



End Water Poverty: Outcomes report

Introduction

As a global civil society coalition, one of End Water Poverty's priority work areas is to support national and regional organisations to help ensure a strong, united civil society. This is a critical step in achieving our common vision of ending the water and sanitation crisis. As part of this mandate, End Water Poverty recently supported the African Civil Society Network on Water and Sanitation (ANEW) in engaging in the [6th African Water Week](#), held in July in Tanzania. Africa Water Week is a biennial conference of African Water Ministers organised by the [African Ministers' Council on Water \(AMCOW\)](#). This conference is the only platform on the continent where governments, donors, practitioners and civil society meet to discuss leading issues of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) issues. It offers a unique opportunity for assessing current progress towards achieving universal access across the region.

Civil society has always been given space to participate in the conference, particularly through presenting addresses in the opening ceremonies. Additionally, in the past, civil society also has had the opportunity to be part of the team responsible for drafting the final outcomes communiqué at the close of the conference. In recent times, AMCOW has expressed concern with the quality of civil society input into the conference itself, as civil society was not united and was unable to input effectively in the processes in previous events. ANEW is an important and long running African civil society network, bringing organisations together from across the region. ANEW has been experiencing difficulties of late, as the network has very limited human resources and capacity to realise their plans and activities. This has reduced the network's ability to be reflective and responsive to issues, and to push for an active, united civil society across the region. The most recent conference however was a very positive turning point for the ongoing relationship between ANEW and AMCOW, and for strengthening ANEW's network and presence.

Pre-conference preparations

Recognising the challenges facing ANEW and the need for a strong civil society, the End Water Poverty secretariat felt it critical to directly support ANEW during this conference. The objectives of the week were to bring together ANEW and its members and other civil society representatives working in Africa to discuss recent major issues, and to explore ANEW's future strategy and plans at a Civil Society Forum ahead of the African Water Week conference.

A working group was established which consisted of key organisations such as ANEW, WaterAid, Water and Sanitation Supply Collaborative Council (WSSCC), Sanitation and Water for All (SWA), End Water Poverty, IRC, and the Tanzania Water and Sanitation Network (TeWasNet) amongst others. The

purpose of the group was to help in the preparatory work for the Civil Society Forum and to ensure effective participation of civil society in the week-long conference. The working group were very successful in pooling resources together for the Civil Society Forum, along with a side event on the human rights approach. The working group contributed to the agenda for the Civil Society Forum and also made comments on the draft position paper and other strategic documents for ANEW. This collaboration also helped in making sure that there was a good regional balance in selecting and supporting civil society participants to attend the event.

Civil Society Forum - 16 July 2016



Civil society representatives join together ahead of Africa Water Week, Tanzania.

Photo credit: <http://bit.ly/2bwdJ0J>

The Forum was a great success in terms of the number of representatives who were able to participate, the high quality of presentations and engagement, and as an opportunity for consensus building as a united civil society. Close to 90 participants attended on the day, from all across the region, helping to contribute to diverse, rich discussions throughout the day. It was a very positive step that the opening session included keynote speeches by representatives from both AMCOW and the Tanzanian government; helping to highlight the importance and value these institutions are placing on engaging with civil society and our role and contributions to discussions.

The keynote speeches were delivered by Bai-Mass Tall, the out-going Executive Secretariat of AMCOM, and Sylvester Matemu, Assistant Director at the Tanzanian Ministry of Water and Irrigation. Bai-Mass's message was incredibly encouraging and uplifting. He recounted how, under his leadership, he engaged directly with civil society by ensuring AMCOW's support of ANEW through the provision of European Commission funding, in order to prioritise and mobilise civil society on the continent for effective WASH advocacy. He was passionate about the role of civil society organisations (CSOs) in working with AMCOW to achieve its objective of implementing and delivering Goal 6 successfully throughout Africa. Following this, Mr Matemu praised the work of CSOs in Tanzania, particularly the national civil society network - [TaWaSaNET](#). He promised to work closely with CSOs in his capacity as

Chair of [AMCOW's Technical Advisory Committee \(TAC\)](#). This is a great opportunity for civil society as the TAC is the arm of AMCOW which formulates its core strategies and policies. He committed to being a useful and positive channel of influence on the current AMCOW President, the Tanzanian Minister of Water and irrigation.

The rest of the morning was dedicated to informing and updating participants on a range of leading issues and current developments, such as the implementation processes of the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through Agenda 2030, and the linkages with the N'gor Declaration.

Presenters explained the journey we have undertaken in the progression from the Millennium Development Goals to the new SDGs. Participants were able to learn of the United Nations Secretary General's report on [Progress Towards the Sustainable Goals](#), the recent [Voluntary National Review](#) reporting process and the proposed draft indicators for the N'gor Declaration. Through the group work and plenary session that followed, it was evident that many civil society representatives were learning of these processes for the first time, and had limited knowledge which highlights that there is a clear need for further capacity building. Participants with governments that had submitted progress reports on the SDGs to the UN High Level Political Forum through the Voluntary National Review, including Togo and Madagascar, expressed concern that the consultation processes had been poor in including civil society participation.

