Capitalization of Experiences Water Land & People – summary of approach[1]

What is it?

"Capitalization of Experiences of Water, Land and People" (CE-WLP) is an initiative of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) facilitated by INITERCOOPERATION. It aims at sharing and deepening the knowledge base of SDC and partners in order to improve the current and future development strategies and policies with regard to Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) with emphasis on the aspect Water for Food. During 2005-2006 learning groups in Bolivia, India and Mali analyzed specific topics related to water management based on the experience of its members during the last years….

Who participated in the initiative?

In order to get widely applicable results, the initiative was implemented in Bolivia, India and Mali representing three continents. The process involved actors at different levels: farmers associations, water users associations, project teams, NGO's, private sector, government (local/regional/national level), staff of SDC's coordination offices as well as headquarters taking the perspective of local interested actors as the starting point of the initiative. In each country, a learning group of 12 to 15 participants was established. In order to create local ownership of the initiative, the learning agenda (topics and detailed learning process) was jointly defined by all partners.

What and for whom are the results?

The initiative is a forward-looking learning process resulting in products which can be used as a resource base at different levels:

- **Implementation at local level**: Local actors (farmer and water user associations, NGO's, local governments) will have access to know-how, technologies and tools of direct value to improve the planning of their activities related to water management.
- **Conceptual learning at institutional and national level**: SDC and partner institutions will gain new insights for an effective and strategic involvement in "future generation projects", targeted at improving IWRM
- **Policy**: Key lessons learnt will enable participating partners to strengthen their policy dialogue and advocacy role.
- **Sensitising of wider public**: Increased public awareness for key issues in water management (e.g. products used as communication tools in schools, training institutes, water fairs, etc.)

Emphasis is given on attractive and authentic products, which are easy to use: audio-visuals rather than large text documents.

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[1] The base of the approach applied is described in: CE "Water, land and people". Learning from watershed programs for integrated water resource management. Approach paper edited by Pierre Walther.

What topics were addressed?

In each of the three countries, the learning group identified key topics to address through a process of priorization using geographical mapping and story telling (Table 1). Poverty, equity, empowerment and environmental sustainability were identified as cross-cutting topics ("lenses of analysis").

Table 1: Key topics addressed by CE-WLP in the three countries

Country	Topics addressed
India	1. Rules, regulations and management systems related to water resources 2. Addressing information imbalances in the context of community organization 3. Convergence, linkages and collaborations among institutions 4. Watershed development and growth
Bolivia	1. Models for local management of water resources (case Tiquipaya) 2. Social concertation for the elaboration of the irrigation law and its regulations
Mali	1. Development of low lands 2. Gender and access to low land ("bas-fond") resources 3. Participative local planning and organization for water management

What was the methodology applied?

The process implemented in each country varied a bit but generally consisted in a series (3-4) of learning events complemented with intermediate activities such as interviews, local meetings, debates, field visits and case studies. Each topic was addressed by a sub-group providing specific inputs for discussion in the whole learning group during the following learning event.

Story telling in different forms was used to priorize and deepen the selected topics striving for authenticity while capturing the experiences. Members of the learning group and other local actors ("experience holders") were invited in learning events to narrate their experience (tell the story) related to a specific topic. Selected stories were recorded (audio or video) and then documented either in a summarized form using "postcards" and "7-point templates" or fully transcribed for further analysis by the learning group.