areas?

Could an improved, mutual understanding of the institutions (i.e. rules, practices and values) that underpin different water and sanitation arrangements help overcome ineffectiveness of existing investments?

To halve, by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation (MDG7, target 10) is globally on track with regard to water, but will with current rates of progress not be achieved with regard to sanitation (WHO & UNICEF, 2010). Many of those who remain without sustainable access to water and sanitation are ethnic minorities and indigenous populations. The low coverage in such areas can only partly be explained by the lower income levels and at times challenging physical conditions for infrastructure. There are also cultural and political barriers that allow inequities in service provision to remain (Kabeer, 2010; UNDP 2006).

The MDG-F supports national governments, local authorities and citizen organizations in their efforts to reduce poverty and inequality. Marginalised populations are among the target groups of the Fund. The Joint Programmes (JPs) under the theme of Democratic and Economic Governance (DEG) hence work mainly in underserved remote areas in order to close the gap in the water supply and sanitation coverage in their respective countries.

A major challenge coming out from their work relates to the issue of communication and differences of 'cosmo-visions' pertaining to indigenous areas and the central 'modern' hubs of policy formulation and implementation. *Effective approaches for transcultural water governance* is a theme which is being pursued through the DEG KM strategy, where JPs from Mexico and mainly other Latin American countries share their experiences of working with indigenous populations. The present project will complement and cross-feed with the on-going KM strategy, to increase the understanding, improve adequacy and progress of the activities of the DEG JPs.

The issue to be dealt with in the present project is the ineffectiveness of the scarce investments into water and sanitation services infrastructure in indigenous areas. Services do not adequately meet the needs of the users, and operations and maintenance falter so sustainability is poor. Particularly with regard to sanitation, low usage of sanitary toilets is coupled with prevailing high levels of infectious disease transmission.

There is a need to understand better, not only the rules and values that underlie the present – always evolving – water services and sanitation practices in indigenous underserved areas; there is also a need to make the rules, practices and values that underpin the modern/bureaucratic complex of water supply and sanitation services visible. Thus, the first innovative approach of this project is the identification of indigenous rules, practices and values as one type of institution related to water and sanitation management among several other institutions, in a field of research where indigenous institutions generally are seen as separate and defined as fundamentally different. Making visible and explicit the rules, practices and values of other institutions (modern/bureaucratic) similarities and disparities will more easily be detected and dealt with.

Greater clarity – transcultural transparency – of the rules, practices and values relating to traditional/informal institutions as well as modern/bureaucratic institutions should lead to: 1) better understanding of different water and sanitation institutions and the requirements for the systems to function, and consequently, 2) a better basis for voicing demands as well as

to find compromises relating to attainable service options, and 3) more suitably devised services to meet local needs and aspirations.

This research will perform 'institutional-mapping' of the rules, practices and values of four different groups – communities, service providers, development cooperation actors and local authorities – in provisionally two selected areas. The mapping will rely mainly on semi-structured, video-taped interviews. The further exploration of the water and sanitation institutions – how they complement and/or contradict one another will draw on group discussions with representatives from the same four groups, providing also input on different perspectives from the interviews. This way, the communities, service providers, development cooperation actors and local authority representatives will themselves be involved in the drawing of conclusions on the different perspectives on water and sanitation arrangements. The project aims to serve as an action oriented link to facilitate the local discussion around contrasts and complementarities of different institutions that underpin the management of water and sanitation.

Popular scientific reports should be produced in national and local languages, as a feed-back to those involved in the research as well as an iterative way to ascertain how modern/bureaucratic and traditional/indigenous water and sanitation institutions prevail and co-exist. Moreover, with findings presented at international forums and to peer-reviewed journals, comparison, feedback and visibility should go well beyond the local case study areas. Possibilities to share with and disseminate results through the DEG JPs will be explored and promoted throughout the project.

WGF will lead the programme of research, provisionally relating to two locations, and each one involving close collaboration with suitable universities. Actual fieldwork should be carried out by local researchers and university students, if suitable in communities already connected to the DEG JPs.

The focus lies on 'sanitation and water supply,' with the recognition of the inter-related complex of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene and its utter importance for human health in low-income settings. Further, water environments are intrinsically linked with livelihoods, the broader environment as well as the economy, but the research focuses on the WaSH nexus because it has been comparatively less studied than other issues related to water governance and indigenous peoples. The relative emphasis on sanitation is because of it often being ignored in connection with water, and that the MDG achievement of the sanitation target is highly problematic. The second innovative approach of this project is the focus on an area of research which has so far been little explored.

The present research, apart from *Exploring the Interface of Modern and Traditional Institutions in Water Supply and Sanitation*, will also contrast and discuss those rules, practices and values with people in the local setting. Thus, the often hidden (implicit) cultural differences that may generate clashes in the implementation and sustainability of water supply and sanitation services should be (made explicit and) brought into the open for the mutual understanding of the parties involved. The long-term benefit of such *Transcultural Transparency* should be more cost-effective water and sanitation services that are devised and operated in a way that sustainably meets the needs and aspirations of indigenous peoples.

### *Documented Knowledge on Contrasting Rules, Practices and Values in Water and Sanitation*

There are different sets of rules, practices and values – institutions – that apply to any given technology or system. Institutions as such constitute a huge area of research, mainly associated with institutional economics: Douglass North emphasises the rules in defining

institutions as “the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction” (1990). Emphasising the habits and practices, Elinor Ostrom relates to institutions as regularized behaviours that are turned into routines (2005). Combining both aspects Loftsson (forthcoming) emphasise the need to also account for the institutional values that underpin and sustain the practices and rules.