The afternoon session of the Forum was dedicated to evaluating and discussions on ANEW's overall strategy, future engagements and action plans. Regional representatives from the ANEW steering committee presented an update of recent events and activities, as well as details of the work plan proposed for the next few years. Participants of the Forum then discussed and explored the draft strategy, providing input and suggestions for strengthening the overall direction of ANEW. All agreed that ANEW's interim steering committee has done a good job with the strategy and that the regional network were travelling in the right direction. It was agreed that the Steering Committee would review all to incorporate feedback, and a revised strategy will be communicated later in the year.

The Forum ended with useful information sharing sessions, highlighting a variety of tools and platforms that are available for civil society to help strengthen their future advocacy and engagement activities. Opportunities were presented on, such as End Water Poverty's annual campaign [Water Action Month in March](#), the [WASHWatch](#) monitoring platform and opportunities for advocacy it allows, as well as the [Sanitation and Water for All](#) platform and the possibilities for civil society's engagement. Participants were provided with opportunities to ask questions about the tools and platforms, as well as being provided with case studies and examples on how to engage and use these opportunities.

All presentations from the Civil Society Forum are available [online](#).

Civil society position statement and key messages

The Forum provided a critical space for civil society to deliberate and to reach consensus on key messages ahead of Africa Water Week. A task team was given the responsibility of drafting and finalising the position statement that would be communicated outlining civil society's key advocacy

positions. The team met the following day on Sunday, to reach agreement and finalise the official statement; a positive, powerful collaborative activity showing a well coordinated, united civil society. Once completed, the final communique was translated into French and circulated to all participants ahead of the conference opening on Monday 18 July 2016, to ensure that all CSO representatives were fully empowered to engage in advocacy on our shared messaging.

[Download the official position statement](#) from civil society in both English and French.

Official opening of Africa Water Week



On the opening of Africa Water Week, the main auditorium of the Julius Nyerere International Convention Centre was filled to capacity with ministers, diplomats, technocrats and civil society representatives. A range of different stakeholders presented position statements and welcome addresses in the opening ceremony, and it was a positive step that a number of civil society representatives were able to present in this session.

Doreen Wandera, current Chair of ANEW, presented the official civil society position statement. She was also invited to officially submit the statement to the AMCOW President; an unexpected, and incredible advocacy success. In 2015, civil society weren't able to organise sufficiently to present their statement during AfriSan, so the outcome this year was an important achievement. A number of speakers at the opening ceremony, including Chris Williams, the Executive Director of WSSCC, referenced the Civil Society Forum and the vital role civil society organisations will play in successfully delivering Goal 6 in Africa, which was a great success.

Technical sessions and side events

The rest of the week-long conference was made up of sessions and side events covering a range of topics and issues. End Water Poverty - in collaboration with KEWASNET, WSSCC, WaterAid and the Government of Kenya - hosted a side event on human rights. The objective of this side event was to facilitate participants in expanding their understanding of core principles of the human rights to water and sanitation, and to demonstrate how to adopt the principles to human rights to deliver services for the poor. The session explored various programmes and case studies that are using the human rights approach to water and sanitation. Approximately 60 people attended the event, which was a good indication of people's interest in this important topic and helped to provide fruitful discussions. It was evident from participants that there is still a lot of work to be done in terms of the interpretation of the affordability principle with regards to payment for services. This will form part of End Water Poverty's on-going focus and work on the human rights to water and sanitation.

It was important to also see that human rights was mentioned in the presentation by a representative of the government of Uganda during a session on inequality. Later in the conference, a representative of the African Development Bank stated that they were in the position that water usage for the tourism industry should not be at the expense of domestic water consumption.

All presentations from the human rights side event are [available online](#).

There was much discussion throughout the course of the week around financing; particularly looking at ways of supporting national governments to develop realistic projects to meet donors' criteria and expectations, with much mention of buzzwords like "bankable projects". There was a lot of talk of the importance of domestic resource mobilisation, but this lacked detailed information as to how it will be practically implemented and actioned at national level. The Africa Water Facility was also presented as one of the potential funds for governments. However, this initiative is focused more on project preparations than project implementation. About 70% of its funding is allocated to project preparation, which means it will be useful for civil society to enter into dialogue with the African Development Bank and AMCOW to try to shift resources to funding project implementation directly.

In one of the sessions, AMCOW presented on how they propose to monitor Goal 6 on water and sanitation and the N'gor Declaration's commitments, together in collaboration with the Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP). They have developed an online data hub which will be the platform where African states will report on their progress on Goal 6 and the N'gor indicators. The French government also presented on the proposed new framework of the Global Water Governance Architecture. According to the French government, they will be presenting this initiative at the next United Nations General Assembly for members to vote on. It will be important for civil society to monitor this development. The proposal mentions civil society representation but does not outline how this will be done. CSOs working on Goal 6 are quite varied in their focus and prioritisation, so to have one network or individual organisation representing the collective interests of civil society will be tricky. End Water Poverty and our task teams on the SDGs and Europe will continue to monitor and assess this ongoing process, and advocate for effective civil society engagement and participation.

