



Extrait du Aqua Publica Europea

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APE-AöW Seminar | Public-Public Cooperation for the Human Right to Water and Sanitation

- Activities - Events -
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Aqua Publica Europea

A wide-ranging audience of water operators from different European countries, development agencies' representatives, and NGOs attended the **APE-AöW seminar on "Public-public partnerships for the right to water and sanitation"**, which took place at the **Berlin Wasser International Fair** on the 26th of March.

Speakers focused on the role of water operators partnerships as capacity-development approach to enhance access to water and sanitation in less developed countries. Particular attention was paid to the specific contribution of public water utilities. The ongoing debate on the next Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was also considered as an important reference framework.

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Ms Uschi Eid, Chair of the UN Secretary General Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation, explained why the fight against poverty is intrinsically linked with the sustainable development objective. She then called on the water community to continue the advocacy action for a dedicated water goal in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals negotiations and stressed the importance of identifying appropriate indicators to have reliable measurements of goals achievement. She also recognised the potential contribution that public water utilities from western Countries can provide to increase water sector management capacities in less developed countries.

[Click here to download the presentation of Ms Uschi Eid](#)

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Mr Faraj El-Awar, Programme Manager of the UN-Habitat initiative Global Water Operators Partnerships Alliance (GWOPA), emphasised the crucial role and responsibility that water operators bear as regards the struggle to ensure universal access to water. He then explained why Water Operators Partnerships (WOPs) have a great potential to increase management capacities of water operators in the Global South. Through a series of concrete examples, Mr El-Awar described how, thanks to WOP, beneficiary operators manage to improve significantly their performances. In several cases, beneficiary operators were able to turn themselves in mentors for other operators, thus enabling a shift from a North-South to a South-South cooperation perspective.

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Ms Christiane Franck, CEO of Aqua Publica Europea and General Director of VIVAQUA, illustrated the benefits of water operators cooperation by presenting a series of success stories based on VIVAQUA experience in Congo and Morocco. Ms Franck stressed the importance of ensuring adequate public funding to support this kind of no-profit cooperation and called on the European Commission to restore the Water Facility.

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Mr Paolo Ciccarelli, Head of "Water, Energy and Infrastructure Unit" at DG Development of the European Commission, pointed out that the EC strongly calls for the adoption of one specific water-dedicated goal within the SDGs framework, as universal access to water and sanitation represents one of the pillar of the EU strategy for cooperation. However, Mr Ciccarelli also recognised that the water domain has been somewhat losing importance within the EU international cooperation approach as compared to other policy areas (like energy and agriculture); as a consequence, the Water Facility has not been - at least for now - renewed in the current programming period. Nevertheless, the water sector will continue to benefit from financial support under EU different programmes (such as the blending mechanisms and the "Global public goods and challenges" instrument). Mr Ciccarelli made it also clear that, overall, the European Commission's strategy in development cooperation aims to increase the involvement of the private sector, even though public-public cooperation is highly regarded.

[Click here to download the presentation of Mr Paolo Ciccarelli](#)

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Mr Samir Bensaid, Director of the International Water Institute at the Moroccan National Agency for Water, called for a mentality shift as regards the approach to international cooperation. According to Mr Bensaid, developing countries do not need economic support from the North to acquire their solutions (and technologies), because these are often not effective in the recipient's context. Rather, Developing Countries should be helped to develop their own research strategy and technological solutions, which really respond to local needs and specificities. In this framework, public-public cooperation is - in Mr Bensaid's view - better suited than public-private partnership to respond to this objective, since it is based on a not-for-profit peer-to-peer approach that ensures sustainability of the relation and long-lasting effects.

[Click here to download the presentation of Mr Samir Bensaid](#)

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Mr Fabio Ferrari, Head of laboratory operations at CAP Holding (an Italian water operator), illustrated the challenges, but also the mutual benefits and gratification that a water operator can have when embarking upon a cooperation project. Based on a case-study analysis of a water operators partnership between Milan and Louga Region in Senegal, he highlighted the importance of a comprehensive approach in water cooperation, joining together both technical and managerial aspects with attention to human dimension and local culture.

[Click here to download the presentation of Mr Fabio Ferrari](#)

In her closing remarks, **Ms Christa Hecht**, *Director of the German Association of Public Operators (AöW)*, urged national and international political institutions to remove any barriers preventing the full involvement of public water operators in the global struggle to realise the human right to water and sanitation.

Watch the video interview of Ms. Uschi Eid

Watch the video interview of Mr. Paolo Ciccarelli

Watch the video interview of Mr. Faraj El-Awar

Watch the video of the Event