While linked to the technology used – as emphasised by socio-technical systems thinking – institutions are all about the human relations. The present review of documented knowledge relates to the human relations or governance systems of water, sanitation and hygiene, primarily in relation to indigenous cultures. The interface to be explored in the present research is that between modern/bureaucratic governance systems and indigenous/traditional, as experienced by communities, service providers, development cooperation actors and local authorities.

There is a significant body of research and debate around the clashes between Western and Indigenous perspectives on water. However, insights are skewed towards irrigation uses and the governance of water *resources*. There is a knowledge gap regarding water *services* in this regard. Although significant insight into the values that underpin approaches to water service provision has been generated through the so-called privatisation debate, this literature is skewed towards the operation and ownership of larger urban systems and is often politically charged.

There is a notable lack of knowledge about rules, practices and values (i.e. institutions) of different cultures in the area of sanitation and hygiene. With regard to indigenous cultures, public health literature provides insights relating to disease prevalence, but the actual sanitation habits and the systems of thought of these institutions are scantily documented.

## Water

Because of the extensive knowledge and long history of living in close relation with the nature indigenous peoples are central in the preservation of biodiversity and ecosystems necessary for maintained sustainable water resources (Peña, 2004). Yet, even if the close relation between indigenous peoples and the water resources has been recognized globally, e.g. the World Water Forums (UNU-IAS TKI, 2011-08-22; Water-Culture Institute, 2011-08-22), substantial gaps in the understanding and documentation of indigenous water management systems still exist (Reij, 2003). Often governments become aware of existing alternative water management systems first when conflicts and protests surface (Boelens & Zwarteveen, 2005).

Independently of geographical research area studies point to two main issues of contest between indigenous water management systems and government led water management systems: 1) differences in values systems and 2) differences in property rights related to water. The majority of contemporary governmental property right systems are based on private property rights which are established through administrative processes of registration. Traditional water rights are generally collective and determined by cooperation and participation in maintenance of water systems (Adams et al, 1997; Benvenisti, 2008; Boelens & Doornbos, 2001; Jackson & Morrison, 2007; Singh, 2005; Tarwick, 2003).

Whereas many indigenous cultures ascribe water spiritual and religious values the Western values dominating water management strategies and laws view water as a resource to be used for economic development (Boelens & Zwarteveen, 2005; Groenfeldt, 2003; Jackson & Morrison, 2007; Tarwick, 2003). Even if modern water management has opened up and now include concepts such as ecosystem services, values are still measured by economic standards (Groenfeldt, 2003). Traditional and/or indigenous water management systems often do incorporate utility based values (Singh, 2005), but they are also highly influenced

by values not connected to economic benefits (Boelens & Zwarteveen, 2005; Garma Indigenous Water Declaration, 2009; Groenfeldt, 2003). Jackson and Morrison (2007) emphasize the integrated view indigenous communities' hold of water, where the water management system cannot be separated from other socio-ecological systems.

As indigenous water management systems often have shown to be more responsive to local needs than large-scale government interventions many researchers call for a better understanding of and respect towards these systems (Adams et al, 1997; Benvenisti, 2008; Boelens & Zwarteveen, 2005; Groenfeldt, 2003; Jackson & Morrison, 2007; Tarwick, 2003). And according to IFAD (2009) there has to some extent been a revival of the traditional water management systems, even if much of the traditional knowledge has been lost. Yet, as Adams et al. (1997) showed in their study, the management systems are complex and multilayered, with both formally recognized rules and informal solutions and compromises working at the same time – especially for women informal activities were important to remedy some of the injustices of the system.

The literature on indigenous water management systems generally focuses on traditional irrigation systems, whereas water arrangements for domestic use have been much less explored. There is also the combination of various systems of use where realities on the ground are not aptly captured by research or development programmes. According to van Koppen et al. (2009), development initiatives aimed at water services have historically been segregated by type of use, e.g. domestic, agriculture or fishing, while the use of water in practice integrates many types of uses of water resources.

The values relating to modern water systems have mostly been scrutinized in the so-called water privatization debate. Finger & Allouche (2002) review the trend of increasing involvement of transnational corporations in water supply throughout the world. It responds to the need for new and more sophisticated investment in many existing systems, combined with the neo-liberal wave of thinking among many Western nations from the 1980s. The public-private divide in the water sector has been thoroughly reshuffled along with the stagflation and financial crises of many states since the 1970s (Swyngedouw et al, 2002).

The public-private shift has not only brought new actors onto the scene of water provision, it has also changed the mind-set of many providers: McDonald & Ruiters (2005) have shown, in relation to South Africa, how also public providers act in accordance with commercial imperatives and logics of private businesses. The issue of water charges, which is fundamental for the survival of a business, presents a fundamental clash with many indigenous perspectives (Groenfeldt, 2003).

In their General Comment No 15, the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (2002, para 2) stated that the "human right to water entitles everyone to sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible and affordable water for personal and domestic uses". An important implication of this interpretation, that water should be affordable, is that it need not be provided for free (Björklund & Sjödin, 2010). Perspectives relating to charges for water services are expected to differ between different groups, depending on their role in the water provisioning process.

Communities and individual households – the rights holders in a human rights perspective – have their legitimate interests and perspectives. Governments are the duty bearers, and face significant constraints even in the so-called progressive achievement of the rights. The duty to provide services is commonly delegated to local authorities, which are the ones who in practice face the responsibility of organizing services for local communities. Services may be provided through government departments or independent service providers. The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (idem) asserts that States are



obliged to pay special attention to those traditionally facing difficulties in exercising their rights, including indigenous people. Moreover, indigenous peoples' access to water resources on their ancestral lands is to be protected from encroachment and unlawful pollution.

