1 Context statement – what is the issue in terms of water governance at local, regional and/or national level?

The legal framework on water and sanitation for each GTF country in Central America is different. Some of the countries don’t have water laws (Guatemala and El Salvador) or the existing laws are old and impede the work of CSOs in integrated water resource management and transparency in water and sanitation (Costa Rica and Panama).

With gaps in governance to promote integrated water resource management and communal water management at regional and national level, since 2006 FANCA has begun to develop advocacy actions and get involved in the design and approval processes for new water laws, constitutional reforms and regional instruments.

At present, only two countries in the region have new laws: Nicaragua with the General Water Law (approved in 2007), which was promoted by the CSOs GPAE, CODA and CAPS, and Honduras, with the Law for the Water and Sanitation Sector (approved in 2003) and Water Law approved by the ‘government’ following the coup in 2009. In addition, only one country, Nicaragua, is taking advantage of specific laws to promote the communal water boards. It approved in May 2010 the Special Law of Water and Sanitation Committees (CAPS) and the respective regulation in August 2010, both as outcomes of the GTF programme.

In Costa Rica, FANCA has begun work with the water board strengthening commission (COFORSA) to work on a bill to improve conditions. The bill was presented and supported by 11 congress men and women in the National Assembly in November 2010, and is in the first position in the Special Environmental Commission for approval and will then be passed to Congress.

From a regional perspective, the re-incorporation of the Human Right to Water principle in instruments for water management (water agreement, water strategy and water plans) is an outcome from the 2010-2011 period.

The United Nations recognition of the Human Right to Water and Sanitation has provided a new opportunity for the region and CSOs to continue working to incorporate the right into the different water policies and laws. FANCA will develop a research process on the legal instruments that can help to implement this right at a national level and to develop multi-stakeholder (civil society, local governments, institutions, Congress) dialogues to raise awareness of its implications.
2 Objectives of the programme

Objective 1: Strengthened integrated network with at least eight staff, four country offices operating in four countries, four work programmes and two regional strategies in place.

Objective 2: Regional instruments and international water management mechanisms for accountability from states and the service providers.

Objective 3: People have access to information on tools and mechanisms that can be used to demand accountability.

Objective 4: Water user associations build in accountability practices together with end users.

3 Partners implementing the programme

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<tr>
<th>Name of partner organisation</th>
<th>Area of expertise</th>
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</table>
| Asociación Regional Centroamericana para el Agua y el Ambiente – Secretariado Ejecutivo de FANCA | • To promote the protection, conservation and sustainable use of environmental and water resources.  
• To develop capacity building processes for young, rural and urban/peri-urban communities, and social organisations of all kinds in sustainable development issues, water resources, civil society participation and the environment.  
• To promote integrated water resource and river basin management.  
• To promote communication and advocacy strategies at local, national and regional levels.  
• To develop processes of advocacy for the formulation, discussion, promotion and adoption of legislation, regulations and national and international policies related to environmental and water resources. |
4 Key activities carried out

- **Capacity building** of FANCA through close coordination with the Secretariat, focal points and national networks.
- Governance and advocacy through the design process and approval of regional instruments of integrated management (water conventions, Central American Strategy for Integrated Water Resources Management – ECAGIRH, the ECAGIRH Plan).
- Organisation of the **first Central America Community Water Fair** where main stakeholders can meet, from communities to regional institutions to national governments.
- Water and Climate Coalition (COP 16 Mexico in November 2010).
- Participation in the regional forum on transparency and integrity of the water sector in Central America (16-18 February 2011).

5 Key achievements so far

- **Regional and national networks strengthened**: Joint spaces are defined as national assemblies and meetings of the different committees are happening at regional level.
- **Central America Community Water Management Fair** recognised by community water systems as a valid and permanent space (two year duration) for the generation of knowledge updates on the status of the sector and linkages with other sectors including governments, private companies and other agencies.
- FANCA is considered as a **key player in the region**, which is taken into account when discussing the regional instruments for integrated water management. The Water Forum of the Americas has invited the network to take part in and jointly develop the preparatory process for the Sixth World Water Forum.

