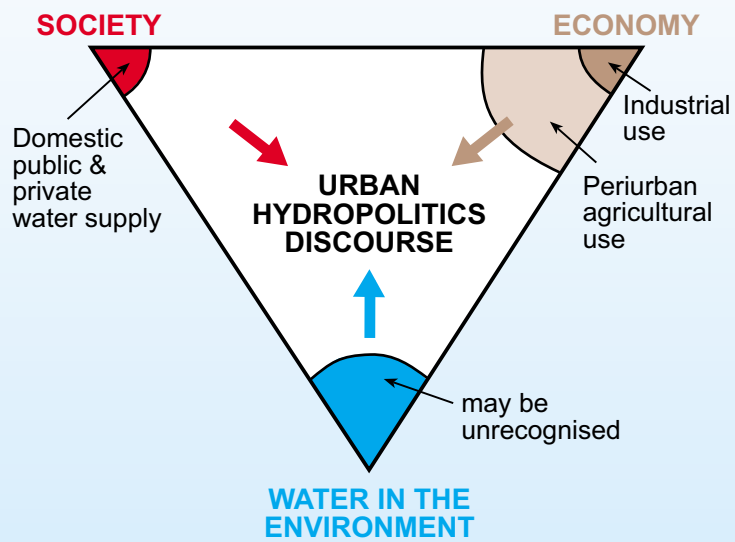


Stakeholder Consultation



Lessons learnt from Bishkek and Narayanganj

Identifying stakeholders

- The number of stakeholders can be significant (18 in Narayanganj and 10 in Bishkek) and it was helpful to divide them into primary and secondary stakeholders as illustrated in Table 1.
- This instructive classification showed in both cities that with the exception of the water utility (whose role as a primary stakeholder is arguable) engaging with primary stakeholders was difficult: in both cities it proved impossible to identify such representatives who could participate in a consultation process.
- Although participation by primary stakeholders was looked-for, the extent of community organisation required for them to be representative of such user groups may only occur in some urban contexts and may therefore be merely desirable rather than indispensable. We believe our experience is likely to be typical.
- In Narayanganj the absence of this stakeholder class was more than compensated for by the diversity of secondary stakeholders. These were drawn not only from public sector agencies/ministries but also local government and trade/industry associations. In Bishkek public sector organisations dominate the stakeholder spectrum but much underfunding and quite poor coordination post-independence has fostered a diversity of views by the agencies involved. This ensured active discussion of options.
- The stakeholders were also analysed to indicate relative positions and the potential coalition of support for a groundwater management strategy (Tables 2 and 3). Those in the shaded cells in Table 2 are the key stakeholders in that they are either important (stand to benefit or lose from aquifer protection policies) or influential (can mentor or veto individual policies or even the whole action plan) or both.

Table 1 List of main Stakeholders with roles in water infrastructure of Bishkek, Kyrghyzstan

Stakeholder name	Role	Type
Bishkekvodokanal	Responsible for most of city's water supply wells, distribution network and city sewer system	1/2
Bishkek City Administration	Responsible for infrastructure development in Bishkek	2
Department of Water Economy of Kyrghyz Republic	Responsible for management of national water resources	2
Kyrghyz Hydrogeological Expedition	Groundwater resource evaluation, monitoring of groundwater	2
Ministry of Ecology of Kyrghyz Republic	Responsible for ecology of water and land resources	2
Office of the Kyrghyz Republic Land Reform Project	Preparing land reform in Kyrghyz republic (including some water resource problems)	2
Sanitary and Epidemic Survey of Kyrghyz Rep.	Responsible for sanitary situation and public health in KR	2
Bishkekremstroy	Mediator between Bishkekvodokanal and public users (flats and houses)	1
Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Apex body of leading industries and commercial organizations, influential pressure group.	2
Bishkekgglavarhitektura	Responsible for urban planning and some city development plans (City Administration Dept)	2