With the privatization wave of the 1980s and 1990s, a much wider range of arrangement for public-private partnerships has come into being (World Bank, 2004; UNDP, 2006). Whereas the international water company involvements hit the headlines in the debates, the more common private involvement in water supply relates to informal solutions of water vending and small-scale schemes that are independent from government interventions (Kjellén & McGranahan, 2006). Water vendors often form part of the communities they serve, and their ways of reasoning and methods for sales and marketing tend to be more attuned to community perceptions. Still, they are often blamed for price-hiking, exploitation and poor quality of services (Kjellén, 2006).

### Sanitation, Health and Hygiene

Structural inequalities in access to sanitation systems and health care for minority groups have been documented and recognized (Kabeer, 2010; Ring & Brown, 2002). Yet, considering the severe situation the lack of studies and policies focusing on indigenous populations and sanitation is remarkable, according to Ross et al. (2004).

Generally indigenous populations have lower access to sanitation facilities and infrastructure, which makes the water contamination from faeces much more frequent (especially different types of gastrointestinal infectious diseases and parasites) (Ross et al., 2004). There is also often intersecting effects from belonging to a socio-economically marginalized indigenous group and of living in remote areas (Kabeer, 2010; Ross et al., 2004). In Australia it has been concluded that many of the diseases common in indigenous communities are not so much related to the quality of water as to the quantity of water, as lack of access to water strictly restrains the possibilities to maintain home and family clean (Ross et al., 2004).

The importance of *sufficient water* for hygiene and health for low-income people living in dense settlements, contrasts with the demand for *higher quality water* of many better-off population segments. Commercially, it makes greater sense to respond to the *quality* demands of those that are able and willing to pay for such improved services (Kjellén and McGranahan, 1997). However, better health of the population is more effectively achieved, as manifested by the influential meta-studies by Esrey (1994) through interventions that improve sanitation and water together, including the increased quantities for hygienic use of water. Dowset et al. (1999) add close contact, crowding and lack of hot water as factors which increase the spreading of diseases in indigenous communities, pointing to the important nexus also with energy access for adequate hygiene uses of water.

Bartram & Cairncross (2010) confirm the overwhelming evidence on that ill-health associated with poor household-level sanitation and water is borne by the poor and disadvantaged in the developing world. Mara et al (2010) continue on the line that government agencies have typically built sanitation infrastructure, but sanitation professionals are now concentrating on helping people to improve their own sanitation and to change their behaviour. Indeed, sanitation services cannot be rolled out in the same manner that water may be done, in principle. They are even more sensitive to local customs and ideas about health and cleanliness.

Along with the increased attention to the backlog in sanitation, more studies and a range of popular scientific writings (e.g. George, 2008) and historic overviews (e.g. Lofrani & Brown, 2010) have been generated. Notwithstanding, ethnographic research on the local practices and values ascribed to sanitation is still lacking (Morrison, 2011-09-05). And similarly to that

of water it is plausible to assume that part of the sanitation backlog and lack of progress towards the sanitation target of MDG7 has been attributed to the clash of perspectives.

### Consequences of Clashing Sanitation and Water Supply Institutions

As the majorities of studies on indigenous water management systems have been carried out on irrigation systems it should be pointed out that the effects of the conflicts with central value and rights systems on other types of water uses and management is relatively unknown. Yet, it is plausible to assume some general similarities.

The negative effects documented are related both to the interventions and to the indigenous management systems. According to several authors the close connection between organisation, social relations and technology makes changes in any of these aspects affect the whole water management system. Thus, interventions do not take cognizance of the rules, practices and values of a system can severely damage or disrupt it, creating a situation where structures previously managing water in an efficient and sustainable way are lost (Adams et al., 1997; Boelens & Zwartveen, 2005; Tarwick, 2003). To instead foster and strengthen the local traditional systems and values, through for example mapping, have shown to be an effective way to make the use of natural resources much more sustainable and effective (IFAD, 2009).

Lack of understanding of indigenous water management systems can also lead to inability to motivate efficient water use. Tarwick (2003) highlights how the small scale of many indigenous systems make economic incentives inadequate, whereas the traditional system linking efficiency to increased frequency of water access is much more suited.

According to the International Fund for Agricultural Development's paper on gender and water, lack of understanding of existing water management systems can lead to development projects exacerbating gender inequalities (Wahaj, 2007). Adams et al. (1997) agrees and claims that if indigenous management systems are not well understood the informal rules mediating for example gender inequalities might be disturbed leaving vulnerable groups with less possibilities to obtain water.

The lack of accordance between interventions and the multiple uses of the affected populations has led to waste of resources, as efforts are done in parallel instead of jointly, and unsustainably, since equipment is used for purposes for which it was not designed (van Koppen et al., 2009). Socio-culturally inadequate technology also leads to unsustainability in infrastructure investments as the population does not have the technical skills to perform maintenance (Tarwick, 2003).

Further, in the area of sanitation, notions about purity and pollution, along with cleansing habits and cultural or religious traditions will greatly affect the way different sanitation solutions are taken up – or not – in the local setting (Douglas, 2002; Movik & Mehta, 2010) .

## II. Project Purpose, Design and Implementation Plan

The purpose of this research project is to help overcome socio-cultural clashes between communities, service providers, development cooperation actors and local authorities, and the resulting ineffectiveness of the sanitation and water supply systems in selected indigenous areas. This is to be achieved by institutional-mapping of the underlying rules, practices and value systems of different sanitation and water supply arrangement, making the institutions explicit and transparently documented.

The underlying assumption, as detailed in the preceding section, is that the different worldviews and values that underpin water supply and sanitation rules and practices among



different parts of the population and different spheres of a society give rise to inefficient services and ineffective investments in indigenous areas. This partly explains the inequitable distribution and access to water supply and sanitation services. It is also assumed that the mutual understanding of the different institutions is one step forward towards the overcoming of differences and inequalities in service provision.

