



Making a SPLASH!

Newsletter 6 – July 2009

NEWS FROM SPLASH

1. SPLASH at the 34th WEDC International Conference, Addis Ababa, May 2009
 2. SPLASH Resources: SPLASH Partner-funded Programmes
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1. SPLASH at the 34th WEDC International Conference, Addis Ababa, May 2009

A range of planned activities meant that SPLASH had a strong presence at this year's WEDC International Conference in Addis Ababa. This included:

- ***SPLASH conference paper presentations***
The first was on “Research dialogue platforms in the context of institutional reform in the East African water sector” by Aard Hartveld, which provided an analysis of the implications of these institutional reforms for research dialogue platforms in Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. In the second paper, Frank Odhiambo presented “Research management in water for development research”, a study into the role of management in the conduct of water for development research. These papers will shortly be made available on the WEDC International Conference website at <http://wedc.lboro.ac.uk/>
- ***SPLASH Sanitation Call event***
SPLASH is to launch a joint research call for the generation of new knowledge on sustainable sanitation service chains in Sub-Saharan Africa. In this side event, SPLASH informed Southern stakeholders about the call development process and asked for feedback on the thematic focus and the institutional set up of the call. Around 40 people from 20 different countries attended and discussed in plenary and in sub-groups both the call content and process. One of the key recommendations of the participants was to focus on sanitation service chains in unplanned and informal areas, which will mean the research call has a clear pro-poor focus. Furthermore, it was suggested to include capacity development as an important component of the call, working in South-North research partnerships, with Southern research institutions taking leading roles in the research consortia. The comments and suggestions of the participants fed directly into the meeting of the Scientific Advisory Council of SPLASH in July and were instrumental in the definition of the call content and process. For more information, contact Manfred Kaufmann (mkaufmann@ethz.ch).
- ***SPLASH Research Coordination Workshop***
A one day workshop was hosted by SPLASH to support coordination between seven ongoing research programmes which are active in Ethiopia. These were:

- RIPPLe – funded by DFID, UK
- MAWARI – funded by the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs
- BOMOSA – funded by the EC
- ROSA – funded by the EC
- IPGL – funded by Austrian Development Agency
- Czech funded support programmes
- Swiss funded research to mitigate the effects of fluoride in drinking water

Presentations were made by each of the programmes, before working in groups to determine a time bound plan of actions to improve coordination between the ongoing programmes' activities. An element of this is to include a SPLASH Ethiopia web page on the SPLASH website to share information on events and training.



2. SPLASH Resources: SPLASH Partner-funded Programmes

All SPLASH public resources are available on the website at http://splash-era.net/search_outputs.php. One of these is a searchable database of SPLASH Partner-funded Programmes at <http://splash-era.net/outputs/index.php>. This is a searchable online database of existing SPLASH partner funded programmes, following a survey which was undertaken. Here you can search by existing donor programmes, recipient countries and major themes. The results are provided as pdf documents giving an outline of each programme. There is also a link to the original synthesis report on the Review of National Programmes on Water Science and Technology for the Developing World at http://splash-era.net/downloads/D2-3_SynthesisReport.pdf.

3. The SPLASH Scientific Advisory Council

In order for SPLASH to achieve its strategic objectives, the Scientific Advisory Council (SAC) is an important element within the structure of the programme. The SAC acts as a mechanism for engagement and dialogue with the scientific, practitioner and stakeholder communities within both Europe and developing economies. There are currently 26 active SAC members from 17 different countries, chaired by Ghislain De Marsily, Emeritus Professor from the University of Paris. They represent a range of organizations including universities and research institutes, national funding institutions, national and international partnership initiatives, inter-governmental organizations and the European Commission and bring with them wide professional experience and specialist expertise.

Meeting twice a year, the SAC advises the Strategic Management Board on the strategic and visionary development of SPLASH and on related science and policy issues.



4. SPECIAL FEATURE: Research Management Course

During the first two years of the project, SPLASH has worked hard to understand what constitutes good research management practice, and has produced guidance materials on the subject. Also work undertaken in SPLASH has revealed that research management is not taught formally to many researchers and that this is a widespread occurrence. This is seen as a significant gap in the provision of research training. Consequently it has been agreed that SPLASH will develop open source training materials on research management, in order to fill the identified gap, and also disseminate the findings from earlier SPLASH work on good research management practice.

Research management is taken to mean all those things that a research project manager should know in order to effectively manage a research project. Thus the course will not be about research design but about how to effectively manage research.

SPLASH aims to develop the course over the next 6 months and have it ready for piloting early in 2010. Topics being considered for inclusion in the course are identification of funding sources, proposal preparation, financial management, directing a research team, planning for lesson learning, dissemination of results, quality assurance and monitoring. The course developers welcome suggestions for course content and mode of delivery. We would particularly like to hear from any individual or organisation that might use the course, and who would be interested to pilot it when developed. We would also like to hear from you about who your target audience would be and how you would use the course. Your views will assist us in developing a course that fits your needs.

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