



**6<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on  
Knowledge and Capacity for the Water Sector**


**FROM CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT  
TO IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE**

**27-29 May 2020 | Delft, the Netherlands**

**Call for Abstracts**

# FOCUS OF THE SYMPOSIUM

Despite great progress in extending water and sanitation services globally, our world is currently facing more, and more urgent, challenges around water security than ever before. We are still far from reaching the SDG 6 (and other water-related) goals on water supply and sanitation. The insecurity and risks associated with water scarcity, flooding, storm surges and sea-level rise are increasing. The combined forces of climate change and growing water demand propelled by economic growth could see the world tip from a predominantly water-abundant place, to one that is predominantly water-scarce by 2045. At the same time as the urgency increases, new investments and policies must navigate deeper regulatory, financial and political complexity and provide answers for a future that brings growing uncertainty.



In this 6<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Knowledge and Capacity in the Water Sector, IHE Delft, the African Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank, OECD, the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, Cap-Net/UNDP, Deltares, the UNHABITAT/Global Water Operator Partnership Alliance, Rand Water and others will convene leaders in the water profession and beyond to explore what the future is likely to bring and how new developments in implementation science can help us to act by strengthening institutional capacity. By bringing together key stakeholders to consider the most pressing challenges and emerging solutions in the field, the Symposium aims to identify and improve upon the concepts, priorities, strategies and tools to develop institutional capacity and share knowledge at a global scale for addressing these challenges. The Symposium will help outline the core skills, knowledge and attitudes the world's water professionals and the institutions will need, and to build clear commitment to identify and act on concrete multi-stakeholder actions.

The Symposium aims to build on the concepts of capacity development and move towards an implementation science. Though most countries now dispose of policies, laws and plans, their effective implementation remains the systemic challenge. Implementation science is commonly defined as the study of strategies and methods to promote the embedding into routine practice of interventions that have proven effective, with the aim of enhancing overall water security.

Capacity development extends beyond education and training, and strengthening skills, competencies, and attitudes of individuals. The capacity of water agencies and of the sector as a whole is more than the cumulative capacity of these organisations' staff. Institutions and the sector benefit from a conducive institutional architecture, incentives and procedures that structure critical reflection, help acquire knowledge and strengthen learning. Low organisational performance is often related to structural weaknesses in procedures and human resources management that discourage learning from successes and failures, and fail to support change in habits and practices. At the same time, the educational agenda remains central to expand and share the 'knowledge pool' and enable society to make better informed choices and play a growing role in water management. But are curricula, didactic, and participatory systems adjusted to meet these imminent challenges?

## CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

**We invite abstracts of high-quality papers with particular attention to the Symposium focus on leadership in knowledge and capacity development across sectors, disciplines, geographies and other boundaries. The Symposium provides a unique opportunity to present to an international, interdisciplinary and cross-sector delegation of water professionals, policy and decision makers, water users, development practitioners, researchers knowledge managers, educators and other capacity development specialists.**

In addition to submissions by scientists and academics, we especially encourage submissions from practitioners, professionals and policy makers who can speak to the effectiveness and efficiency of capacity development in the water domain. Papers reporting original findings resulting from case studies and from rigorous analytical studies are particularly welcome.

Abstracts (400-500 words) must be submitted by 14 November 2019. Abstracts must provide a clear overview of the purpose and goal of the study/analysis/review, a description of the methodology, a short but meaningful discussion of key results with conclusions, and their relevance for the sector. Authors will be notified of the acceptance of their abstract by 12 December 2019. Authors of accepted abstracts will be invited to provide either a full paper (4000-10,000 words) by 29 February 2020, or a complete description for a poster. They will be notified regarding the acceptance of their paper for presentation by 27 March 2020. After the Symposium, a final peer review will select updated papers for publication. Registration for the Symposium will open in December 2019.

**CHECK THE WEBSITE: [capdevsymposium.un-ihe.org](http://capdevsymposium.un-ihe.org) to submit your abstract.**

## THEMES OF THE SYMPOSIUM

**The Delft Symposium on Knowledge and Capacity Development is the international forum for water professionals and development practitioners, policy makers, managers and staff from government and local-government agencies and utilities, financiers, water users, researchers, and capacity development specialists to discuss the challenges, current realities and new opportunities for knowledge and capacity development in the water sector. In this 6<sup>th</sup> Symposium, themes to be addressed are listed below; submitters may propose complementary subjects within the scope of the Symposium's focus. Submitters are encouraged to include, as cross-cutting themes, aspects relating specifically to (1) impact measurement and monitoring, and (2) adaptation to climate variability. 'Capacity' hereunder is deemed to cover its rationale, frameworks, strategies, skills, tools and procedures.**

- Unpacking and redefining the nature and goals of capacity development. How can implementation science help in developing capacity and strengthening state capability?
- Capacity for water agencies and the water sector as a whole to operate under conditions of risk, complexity and uncertainty. How do strengthened capabilities for effective governance systems in water management support institutional change processes?
- Capacity for negotiation and for managing risk and conflict in water services, river basins and international waters.
- Capacity for helping water organizations such as utilities, water boards, ministries, private operators and water users (NGOs, CSOs, and other community groups) to become better targeted, more resilient and more effective through deeper partnerships for the extension of water services, especially the 'last-mile' to reach the more vulnerable and poor communities.
- Capacity in the water and financial sectors to ensure sustained and sustainable financing.
- Capacity to accelerate knowledge-sharing and commitment among individuals and organizations, across civil society. How do we share our knowledge, and how can we raise more ownership and responsibility about water matters among our staff, our families, society, and current and future generations?
- Developing strategies and methods to enhance the quality, impact and effectiveness of education and training and to develop behavioral and leadership skills, and continual-learning attitudes among professionals and inside institutions.
- Capacity to optimize the use of new 'big data', ICT, Artificial Intelligence, internet-based communication, and other enabling e-based technologies to strengthen institutional and individual capacity.

## REGISTRATION

Tickets to the three day event are 375 EUR and include access to our reception, lunches and coffee breaks.

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