Ministerial Meeting

The week culminates with the final session – the Ministerial Meeting – which brought together all government representatives to present the final outcomes of the conference and decide on next steps. The design of the Ministerial Meeting however was not conducive for encouraging active civil society engagement as the Ministers interacted very little with participants. Much of the issues discussed were repetitions of what people said at the opening of the conference and offered little progression of the issues discussed throughout the week. There was also very limited participation by Ministers in the technical sessions; in some cases, close doors meetings ran parallel to technical sessions which did not help the situation. This is a clear indication that there is still a long way to go in terms of improving engagement between stakeholders, particularly ensuring better civil society's participation.

Meetings with key organisations working with EWP and SWA

Africa Water Week was an important opportunity for the End Water Poverty secretariat, including the SWA CSO Advisor, as it was a unique space to directly engage with our members and partners working in the region. We held numerous face-to-face meetings with partners and members present to discuss action plans and advocacy issues. SWA and EWP were able to financially support thirteen civil society representatives which was a great achievement. Representatives from a range of countries around the region were supported to attend, including from Burkina Faso, Malawi, Sudan, Chad, Togo, Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Tanzania and Kenya. These meetings allowed us to have deep and investigative dialogues with members and partners in a number of work areas including; Water Action Month in March 2017, the use of WASHWatch in monitoring government's progress in delivering water and sanitation, the upcoming SWA High Level Finance Ministers meeting in April 2017. End Water Poverty was also able to assess general advocacy needs and challenges of members at the national level, and how best we can work together to strengthen civil society's role. We also paid a visit to TaWasNET's office to interact with their staff and discuss the coalition's future plan. Follow up engagements and joint action plans will be developed throughout the next few months to ensure a strong, active civil society.

Closing and Conference Declaration

On the close of the conference, AMCOW issued their outcome declaration entitled *"The Dar es Salaam Road map for Achieving The N'gor Commitments on Water Security and Sanitation in Africa"*. A number of the positions and demands from the civil society position statement were included in this. This was a very important and progressive outcome and achievement for us as civil society. It was a great success to have the ANEW Co-ordinator, Samson Shivaji from ANEW/ KEWASNET, who represented civil society on the drafting committee of the final outcome document, and could advocate strongly for the inclusion of our collective positions.

The roadmap is available in French and English and is available to [download from the End Water Poverty website](#), along with a blog about the outcomes of Africa Water Week, by EWP's coordinator Al-Hassan Adam.

All photos taken by AMCOW at the event are [available online](#).

Next steps

- End Water Poverty will follow up with the members of the co-convenors working group to review the outcomes from this important event and develop next steps.
- The ANEW interim steering committee will be reaching out to their members to finalise a new strategy and communications plan, along with a proposed work plan. They will also be organising elections for new members of the steering committee, and will communicate this process in the near future. End Water Poverty will continue to work with, and support ANEW in the implementation and realisation of their strategy.
- There is the urgent need to address knowledge gaps evident in civil society, particularly on the proposed indicators for the N’gor Declaration and Agenda 2030 implementation processes at a national level. Civil society has a very limited knowledge of these processes, and this much needed capacity building will be a key priority for End Water Poverty and our engagement with our members. Much of this will be done through End Water Poverty’s dedicated SDGs task team which has made national level support a priority in its work plan for the next year.
- End Water Poverty and our partners will investigate and develop lobbying actions to engage the new Executive Secretary of AMCOW, Canasius Kanangire from Rwanda to ensure that a strong relationship between civil society and AMCOW continues. End Water Poverty will work with organisations based in Rwanda, such as Aflodis Kagaba from WASH-NET Rwanda, to plan future advocacy interventions and plans.
- End Water Poverty will continue to engage with AMCOW about plans to roll out their proposed new data hub for monitoring Goal 6 in Africa. This is currently available in draft form [online](#) and we will be investigating the role for civil society in data collection and monitoring processes in the future.
- End Water Poverty will be to continue working on the human rights to water and sanitation. We will be engaging in dialogue with participants and, particularly will seek to work with the Kenyan and Ugandan government to assess the extent of the implementation of the human rights to water and sanitation in their respective countries. We will be reaching out to national coalitions such as TaWaSaNET in Tanzania and SPONG in Burkina Faso to protect the inclusion of the human rights in their draft national constitutions. We will also reach out to the African Development Bank to explore potential collaborations together. This could also open up potential funding opportunities for our work on human rights. Finally, we will be sharing the communications materials and tools that are currently being developed on the Special Rapporteur's Handbook on the Human Rights to Water and Sanitation.

A very big thank you to all the co-convenors, partners, members and participants who helped to make the Civil Society Forum a reality and a great success. Together for a better future!