### *Objectives*

Research objectives:

1. Map changing institutions: describe the present status and recent evolution of rules, practices and values relating to sanitation and water supply
2. Explore the transcultural interface: assess contradictions and complementarities of sanitation and water-related institutions of different groups relating to same geographic area
3. Suggest ways forward: find potential service options, management methods and behavioural changes that serve both traditional/indigenous needs and aspirations and requirements of modern/bureaucratic service provision

### *Methodology*

The rules, practices and values around water, sanitation and hygiene at the individual and community levels will be mapped among four groups of people in provisionally two selected research locations. Those sites should be areas with mainly indigenous populations or ethnic minorities, with generally poor access to water supply and sanitation services.

The four groups are

- communities (individuals, households and leaders)
- service providers (small informal or larger formal actual service producers)
- development cooperation actors (international development agencies and/or NGOs)
- local authorities (or entity officially responsible for water and sanitation provisioning)

**Research objective 1:** Map changing institutions: describe the present status and recent evolution of rules, practices and values relating to sanitation and water supply.

The different institutions of the four groups are initially to be mapped through semi-structured, video-taped interviews with key informants and individuals from the four groups. The water and sanitation institutions are to be mapped, based on the expressed rules, stated practices and values. At least five interviews in each group should capture majority views and some contrasting opinions. Purposeful sampling will gather two to three more influential persons in each group, and two or three persons representing basically themselves.

Interviews may be carried out by university students under the supervision of a more experienced field researcher (FR). It is important that the partner institutions, to be in charge of the field work, have pre-established links with the research location, and are able to establish trust and mutual respect in the respective groups.

The use of video cameras will enable mapping of institutions and worldviews that are constantly evolving, even if they are described in languages without written language. Certain practices, which may be in breach of official rules, may be difficult to capture in a recorded interview. However, video documents may also be produced on (de-personalised) traces of practices. Nonetheless, where sensitivities so demand, recording will stop. As appropriate, as much self-documentation as possible will be facilitated, i.e. the interviewees

themselves manage the recording. The video notes will also serve to document evolving beliefs and stated practices of institutions, in a way that is accessible to all stakeholders.

The results of the institutional-mapping will feed into the next step in the research process, and will also provide the basis for a journal article to submit to an international journal.

**Research objective 2:** Explore the transcultural interface: assess contradictions and complementarities of sanitation and water-related institutions of different groups relating to the same geographic area.

Summary reports from the institutional-mapping, along with clips from the interviews, will be used as input material for focus group discussions (FGDs) within the same groups. The FGDs are to discuss and identify commonalities and contrasts between the rules, practices and values of the own and the other groups, including ideas for overcoming the differences.

This way, researchers will discuss all findings with each of the four groups, which will provide their own perspective and conclusions, and thus co-produce the conclusions regarding the 'transcultural interface' of the different institutions relating to sanitation and water supply in the selected geographic area. The findings will be written up into popular scientific reports – containing numerous photos and graphics – documenting the differences and similarities as analysed by the four groups.

The popular scientific reports will be produced in local and national languages as a way to feed back the conclusions in an accessible way for those involved. The reports will be an important point of departure for the next step in the research process.

**Research objective 3:** Suggest ways forward: analyse valuable experiences, find potential service options, management methods and behavioural changes that serve both traditional/indigenous needs and aspirations and requirements of modern/bureaucratic service provision.

Researchers will continue to work with the four groups, in a more action-oriented manner. In order to find potential ways forward that overcome differences between the values, practices and rules of the four groups, meetings will be facilitated between them.

In preparation, each group will also meet among themselves and discuss questions like:

For communities:

- What types of services actually meet our needs and aspirations?
- How can we act in order to have such services sustainably provided?
- How can service providers and/or development cooperation actors adapt their ways of managing services to more sustainably meet our needs and capabilities?
- In what ways can local authorities and/or development cooperation actors support these endeavours?

For service providers:

- What type of services are needed, aspired for and demanded in the present area?
- How can we better respond to the local needs, aspirations and demands?
- In what ways can local authorities and/or development cooperation actors support these endeavours?

For development cooperation actors:

- What type of services are needed, aspired for and demanded in the present area?
- How do we act to understand and adapt our activities to the needs, aspirations and demands of the communities?

- In what way could the collaboration with local authorities and service providers be improved to make our activities more effective and sustainable?

For local authorities:

- How do formal or informal service providers and/or development cooperation actors respond to the needs, aspirations and demands from communities?
- How can we help make services better targeted and more sustainable?
- In what way can local authorities most effectively live up to their (delegated) responsibility towards communities, either directly or through independent service providers and/or development cooperation actors?

An issue which is connected not only to the institutional characteristics of the groups, the socioeconomic conditions of many indigenous areas, is the (uneasy) relation between costs for infrastructure investments and the right to water. How to handle this complex issue should be discussed in all four groups, since it is fundamental for the sustainability of water service provision.

To make sure that existing knowledge and experiences are benefitted from a central part of all discussions will also be to document and analyse these, to make sure that up-coming problem-solving learn from previous activities and interactions. To build on existing experiences and knowledge is vital in order to not commit unnecessary mistakes and is emphasised by both practitioners and researchers (IFAD, 2009). In this context both successful and less successful experiences will be analysed, since they all can provide valuable lessons. The documentation of useful experiences (including the less successful experiences) fits with the WGF knowledge management strategy for the JPs of the DEG thematic window. For this part of the project cross-feeding with the DEG JPs' exchange of experiences will be promoted, for the enrichment of both processes.

