WHAT WORKS IN WATER AND OCEAN GOVERNANCE

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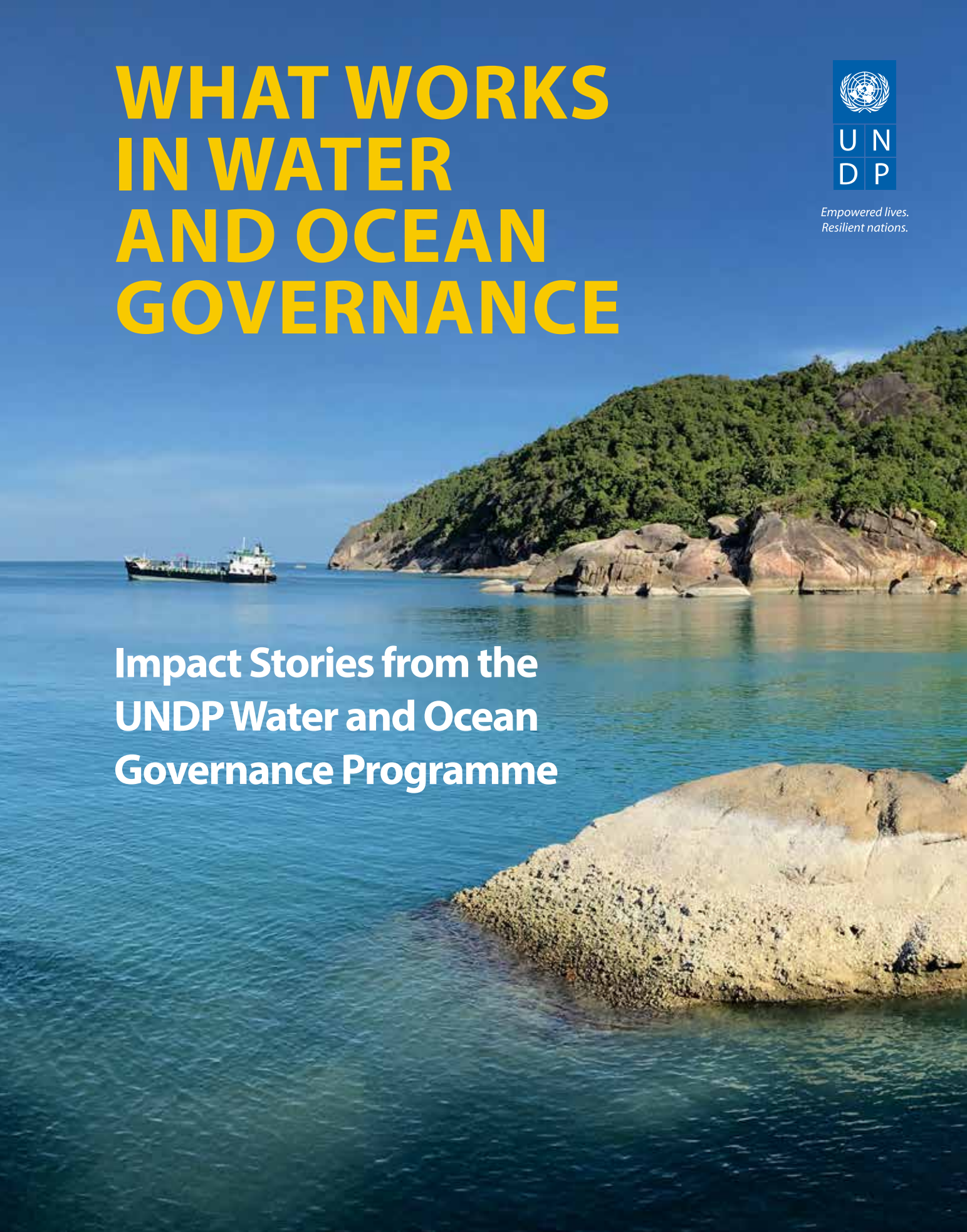

Impact Stories from the UNDP Water and Ocean Governance Programme

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SIWI

WATER GOVERNANCE FACILITY

December 2018

WHAT WORKS IN WATER AND OCEAN GOVERNANCE. IMPACT STORIES FROM THE UNDP WATER AND OCEAN GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME
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The United Nation Development Programme
UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help countries eradicate extreme poverty, and roll back inequalities and exclusion. We act on three fronts to achieve development that is sustainable, inclusive and resilient. On the ground in nearly 170 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations.

Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

The Global Environment Facility was established on the eve of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit to help tackle our planet's most pressing environmental problems. Since then, the GEF has provided over $17.9 billion in grants and mobilized an additional $93.2 billion in co-financing for more than 4500 projects in 170 countries. Today, the GEF is an international partnership of 183 countries, international institutions, civil society organizations and the private sector that addresses global environmental issues.