Table 2 Matrix classification of stakeholders and observers in Narayanganj

High Importance →	Domestic users Metropolitan planning authority RAJUK	Urban water utility; Dhaka WASA Rural water utility; DPHE Municipality;- Narayanganj, Kadum Rasul Pauroshova Bangladesh Brick Manuf. Owners Assoc.
Low Importance →	Dept of Environment Rural local govt. (Upazila Parishad)	Bangladesh Hosiery Assoc. Bangladesh Knit Manufacturers & Exporters Assoc. Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corp. Narayanganj Chamber of Commerce & Industry <i>Development agencies: DFID, WHO, DANIDA, World Bank, UNICEF</i>
	Low Influence ↑	High Influence ↑

In green:

In red:

In italics

Participated in workshop

Elected not to attend/were not directly represented at Workshop

Observer agencies; present influence and potential future importance in funding better management

‘Importance’ criterion; Does the stakeholder stand to benefit or lose from an aquifer protection policy?

- The participation matrix in Narayanganj, shown in Table 3 indicates:
 - The pivotal role of the urban water utility WASA and the rural water supply agency DPHE in partnering change,
 - The essentially passive role of the Trade associations, who strive principally to safeguard their members’ interests, and
 - The potentially negative role of organisations like RAJUK and the Dept of Environment who need to partner implementation of planning or regulatory measures but see little benefit and potential opposition in a control programme.

Mobilising stakeholders

- The workshop comprised the penultimate stage of the consultation exercise in each city because the research project was coming to an end. However, in other programmes it would be expected that a successful workshop would lead to the establishment of a stakeholder forum, usually facilitated by sponsorship of an important stakeholder such as the city water utility, municipal planning department or public health agency. Unsolicited, participants at both workshops identified this as a recommendation. The direction such a forum might take would of course vary with the energy and influence of the participant individuals and the degree of autonomy enjoyed by the municipality in terms of planning regulation.
- In a few cases there might be enough impetus generated to enact municipal ordinances, the enforcement of which will be much assisted by the prior consensus developed by a representative stakeholder forum. More typically it might become a lobby, seeking to influence central government or a particular ministry into the enforcement of existing environmental/water resource regulations or the enactment of new enabling legislation.

Table 3 Participation matrix for development of future groundwater management strategy in Narayanganj

Participant. type→	Inform	Consult	Partnership	Control
Stage↓				
Situation analysis	Domestic users Trade associations & chamber of commerce Corp. Metropolitan planning authority RAJUK Rural local govt	Dept.of Environment	Urban water utility; Dhaka WASA Rural water utility; DPHE	Development agencies:
Strategy definition	Domestic users Development agencies: Rural local govt	Metropolitan planning authority RAJUK Dept.of Environment Trade assocns/ chamber of commerce	Urban water utility; Dhaka WASA Rural water utility; DPHE	-
Management Action Plan	Domestic users Development agencies:	Trade assocns/ chamber of commerce . Rural local govt	Dept.of Environment Metropolitan planning authority RAJUK Urban water utility; Dhaka WASA Rural water utility; DPHE	-
Implementation: (programme, projects and policies)	Domestic users Development agencies:	Trade assocns/ chamber of commerce . Rural local govt	Dept.of Environment Metropolitan planning authority RAJUK Urban water utility; Dhaka WASA Rural water utility; DPHE	-

- In Narayanganj participants identified a need for more involvement at local level in the planning process. Given the city’s proximity to rapidly-expanding Dhaka, this reflected a general uneasiness over the remoteness and lack of transparency of the metropolitan planning authority which currently handles planning issues in the region around the capital city. In Bishkek it was felt that there was scope in the future for directing water supply and sanitation development assistance funds into urban infrastructure development/aquifer protection instead of concentrating exclusively on the rural sector, as at present.
- It seems inescapable that if groundwater protection is to be brought into the municipal planning process, then stakeholder policy forums will have to enter the political arena if resultant planning regulations are to be enforceable and enforced.
- Stakeholders liked the general approach of working openly through the policy development process, although this only became apparent during the workshops, since feedback from stakeholders receiving the newsletters beforehand had been very poor. Nevertheless, the newsletters provided a means to drip-feed quite complex information which could never be assimilated in the time available to a workshop audience, while the workshops provided the enabling forum for frank discussion of problems. Our view is that structured newsletters and workshops complement each other and proved together to be an effective aid to stakeholder consultation.

