

Communicating Water in the SADC Region

Local indigenous knowledge systems and practices

Topics for Interviews and Model Questions

1

Reflection time

- i. In your media house, what is the attitude among journalists toward local indigenous knowledge as a source of information to deal with climate change, natural disasters, and to improve crop yields?
- ii. How do you see indigenous knowledge and modern science working together to provide solutions to today's pressing water management issues?

2

Topics for interviewing/ in-depth/ feature analyses

- i. To what extent is there a growing recognition and promotion of indigenous knowledge and where has it been used? What were the benefits?
- ii. Traditional cultures are based on using what is needed, not accumulating unnecessary surpluses. In other words, wastage is limited. How do you see using this as a vehicle to promote recycling?
- iii. It is all good to recognise the value of traditional knowledge, and to consult the holders of this knowledge. But is it a two-way exchange? For example, are traditional chiefs given the opportunity to learn the basics of modern science in terms of weather and water management systems?
- iv. Traditional knowledge is normally discussed and studied by sociologists and ethnographers, not scientists. How can universities help build the bridge between these two worlds?

3

Sample questions for interview subject

- i. In terms of strengthening regional cooperation and resilience in water related disasters, what mechanisms do you think could be put in place to communicate well between yourselves and the holders of traditional knowledge?
- ii. How likely are you to consult traditional leaders in a time of an impending crisis caused by a flood or drought?
- iii. SADC produces a substantial amount of information in the form of reports, expert publications, studies and surveys. With the growing recognition of the importance of the voice of indigenous knowledge, will we see this reflected and mainstreamed into SADC's work? Will the holders of traditional knowledge enjoy participation on discussions and resolution of issues on an equal footing on an ongoing basis?
- iv. In most cases, indigenous knowledge is transmitted by word of mouth. Does SADC envisage launching a programme to capture this well of knowledge before it gets lost?

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Water financing

Topics for Interviews and Model Questions

1

Reflection time

- i. As journalists, and a pivotal link in any awareness-raising campaign, do you share in the view that, when possible, one must try and get away without paying for services, especially water?
- ii. Would your media house consider creating a regular space or time for water management issues, in this way creating a forum for dialogue?

2

Topics for interviewing/ in-depth/ feature analyses

- i. Is access to water really a human right? Can countries in the southern African region afford to meet the basic needs of their people for access to clean water?
- ii. How much of our national budget is used for water resources development and management, compared to support of other sectors? How do we compare with our neighbours on this (an opportunity for data journalism)?
- iii. How can a message of 'user-pays' among the public be fostered? Could you foresee the use of high-profile cases to highlight the situation? Would you look at the work of inspection officers, large-scale theft of water, illegal connections?
- iv. What role could River Basin Organisations play in financing water through basin level initiatives such as payment for ecosystem services and basin investors' forums?
- v. Would exploring the connections among investing in water, food production and the price of food be a subject of interest to the media?

3

Sample questions posed to interviewee

- i. As in most other areas, we in [Name of Country] are behind in attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). With 2015 here, what is being done about Goal No. 10 of the MDGs, to halve the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation?
- ii. In the face of public resistance to water tariffs, has your department considered developing educational materials explaining the benefits of not only investing in water, but also of paying for it?
- iii. Against the backdrop of resounding successes in establishing lasting and rewarding ties with International Cooperating Partners, are you optimistic that you will be equally successful in developing a framework that will encourage the private sector to step into the water sector, and maximise the potential of Public-Private Partnerships?
- iv. To what extent is there coordination between the authorities and rural populations in terms of individual initiatives to harness water and build private dams and reservoirs? Done on a large scale, would this contribute to water security, or would it be detrimental to water tables?
- v. Self-sufficiency is generally a principle that is lauded in most areas of development. How could this approach contribute to fostering an attitude of "we are all in this together", and not one of, "it is solely the responsibility of governments to provide solutions"?

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