Two or three meetings between the four groups are to be facilitated by the researchers. The actual suggestions for ways forward will need to be picked up through different forums: An expected outcome of the research is for support networks and lines of communications to have been established. It is hoped that the contacts established will serve as avenues for acting on the (agreed) findings of the (action) research.

Further, the research project will through its continuous networking endeavours synthesise suggestions and feed back to programme implementation primarily of the DEG JPs, but also of selected UNICEF, UN-Habitat and UNDP financed programmes (as identified in initial review of on-going programmes). A journal article will also be submitted to an international journal, responding to findings of initial literature review of lessons learned, suggesting service options, management methods and behavioural changes that serve traditional or indigenous needs and aspirations as well as the requirements of modern or bureaucratic service provision.

## Research Methods

In the project several different methods will be used, but with the commonality of a strong focus on participation. To make the people in the communities become involved and co-steer the documentation and problem-solving will be a central aspect of the research process.

The mapping of rules, practices and values related to water and sanitation of the different groups will not only make the institutions more visible and transparent – the institutional-mapping will also serve to make otherwise often neglected indigenous/traditional institutions explicit and recognised as valid and existing references in the water management dialogues, both to the communities themselves and to other actors. Experiences from Peru have shown that the mapping of activities and practices do not only hold great acceptance among the Andean farmers, but it has also strengthened the pride and appreciation of the own systems

in the indigenous communities (IFAD, 2009). This project has two innovative aspects: 1) the mapping of institutions (practices, rules and values) rather than focusing on practices, 2) to view all four groups as social groups with their own institutions, as a way to bridge the perceptions of 'them and us'.

1. Video notes will form the base of the institutional-mapping and involve self-documentation of semi-structured interviews, using e.g. video-cameras, where people themselves (typically younger members of the community) document important rules, practices and values related to the management of water and sanitation. The method will be used as a way for community members to present their own view on their management systems as well as to express themselves regarding the need for adapting services, or how the local practices can be modified to accommodate more sustainable ways of service provision. Video notes will be collected from all four groups to provide their varying perspectives and inputs. Here for example Creswell (2007) and Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) will provide inspiration for how to use and facilitate semi-structured interviews and video notes.
2. Focus groups will be used to further explore the findings which have surfaced during the video-taped interviews. In the focus groups the participants will discuss both the perspectives of their own group as well as the perspectives present in the other two groups. Focus groups allow the researchers to investigate attitudes in a freer and more natural setting, which encourage dialogue and interaction among participants (Barbour & Kitzinger, 1999; Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 1999) and are therefore more suitable for problem-solving exercises.
3. Participant observation will complement the video interviews and focus groups to provide more *en vivo* information about the practices, rules and values of the different institutions (Creswell, 2007; Mack et al., 2005). Together with the information from the two previously mentioned methods the participant observations can be further analyzed and edited to produce policy relevant messages to be presented within communities as well as to national authorities.
4. Facilitated meetings will provide a forum for service provision authorities, service providers, development cooperation actors and communities in the local area to meet and discuss water and sanitation management. Together the parties can define possible solutions and alternatives for joint efforts.
5. Production of written material will serve both the documentation of the process and the findings as well as the internal verification and reflection on the findings. Summary reports will be produced and brought back to the four groups to be discussed in the focus groups. Suggested solutions and compromises will be presented in popular scientific reports. Written conclusions and synthesis of the whole exercise will provide sustainable documentation and make experiences available to other actors, as well as to check research quality through peer review.

### *Dissemination Strategy*

Dissemination will be an integral part of the proposed research. Local as well as international audiences will be targeted, but with different means and purposes.

The dissemination strategy of the present research directs itself partly to the communities, service providers, development cooperation actors and local authorities that are the objects, but also the subjects, of the present research. Thus, dissemination, to some extent, will form part of the research process.

The dissemination that forms part of the research process relates to 1) the interview material which will be fed back into focus group discussions, and 2) the popular scientific reports which will be produced in relevant languages (local and national) together with the four groups involved in the research. The popular scientific reports will be printed, in a simple format but rich with pictures and graphics, and disseminated back to the same groups. The reports will constitute memorabilia of the research process, and inputs into the final phase of action-oriented research towards suggesting the way forward.<sup>1</sup>

Results will also be shared very informally, through email discussions and the circulation of draft reports through a network of persons and organisations working on similar issues. In particular the DEG JPs, and the selected UNICEF, UN-Habitat and UNDP supported programmes (covered in review of on-going programmes) that show interest in keeping in touch with the project will be regularly updated on progress and findings.

Further international dissemination will occur via conferences and meetings. The forums presented by SIWI – the Stockholm World Water Week and Swedish Water House seminars – will be used to present and discuss results mainly with water-related audiences. Especially the possibility to reach a larger international audience through the World Water Week in Stockholm will be taken advantaged of through one presentation and perhaps some smaller discussions.

Research partners, the local universities leading the field research, will also be encouraged to present findings and results at national and regional forums. Joint publications in local or regional journals will be produced, as led by research partners.

As a means for sustainable documentation and as a quality control of the research endeavours, publication in international peer reviewed journals will be sought. At least two articles are to be submitted – relating to the mapping of perspectives and a final about the suggested way forward.

*Work Plan and Indicative Time Table*

This research project is an endeavour of eighteen months. The preceding sections on methodology and dissemination strategy outline the field research and documentation tasks. The results framework in the next section provides further detail on the research activities and outputs in relation to the research objectives.