- There is nonetheless a paradox in the use of workshops for stakeholder consultation purposes. The meetings would be most influential and high profile if the decision makers within each stakeholder group attended them. Yet the time required for a workshop means that staff detailed to attend are rarely the most senior members of each stakeholder group. So secondary stakeholder consultations are burdened not only with ensuring that meeting deliberations are transmitted effectively to agency decision makers, (perhaps several levels higher in the organisational hierarchy) but also with the inability of participants to speak authoritatively on behalf of their respective agencies. This prolongs the consultation exercise with inevitably the risk of loss of credibility and interest in the process.
- This was the project team’s experience in both workshops. The seminars were undoubtedly successful in communicating the advantages of an urban aquifer protection plan, in raising awareness of the issues involved and in focusing on the key problems facing those tasked with devising working policies. The workshops were also supported in a positive way by certain key stakeholders at the highest level (in Narayanganj the workshop was opened by the Chief Executive Officer of the water utility and in Bishkek the water utility’s Deputy CEO participated actively throughout the workshop).
- But other institutions, such as the influential Ministry of Industry and Trade Development in Bishkek and the Dhaka metropolitan urban planning authority RAJUK stayed away, and it is inferred that either the consultation process was unwelcome to these institutions or the objective of an aquifer protection plan was perceived to offer insufficient benefits to outweigh the effort required in implementation. Attendance at both workshops by middle level management was excellent, but only the city water utilities (who have readily identified that they have much to gain from an aquifer protection policy) were engaged right up to the most senior level (Table 4). We conclude that: workshops and newsletters are not sufficient in themselves to engage the senior administrators/politicians who either make or influence policy-making.

Table 4 Degree of engagement of institutional policymakers at senior level in workshops

Stakeholder group	Senior policy makers engaged via workshop?	
	Bishkek	Narayanganj
Urban water utility	Yes	Yes
Rural water/sanitation agency	Not applicable	No
Municipal Mayor’s office	No	Yes
Municipal/regional planning office	Yes	No
Public health authority	Yes	No
Industry associations/chamber of commerce	No	Some
Ministry of environment/ecology	No	No
Ministry of water economy	No	Not applicable
Ministry of industrial development	No	No
Hydrogeological survey	No	Not applicable
Major water-using industries in their own capacity	No	No
External sector agencies	Some	Some