6 The way forward

- **Institutional strengthening**: Continue capacity building of the national network and regional committee through its coordinator (FUNDEMABV); enhance specific actions for fund management and guarantee the sustainability of the network; increase the feeling of belonging to the network of members and continue with FANCA positioning at national, regional and international level through different communication means (Agua Noticias newsletter, FANCA reports, e-bulletins and the FAN newsletter).
- **Sixth World Water Forum ‘Time for solutions’**: The main objective of the next forum is to develop objectives, means and actions that will allow the world to have an integrated approach to water management. Considering this new option, FANCA decided to participate alone in the forum as well as in the preparation process of the ‘Américas’. FANMex was brought in, for the development of the goal linked to the Human Right to Water and Sanitation at continental level.
- **Río +20**: The objective of this conference is to ensure the renovation of the political compromises for sustainable development, assess the progress that has been made, determine the gaps and manage new challenges. FANCA considered it was important to be part of this process as an observer, meet the political commitments made by countries, and show how commitments can become tools for the development of actions related to water management and sanitation, governance and transparency in the countries. Completion of the process of comparative study on transparency and accountability in Central America, so that FANCA can consolidate a GTF draft concerning the clean water and sanitation issue.
Guatemala

1 Context statement – what is the issue in terms of water governance at local, regional and/or national level

In Guatemala there is no authority to regulate the operation, distribution, administration and maintenance of drinking water systems at community or national level. As a result, communities in Guatemala manage their water using provisions from various legal regulations. Nationwide there is a trend to not pay for access to water. Local governments or municipalities have in the past installed clean water points and supply systems then left it to communities to decide whether or not to pay for drinking water services. However, the new policies of INFOM (Institute for Municipal Development) and UNEPAR (Implementation Unit for Rural Water Supply Projects) require that communities pay. Indigenous communities have an ancient culture of respect for water according to the Mayan cosmovision (worldview). However, it has lost its value due to pollution, neglect and so on. The GTF programme in Guatemala is widely accepted as a valuable programme by communities but they are demanding that the project do more than advocacy and create water infrastructure. Guatemala is a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-lingual country and advocacy is conducted in Pocomam as well as Spanish – so that Maya-speaking people can have access to the same information as other communities.

2 Objectives of the programme

- Objective 1: Strengthened integrated network with at least eight staff, four country offices operating in four countries, four work programmes and two regional strategies in place.
- Objective 2: Regional instruments and international engagement to create accountability, civil society participation and transparency from states and the service providers.
- Objective 3: People have access to information on tools and mechanisms that can be used to demand accountability.
- Objective 4: Water user associations build in accountability practices together with end users.
3 Partners implementing the programme:

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| Fundación de Defensa del Medio Ambiente de Baja Verapaz – Fundemabv | • Environmental education.  
• Family agriculture. |

4 Key activities carried out

- **National communication strategy**: A radio campaign was developed to raise awareness for the protection of water resources and networking. The radio spots were recorded in Spanish Pocomam (Maya) which is widely spoken by communities of Palin Escuintla and surrounding communities in that department. Furthermore, shows were scheduled for radio stations Salama, San Miguel and Rabinal Chicaj.

- **National meetings, departmental and municipal committees for water**: These have included members of the community, community development councils and representatives of local governments. The progress and challenges in municipal drinking water and sanitation were broadcast and municipal commitments were announced that sensitised the population to water resources. It also raised awareness of the importance of accountability in the country in adapting to climate change, water legislation in Guatemala and access to water as a human right.

- **Socialisation of the Water Bill**: FANCA has been involved in the socialisation of water policies and legislation with other networks and stakeholders such as SEGEPLAN, RASGUA, GIGA, GWP and others.

- **Research on accountability mechanism**: To understand the regulatory framework and opportunities for citizens to influence decision-makers in providing transparency and accountability in water management. To disseminate information on relevant legal issues relating to transparency and anti-corruption processes. To identify the legal framework in the countries of Central America to put forward a proposal to harmonise legislation.