The objective of **Swedish development cooperation** is to create opportunities for people living in poverty and under oppression, to improve their living conditions.

SIWI is a water institute, leveraging knowledge and convening stakeholders to strengthen water governance for a just, prosperous, and sustainable future.

The **UNDP-SIWI Water Governance Facility (WGF)** supports low and middle-income countries in their water reform by providing policy and technical advice and support, developing water \governance knowledge and helping to develop institutional capacity.

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Comments and Contributions from
Michael Akester, John Alonso, Shukhrat Bahromzade, Antoine Blonce, Patrick Debels, Geraldine Deblon, Antoine Delepiere, Aimee Gonzales, Mish Hamid, Hashali Hamukuaya, Lotten Hubendick, Andrew Hudson, Neil Jarvis, Alejandro Jimenez, Hugh Walton, Ryan Whisnant, Akiko Yamamoto, Ivan Zavadsky, are gratefully acknowledged.

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FOREWORD

"Why does governance work take such a long time?" This was the question, from one of our financial partners, which incited us to prepare this report. The simple answer is that governance reform is a process; it is not the mere issuing of a statement or the signature of a document. Governance reform is about instituting and practicing new ways of operation and interaction. Governance reform is not like a linear production process but rather a whole-of-society transition that negotiates among varied interests and challenges towards changing entrenched practices.

Embarking on the present review, and in the interest of harvesting practical lessons from UNDP's Water & Ocean Governance portfolio, the exploration was focused on "What works in water/ocean governance?" Rather than looking at why governance reforms usually take time, the report aims to unveil the most critical steps or factors that made these generally successful water and/or ocean governance projects reach their objectives.

The report therefore puts a selected set of projects of the UNDP Water and Ocean Governance Programme (WOGP) under the spotlight. Whereas the achievements are often of a very different nature, they all tackle complex, cross-sectoral water or ocean issues that none of the actors involved could have managed on their own. This illustrates the important difference between management – addressing matters that are principally tackled by one actor, often within the purview of one organization – and governance, which relates to the broader relations and rules that regulate the way a whole sector or society acts jointly.

The unifying factor of the sixty plus active projects of the WOGP is bringing stakeholders together for the pursuit of collective interests like environmental protection or sustainable services provision. Beyond connecting them, the projects help stakeholders become more effective by way of knowledge and capacity development, and by helping to identify, mobilize and sequence finance to roll-out action. To catalyze finance through creation of appropriate enabling policy environments has always been an important part of WOGP's support to stakeholders; in this review it is highlighted as an essential element of the WOGP's overall theory of change. It also emerges as one of several critical factors for 'what works in water and ocean governance.'

Whereas policy reform can indeed accelerate financing for sustainable use of water and ocean resources, for governance to "work" it also needs to move in a desirable direction for all societal actors – towards equitable and sustainable human development scenarios. This review highlights the importance of building trustful relations that help actors overcome differences and 'unbundle' complex situations. Trust and confidence emerge from enabling environments of transparency and 'interactive governance.'

Revisiting our theory of change and reviewing 'what works in water and ocean governance', we in the UNDP Water & Ocean Governance Programme have reaffirmed our stakeholder-oriented approach with additional emphasis on transparency, trust-building and catalyzing finance towards long-term and collective goals in the pursuit of sustainable development. We hope you will enjoy this review of 'what works'.

ANDREW HUDSON
Head, Water and Ocean Governance Programme Sustainable Development Cluster
Bureau for Policy and Programme Support United Nations Development Programme

[1] See, for example, UNDP (2012) Catalyzing Ocean Finance Volume I: Transforming Markets to Restore and Protect the Global Ocean and Volume II: Methodologies and Case Studies.

Credit: Antoine Delepiere

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INTRODUCTION

What works in water and ocean governance?

Governance is a complex and distributed process that fundamentally determines how resources are utilized and protected, and how the related services and benefits are distributed in society. The effects of governance reform take time to materialize, through the resulting actions that are stimulated or controlled by a revised governance framework.

This report reviews a selected set of projects under the umbrella of the Water and Ocean Governance Programme (WOGP), with a view to exploring what has worked on the ground in terms of assisting countries and stakeholders to reform their water and ocean governance frameworks. The analysis inserts the reported transformation into the steps of the WOGP theory of change, as a way of identifying the factors that helped stakeholders improve their way of interaction and realize governance reforms.

The conclusions highlight the importance of both horizontal and vertical integration—where stakeholders bring the interests of the varying actors involved

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