- For developing cities where there is at least the prospect of self-financing the measures in a groundwater management Action Plan, international development institutions could engage senior decision-makers by funding carefully structured study tours to visit those groundwater-dependent cities where policies on pollution control, wastewater management, land use planning, industrial zoning, solid-waste disposal and demand management measures have taken into account the underlying/nearby groundwater resource in their conception and execution.
- However, for the large number of developing world cities where proactive groundwater protection and management will not happen without external support, there is no substitute for investment. Decision-makers in the scores of cities in this situation will not be impressed by the practice of urban groundwater management until they are matched by external funding agency investment decisions to support the principles of urban groundwater protection. This may for example translate into pilot programmes in a few cities to demonstrate good practice nationally, extra funding within a capital-intensive infrastructural improvement to introduce aquifer-sustainability measures, or introducing specific conditions before a particular investment programme is approved.
- In this very respect, the project teams involved in these case-studies worked from a weak base; they could offer neither incentives nor disincentives ('no carrot, no stick') to stakeholders to pursue the aquifer protection action plan process into the arena where influential policy-makers would be engaged. For instance, on a mundane level, the research-level budget of the project was unable to resource such study tours by senior decision-makers to countries where aquifer protection is a politically important issue. More importantly, despite strenuous efforts by the joint teams to engage and keep informed the country offices of infrastructure support agencies like the DFID, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, none could offer even the prospect of funding improvements of the urban water infrastructure in either of the cities in question. Without the means to support or facilitate the implementation of any of the policies of the Action Plan, the policy development process in both these financially hard-pressed cities must have seemed both remote and idealistic even to the senior technical staff participating. The project was not the vanguard of financial or institutional support to enact an aquifer action plan, and impetus inevitably suffered.
- DFID especially needs to learn afresh from this observation what seems to have been forgotten from past UK practice; that country policy needs to be flexible enough to support the results of technical research projects if the system improvements/innovations that they have identified are to have any hope of being put into practice. Without funding support from the (much larger) country budgets, pilot projects that could act as beacons of good practice will never materialise.
- We identify this transition from the technical to the political arena as the key challenge in any city seeking to enact an aquifer Action Plan. At its heart, water resources management is about 'who gets what, when and how', a definition that was originally applied to politics (Laswell, 1956). The activities of the officials involved in the 'how' are subordinate to the contention amongst the 'who', and they- water users, officials and municipal/national political leadership- lie at the heart of the political process. Thus it is primarily a political process that the technical issues can only inform, and if changing policy is always a political process, changing the way a city handles its water resource is particularly political, because water users have much more at stake than water professionals and scientists.
- The terms of reference of this project did not extend to this vital, contentious area but insights into the issues facing those moving an aquifer protection plan from the initial scientific/technical stage to the political arena can be found in Allan (2001). Although discussing hydro-politics in national terms, as the tension between society, economy and

water in the environment (Figure 1) his analysis of the Middle East water question applies equally well to the urban environment where discourse is between public and private domestic supply, industry and the needs of the environment/urban amenity. This book also captures the essentially subsidiary role of science in water management.

“Sustainability is achieved when outcomes which are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable are successfully contended” Allan J A, 2001 *Hydropolitics and the global economy*. Tauris, London

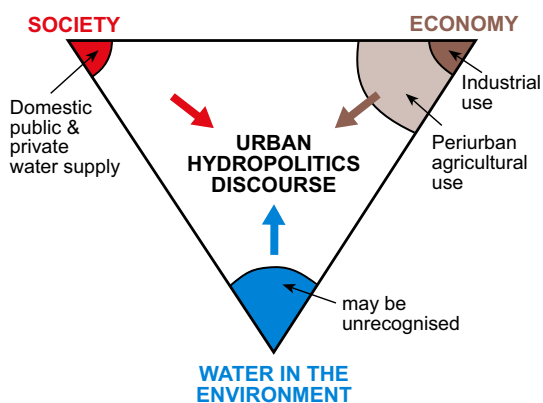


Figure 1 Water in urban politics (adapted from Allan, 2001)

Brookshire and Whittington (1993) also comment perceptively on the contrast between the rational vision of water resource professionals, and the true state of affairs that constitute water resource problems and the institutions involved. An extract from their paper on this topic is reproduced in Box 2 with grateful acknowledgement to the authors.

- At both workshops comments by participants showed that although only those concerned with the city’s water infrastructure attended, such cross-sectoral involvement was unknown. Even allowing for the novelty of the approach, it was clearly welcomed by attendees as a positive contribution to the urban water development process. There are lessons to be learnt here on institutional involvement for international development agencies involved in urban water infrastructural improvements in small to medium-size cities.

Points added to Stakeholder Consultation Tool from applying it to case-study cities

- A new table on stakeholder mobilisation with examples of techniques which can be used in stakeholder participation in developing an Action Plan.
- A potential means of funding work towards an action plan needs to be identified or the policy development process is likely to seem both remote and idealistic even to the senior technical staff participating.
- Structured newsletters and workshops complement each other and are likely together to be an effective aid.
- The transition from the technical to the political arena may be the key challenge in any city seeking to enact an aquifer Action Plan. The terms of reference of this project did not extend to this vital, contentious area but insights into the issues facing those moving an aquifer protection plan from the initial scientific/technical stage to the political arena can be found in Allan (2001).