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Moderator: Caby Verzosa, The World Bank

Caby Verzosa: If you were going to map your various stakeholders along a continuum from those who are unmovable opponents to those that were strong supporters of reform, which groups will fall in which categories?

George Khroda: Let me start with the strong supporters. As soon as we had created awareness of the situation and understanding of the problem, the politicians were on board, because they definitely knew something was wrong and something needed to be done. So they were with me all the way. The next level, the other government ministries, because water has been shared. The administration of water had been shared between various government departments. For example, the Ministry of Agriculture was in charge of allocation, the Ministry of Local Government was in charge of service delivery to cities and municipalities and several NGOs were delivering water. Private organizations were also delivering water. So there were numerous stakeholders. Those who were supportive understood that the crisis was basically poor service delivery. The municipalities couldn't pay salaries for their workers, so therefore there was discontent among the staff.

Caby: There was broad understanding of the reason for the reform so it was good to have that understanding because you could have supporters mobilize around that issue, but who tended to be on the opposite side?

George: I think the greatest opponent was the Ministry of Local Government because they had invested in water; they have thriving departments of water and sewerage services and so they felt like they were losing something. But as I mentioned a little earlier, the Ministry of Local Government has used the water services as a cash cow to pay allowances for the counselors and to pay other workers. And to a large extent the workers within the water and sewerage department were not paid. So there was some quiet discontent among the technician and the managers, but the politicians didn't know exactly what was going on. So when we started discussing reforms, the Ministry of Local Government was very reluctant to release the utilities to be managed in a more decentralized manner as we had planned.

Caby: And who were in the middle, who were persuadable and convincible?

George: Mainly the middle-level managers. The middle-level management is very interesting lot. They are sandwiched between the decision makers (senior managers) and service delivery. They are people who feel where the rubber meets the road in a sense. So basically what happened is that they were open to listen. They wanted to know what was at stake. They knew something was wrong, because they are engineers. But they didn't know how to handle it. So leadership was required here so that they could come to board. A lot of awareness needed to be created. They had to be told that investments cannot come without reforms because the water administration was not putting investment in. So soon they came on board.

Caby: So from your rich experience in your water sector reform in Kenya, what kinds of approaches have you used yourself to create a communication strategy to support water sector reform in Kenya?

George: I would say that the most important thing is to share information, and create awareness, that begins to galvanize some support. One tends to get a critical mass of colleagues in government, critical mass within the ministry itself to believe that something needs to be done. I think the most important is to create that critical mass of reformers. Then you begin to share information more to those who are preferable, for example, other ministries are needed to have other permanent sector share what was going on, share with them what is going on, and share with them the road map to which we were taken the administration of water. Now after doing that, then it became possible now to begin the implementation. In terms of implementation we had a fairly independent steering committee, which brought in nearly 12 stakeholders, key stakeholders, and this helps to steer the cause. As a matter of fact, it introduced transparency, it introduced ownership, and it removed any kind of suspicion that other ministries may feel that we were taken water administration from them.