

Butterfly Effect NGO Commitments – 6th World Water Forum 16 March 2012

National, regional and local governments - and especially the elected parliamentarians and representatives - are the main duty bearers responsible for progress in all aspects of the water and sanitation sector: access to services, the realisation of the human rights to water and sanitation, coordination of Integrated Water Resources Management, including peaceful resolution of trans-boundary issues, and development and implementation of governance frameworks. These responsibilities derive from their mandate from civil society.

The Butterfly Effect is a coalition of over 90 civil society organisations, and national and international NGOs, networks and womens' organisations. We have been working together for over a year to prepare for this forum, bringing our experience and expertise together with a common set of messages and our own commitments which we present to duty bearers and all other actors at the 6th World Water Forum, March 2012.

We have identified several key water management issues that need addressing if the number of people with access to safe water and adequate sanitation and hygiene services is to significantly increase.

We are committed to using evidence-based models and innovation, integrating both traditional knowledge and demonstration of best practices. We advocate for effective local solutions that have an impact on sustainable water and sanitation services. Our solutions are based on human rights principles, and communities' experience, and relate to policies, projects, information campaigns and empowering stakeholders. Crucially, our solutions are local, sustainable, adaptable, innovative, equitable and people-focused.

Our commitments derive from our common set of messages and fall in to three categories which I now present to you;

Firstly, the Human rights to water and sanitation. This is a cross cutting issue in all of our work. We believe that good governance of water and sanitation will only be brought about through a human rights-based approach which requires investment in informed and effective civil society participation. We greatly welcomed the 2010 UN resolutions recognizing the human rights to safe water and sanitation as legally

binding and now urge all actors to support national governments to implement this right for all people.

Secondly, we call on all actors to recognise local knowledge and support community management of water and sanitation as essential components in order to implement the human rights to water and sanitation. We focus on capacity development, raising public awareness, monitoring of public services provision and Integrated Water Resources Management. We continue to maintain an emphasis on the links between water, sanitation and environmental health.

Finally, we consider water and security to be absolutely fundamental to sustainable water management. This includes security of access to water for all and must be achieved through peace and transboundary cooperation and a focus on water and food security, humanitarian emergencies, natural resources management and climate change.

1. On Human rights to water and sanitation, we commit to

- Support the development of strong international and national legal frameworks providing sufficient detail on the duties of States and the rights and obligations of citizens with regard to the realisation of the human rights to water and sanitation.
- Support the formulation and implementation of national action plans in line with international law.
- Articulate human rights commitments with all other fields of law which impact water management. In particular investment, trade, transboundary waters and the environment.
- Monitor our governments' commitments to financing water and sanitation services for the poor through working with multi-stakeholder global frameworks like the Sanitation and Water for All partnership.
- Promote and advocate for the development of financial mechanisms allowing local stakeholders to access the financial resources they need.

2. On supporting community management of water and sanitation, we commit to

- Facilitate holistic user-oriented and community-based water, sanitation and hygiene strategies which incorporate traditional *savoir faire* on water management.

- Promote a high level of user participation and empowerment at household and community level with a strong commitment to equity and inclusion.
- Promote a holistic understanding of the linkages between sanitation, water, environment, agriculture, health --including food security and nutrition-- in order to effectively achieve and sustain universal sanitation coverage and ensure sustainable practices that reduce infection and transmission of diseases.
- Promote integrated multi-sector water and sanitation program approaches to ensure sustainable development,
- Develop local and national capacity on participatory assessments, planning and management of water, sanitation and natural resources management and proven mechanisms for water-based adaptation to climate change.
- Advocate for capacity development to be part of every project and program - and to be a criteria for funding by multilateral, bilateral and other donor agencies.

3. on water and security, we commit to

- Raise awareness of the importance of international legal frameworks
- Increase the brokering role of civil society in support of the UN Watercourses convention
- Implement equitable and sustainable Integrated Water Resources Management in River Basins on the basis of negotiated water sharing arrangements between citizens at the local level
- Engage relevant organizations at all levels in order to support the water and nutrient flows for sustainable agriculture
- Support humanitarian coordination with an extensive involvement of local institutions, local partners and national platforms
- **And finally**, the Butterfly Effect Coalition commits to support governments and local partners to act coherently with the implementation of the Hyōgo Framework for Action on disaster risk management supporting national strategies and developing programs accordingly.