The present section outlines the overall plan for getting the work done, divided into seven partly overlapping phases / areas of work. The approximate timing of each phase is indicated in the table:

Indicative Time Table – 18 months					
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6
Inception					
	Reviews				
	Field Research - Location 1				
	Field Research – Location 2				
		Write: 'mapping'	Write: 'pop.rep.'	Write: 'way forward'	
	Dissemination: local feed-back / international meetings / journals				
					WWW
Networking: maintain links with related research and development programmes (info sharing throughout)					
Legend: Q= quarter of year					

<sup>1</sup> Production of local language material in a study of water vending in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania proved to be enormously appreciated not only by the vendors themselves, but also by the city’s water utility, as a record of the informal activities which is often overlooked in official reports (Kjellén, 2001; Kjellén 2006)

Each phase contains several tasks, as briefly outlined in this summary workplan:

Inception

- Exploration of university relations and potential field study sites through on-going DEG-KM *Effective intercultural approaches* work (WGF, with JPs)
- Visits to potential sites and potential partners (WGF)
- Negotiation and contracting of partners (WGF & partners)

Reviews of existing knowledge and challenges (mainly WGF, with network)

- Literature review to establish knowledge and lessons learnt on indigenous as well as modern/ bureaucratic institutions relevant for selected areas
- Review of on-going programmes for further insight into main challenges faced by (primarily DEG JPs and selected UNICEF, UN-Habitat and UNDP) programmes targeting sanitation and water for in indigenous areas, as well as why and how some development actors have been successful or not in their activities

Field research – location 1 & location 2 (mainly partner university)

- Establishment of detailed research protocol (WGF & Local Lead Researcher)
- Institutional-mapping through video (self-)documentation & interviews on institutional change
- Iterative analysis with community/service providers/development cooperation actors/local authorities & co-production and dissemination of popular scientific report in relevant languages
- Facilitated meetings for finding “way forward”

Writing up of results (WGF and partner institutions)

- Article – Institutional-mapping of rules, practices and values
- Article on ways to overcome socio-cultural differences in institutions

Dissemination and Networking

- Establish and maintain networks with persons and organisations working on similar issues, throughout the project (WGF)
- Dissemination of research results (popular scientific report, articles and seminar presentations & discussions – WGF and partners)

The indicative time table outlines the time frame for each phase.

**III. Results and Resources Framework**

<p><b>Project title:</b> Towards Trans-cultural Transparency: Exploring the Interface between Modern and Traditional Institutions in Water Supply and Sanitation</p>
<p><b>Project Purpose:</b> To help overcome socio-cultural clashes between communities, service providers, development cooperation actors and local authorities, and the resulting ineffectiveness of the sanitation and water supply systems in selected indigenous areas by institutional-mapping of the underlying rules, practices and value systems of different sanitation and water supply arrangement, making the institutions explicit and transparently documented.</p>
<p><b>Partnership Strategy:</b> WGF works with local research partner institutions in provisionally two selected areas, in a context of further international networking with universities and implementation programmes focussing on trans-cultural issues in water supply and sanitation.</p>



<b>Research Objectives</b>	<b>Indicative Activities</b>	<b>Tangible Outputs</b>	<b>Implementing Parties</b>
(1) <u>Map changing institutions</u> : describe the present status and recent evolution of rules, practices and values relating to sanitation and water supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Literature review</li> <li>▪ Review of on-going projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reports of reviews</li> </ul>	WGF (PM, RA)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interviews with key informants and individuals from communities, service providers, development cooperation actors and local authorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Video-taped notes</li> <li>▪ Brief reports (summary transcriptions)</li> </ul>	Partner (FR) supported by WGF
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mapping of rules, practices and values</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Article submitted to journal</li> </ul>	WGF & partner
(2) <u>Explore the transcultural interface</u> : assess contradictions and complementarities of sanitation and water-related institutions of different groups relating to the same geographic area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Focus group discussions among service providers, communities, development cooperation actors and local authority representatives – contrasting rules, practices and value systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ FGD video notes and summary transcriptions</li> </ul>	Partner (FR) supported by WGF
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Further analysis of contrasts and complementarities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft research write-up, as input for:</li> </ul>	Partner institutions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Co-production of popular scientific material</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Manuscript with photos</li> </ul>	Partner, WGF & groups/ interviewees
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Translation of popular scientific material into local and/or national languages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Translated reports</li> </ul>	Partner institution
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dissemination of co-produced report to local audiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Printed reports</li> </ul>	Partner institution
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Presentation of results at local/national/regional event(s) or forums, as appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Presentation/report/proceedings</li> </ul>	Partner institution & WGF
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Presentation of results at international event(s) or forums, as appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Presentation/report/proceedings</li> </ul>	WGF & Partner institution
(3) <u>Suggest ways forward</u> : analyse valuable experiences, find potential service options, management methods and behavioural changes that serve both traditional/indigenous needs and aspirations and requirements of modern/bureaucratic service provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Facilitated (separate and joint) meetings between groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Records from meetings</li> </ul>	Partner (FR) supported by WGF
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Analysis and comparison with reviews of literature and on-going projects and processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft findings as shared and discussed in networks of researchers or development projects</li> </ul>	WGF & Partner (FR)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review of means for overcoming socio-cultural differences in water and sanitation service provision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Article submitted to journal</li> </ul>	WGF & Partner (FR)

## Budget

The total budget requirements for the planned 18 months research project are USD 320,000. The resources will be used for programme management and research at WGF/SIWI and the lead and field researchers at partner institutions, as well as the requisite logistics for international travel, field research and dissemination and networking activities. Because of the importance of the World Water Week in the water and sanitation scientific community, but the relatively high cost of participating, the proposed budget of USD 300,000 has been exceeded by USD 20,000 to cover this specific dissemination opportunity.

Programme Budget (all amounts in US Dollars)							All quarters (1,5 years)
Budget item / quarter:	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	
<b>Researchers SIWI</b>							
Programme Manager - 25%	9,900	9,900	9,900	9,900	9,900	9,900	<b>59,400</b>
Research Assistant - 50%	10,100	10,100	10,100	10,100	10,100	10,100	<b>60,600</b>
<b>Partner Institutions</b>							
- field researchers, students (time & administration)	1,500	12,000	18,000	18,000	18,000	12,000	<b>79,500</b>
Logistics, local travel	1,000	2,000	5,000	5,000	3,000	2,000	<b>18,000</b>
International travel (exploration, research, dissemination and presentation)	6,200	5,900	5,900	5,800	5,800	5,800	<b>35,400</b>
Dissemination (translation, printing, copying, distribution)			2,500	6,700	3,000	5,000	<b>17,200</b>
Stockholm WWW seminar with partner participation						18,800	<b>18,800</b>
Communications, sharing, networking	900	900	900	900	900	900	<b>5,400</b>
Materials, equipment	1,000	1,500	2,000	2,000	500	587	<b>7,587</b>
Programme Administration, SIWI (6%)	1,836	2,538	3,258	3,504	3,072	3,905	<b>18,113</b>
<b>Totals by quarter/ grand total:</b>	<b>32,436</b>	<b>44,838</b>	<b>57,558</b>	<b>61,904</b>	<b>54,272</b>	<b>68,992</b>	<b>320,000</b>

## IV. Management Arrangements

The proposed programme will be implemented by WGF – forming part of UNDP’s Water Governance Programme and based at the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI). WGF provides strategic technical and policy support to governments for improved water governance to advance water resources and water services in relation to the MDGs and works to enhance the water governance knowledge base. WGF is the present focal point for the Democratic and Economic Governance Knowledge Management programme (DEG-KM).

A senior Water Governance Programme manager will be dedicated on a part time basis (25%) to lead the implementation of the present research, including the management and oversight of collaborative arrangements and the execution of field research, analysis and the production and dissemination of research outputs.

A Research Assistant will work on a part time basis (50%) to assist with programme management and research tasks, including literature reviews, collaborator coordination, field research, analysis and the production and dissemination of research outputs.

Direct responsibility for field research, initial analysis and production of research reports will rest with the collaborating partner institutions. These institutions will primarily be university departments in selected regions. The present field research plans counts with university students to undertake initial interviews under the supervision of a more experienced researcher. The local analysis and discussion relies on an experienced moderator of focus group discussions. All detailed field research plans will be reviewed with the local collaborator in order to establish a mutual agreement on the respective roles and responsibilities in the research process.

The present proposal envisages (but is not limited to) two partner organisations in one or more Latin American countries. Further informal research collaboration and exchange of information beyond the formalised partnerships will be handled through a range of looser networks, through which a global outlook will be maintained.

### *Networking and Partner Identification*

The proposed research programme will maintain links with organisations working on similar issues, e.g. researchers at the United Nations University-Institute of Advanced Studies: Traditional Knowledge Initiative in Australia or international NGOs working on with "First Nations" and the fostering of indigenous rights. Such networking will be on an entirely informal basis, as a way to keep in touch with international discourses on inter-cultural approaches.

Further networking (sharing of information and ideas) will involve programmes working with water and sanitation in remote or disadvantaged areas. This will partly be covered in the initial review of innovative approaches and lessons learned through (mainly UN funded) development programmes. Here, MDG-F-sponsored JPs, GoAL WaSH initiatives and similar programmes will be reviewed (desk study) in order to summarise approaches taken and the constraints that are faced. Selected on-going programmes, by for example UNICEF, UN-Habitat and UNDP, will be an important target group for research findings, networking and also for review of preliminary results, as appropriate. Suggested ways forward from the research should clearly be circulated among interested managers of on-going programmes, in particular those of the JPs of the DEG.

The incipient DEG-KM knowledge management process of "Effective Intercultural Approaches" will serve as the major vehicle for exploring contacts and collaborative arrangements for local field research (both communities and universities). This knowledge process entails the setting up of a network between selected JPs in the DEG thematic window for the exchange and cross-learning in relation to existing and potential intercultural and participatory approaches. The process builds on a 'mini-proposal' spear-headed by the Mexican JP at the DEG-KM workshop in Manta in March-2011, but also the explicit interest in experience exchange expressed by several other JPs during the same workshop. Mapping of resources has been initiated the network should be set up during the third quarter of 2011. The results from the research carried out in this project will of course be fed into the on-going dialogue and will serve to deepen and broaden the knowledge base of the DEG JPs in their interaction with the indigenous communities in their programme areas.

Several of the JPs collaborate with local universities. Whereas the present research is to be seen as independent from existing JPs, it will seriously consider the following potentially interesting cases and research sites:

- Southern parts of Mexico, where the DEG JP has developed close links to the University of Chiapas and the Intercultural University of Tabasco. Both have expertise in specific approaches and in adapting knowledge to indigenous visions
- Northern Panama, where the DEG JP has very advanced work in regard to gender issues and close links to indigenous governance structures
- Eastern Nicaragua, where the DEG JP is working to bring indigenous organizations and leaders to become represented in regional and national governance structures.
- Paraguay, to build on DEG JP work on finance and investment mechanisms that are being developed to suit needs in indigenous areas
- Philippines, where the DEG JP has expressed an interest in pursuing more targeted communications and engagements with different socio-cultural groups

Moreover, twinning arrangements between countries should be considered. Preliminary contacts suggest that there are possibilities to work with students, primarily from Mexico and Ecuador, enrolled in water-related studies at CAALCA (Centro del Agua para América Latina y el Caribe) based at TEC Monterrey in Mexico, a programme supported by the FEMSA Foundation. Regional university cooperation and networking may also be pursued through the Latin American Social Science Faculty agreement (FLACSO) based in Costa Rica and represented throughout the region.

Suitable research partners should be universities with a research record in indigenous areas and preferably a long-term engagement in emancipatory research. Administrative capabilities and the ability to arrange for interviews and group discussions in specified areas, as well as to facilitate translation and the production of popular scientific reports in a cost-efficient manner are also required.

A major part of SIWI's relations with academic institutions are mediated through the UNDP-supported capacity building network Cap-Net and its Latin America-specific Latin American Water Education & Training Network (LA-WETnet). Thus, the networking through JP contacts will be complemented with existing relations through LA-WETnet in order to find suitable locations and partner organisations for the present research.

A potential spin-off from this research collaboration could be exchange studies between different universities. Swedish universities (e.g. the Department of Human Geography or the Institute for Latin America Studies at Stockholm University) could potentially draw on established mechanisms for student and teacher exchange.

Further networking resources related to SIWI is the Swedish Water House which provides face-to-face and virtual meeting places for innovative thinking on emerging issues, knowledge dissemination and multidisciplinary policy development concerning the global water situation. At least one seminar should be organised under the SWH umbrella, reaching out also to activist groups and development assistance organisations working with indigenous rights or special needs in the area of sanitation and water supply. As mentioned in the dissemination strategy (above) the Stockholm World Water Week is another platform for organising outreach and communication with a broad set of actors on the global water and sanitation scene.

### *Progress Reporting*

The substantial reporting of research results will (as specified in project work plan) be channelled through:

- 1) Local language popular scientific write-ups
- 2) Feed-back of findings at national forums
- 3) Presentations at international conferences
- 4) Findings in international perspective through submitted articles

Operational performance will be reported in accordance with the MDG-F Knowledge Management Plans progress reporting format, or as particularly specified by the MDG-F. Regular reports (annual and semi-annual, or as specified) will hence be provided on the status and evolution of:

- purpose/goals/objectives,
- finances resources: budget and expenditures
- results: outputs, outcomes, activities and implementation constraints
- further plans and adjustments

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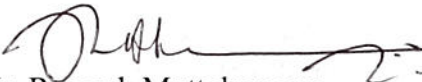
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To: Mr. Hakan Tropp  
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UNDP Water Governance Facility at SIWI  
Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI)

Date: 22 October 2011

  
From: Mr. Romesh Muttukumaru  
Deputy Assistant Administrator  
Partnerships Bureau, UNDP

Subject: Research proposal "Towards Trans-cultural Transparency: Exploring the Interface between Modern and Traditional Institutions in Sanitation and Water Supply"

## Approval Status

On behalf of the MDG-F Secretariat I am pleased to inform you that your initial concept note research proposal "Towards Trans-cultural Transparency: Exploring the Interface between Modern and Traditional Institutions in Sanitation and Water Supply" for a total amount of **USD 320.000** has been approved. In order to proceed please submit a revised document for our final review taking into consideration the observations made in the design comments below. Additionally, kindly provide us with:

- Name of designated programme manager/responsible person for this initiative; and
- Bank account details

Please note that all activities will have to be finalised and the project completed no later than June 2013

### I. Design comments

This partnership proposes to carry out a research project to help overcome socio-cultural clashes between communities, service providers, development cooperation actors and local authorities, and the resulting ineffectiveness of the sanitation and water supply systems in selected indigenous areas. The research will cover a changing institutions map, a transcultural interface analysis and will provide suggestions on the way forward.

In the revised document to be submitted to the Secretariat please consider the following:

- A chapter on research products should be included. This chapter should detail the nature of the products, scope, language, timing of production, etc. It should detail how the various

products are going to be adapted for each of the four groups included in the research (communities, service providers, development cooperation actors and national institutions).

- A chapter on the Governance of the research project should be included. In this chapter the decision making, coordination and approval system should be defined, both related to the desk review and the field research. A Steering Committee should be established and should meet at least once every six months.
- Regarding the methodology, two elements should be included as crosscutting issues in the research: 1) water access as a human right and 2) Inequality issues. Every product resulting from the research should address these two aspects in a specific and detailed way. A specific analysis on how the inequality ties with the right to access to water should be included, as well as an assessment on how the MDGF's JPs could improve their interventions at this respect.

The inequality approach and analysis methodology will be defined together with the MDGF Secretariat in accordance to the strategic lines of its Inequality Agenda.

- In relation to the dissemination strategy: it is necessary to elaborate more on the means for dissemination to be used. Especially detailing the event to be organised in the framework of the World Water Week. An introduction on the relevance and scope of the WWW would be necessary, including the objective audience and potential impact in terms of dissemination and advocacy.

## II. Secretariat's Role in the implementation process

The MDGF Secretariat will act as a partner during the implementation process and will be part of the research project Steering Committee.

The following implementation phases will be done in agreement with the Secretariat:

- Identification of case studies and actors.
- Products outlines
- Field research Agenda, work methodology and coordination system
- Dissemination event to be organised during the WWW

The Secretariat will be clearly involved in the quality review and approval of:

- Draft reports
- Dissemination products

In relation to communications with the JP teams, the Secretariat will be copied in any communication and will stay as the main interlocutor with them.

The MDG-F looks forward to working closely with SIWI on this exciting initiative. We trust that we will be able to use and share the outcomes of this partnership with relevant stakeholders and decision makers.



### **III. Management arrangements and delegation of authority**

Upon receipt of the revised document, the Secretariat will do a final revision and approval at which time the financial allocation will be transferred in full.

### **IV. Publications**

The Secretariat will be recognised and acknowledge in any publications resulting from the research project. The Secretariat will be also entitled to use all publications resulting from the research project as communication and advocacy tools.

With best regards.

cc.: MDG-F Secretariat