- **Socialisation of the administrative manual water committees**: To date around 100 COCODES and 700 members have made contact with approximately 20 government institutions and about 10 local NGOs.

5 Key achievements so far

- **FANCA-Guatemala strengthened**: It unveiled the network and coordinated actions with other national networks such as the Global Water Partnership (GWP), RASGUA (Red de Agua y Saneamiento de Guatemala) and the Grupo Impulsor de la Gobernabilidad del agua en Guatemala (GIGA).

- **Working in tandem with government institutions**: These include CONAP (National Council of Protected Areas), Conrad/SIPECIF (National Coordinator for Disaster Reduction / National System for Prevention and Control of Forest Fires) and MARN (Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources) in the areas of reforestation of water recharge areas, prevention of forest fires and conservation of wildlife species into areas of watersheds and micro watersheds, and the issue of change climate.
• **Active participation in different areas:** We work as a platform to support conflict resolution related to water in a forest environment, so that each case can be transferred effectively to the Departmental Environment Committee (CODEMA). The committee treats all matters affecting the environment including water and involves all government institutions and NGOs. The committee is chaired by the governor of Baja Verapaz who represents the President of the Republic in decision-making at the departmental level.

6 **The way forward**

• **Capacity building:** Capacity building in management, accountability and transparency will be directed internally (FANCA-Guatemala) and at community organisations (water committees and COCODES), and incorporated into the student population (studies in administration and accounting).

• **Incidence and governance:** The impact will be managed locally (COCODES and water committees) to continue with the process of legalisation. As well as actively participating in the regional process of the ‘Americas’ in the setting of objectives, goals and actions relating to WASH, and filing for Forum VI of experiences on community water management and its work on accountability, transparency and governance.

• **Promoting transparency and accountability:** This process consists of strengthening capacity in accountability in the water committees and COCODES, along with training to develop management manuals.
Honduras

1 Context statement – what is the issue in terms of water governance at local, regional and/or national level?

In 2010, Honduras restarted its democratic process by calling for presidential elections. However, the abstention rate was high because the ‘resistance’ did not consider these elections to be a valid mechanism for solving the coup of 2009.

On water and sanitation, Honduras is characterised by having a comprehensive legal framework and a recent water management act – the Sub-sector Water Supply and Sanitation Act – which was passed in 2003 and states that providers of water and sanitation are the municipalities and water boards. They also have a Water Law, approved in 2009 (during the military coup), an Access to Information Act and a Forest Conservation and Wildlife and the Municipality Act. However, there has been little progress in implementing the legislation.

The new government has promoted a ‘National Plan Country Vision’. This states that development in Honduras will take place under a watershed approach, dividing the country into six watersheds for the implementation of a 12 year development plan (with a vision of 28 years). One important aspect is that it promotes decentralisation and the establishment of thematic working groups for each of the regions and nationally.

It is clear that the main challenges of working in Honduras are the implementation of legislation and creation of real opportunities for citizen participation, so each sector has the potential to meet the needs of the people.

2 Objectives of the programme

| Objective 1: Strengthened integrated network with at least eight staff, four country offices operating in four countries, four work programmes and two regional strategies in place. |
| Objective 2: Regional instruments and international water management mechanism for accountability, civil society participation and transparency from states and the service providers. |
| Objective 3: People have access to information on tools and mechanisms that can be used to demand accountability. |
| Objective 4: Water user associations build in accountability practices together with end users. |
3 Partners implementing the programme

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| Asociación Hondureña de Juntas Administradoras de Sistemas de Agua (AHJASA) | • Capacity building for water boards; accountability, water management, tariffs.  
• Technical assistance to water boards; community monitoring and evaluation of the services.  
• Consumables provider (chlorine etc). |
| Fundación Parque Nacional Pico Bonito (FUPNAPIB)                 | • Based in La Ceiba, Honduras.  
• Conservation of the natural resources of the National Park and promotion and lobbying of the sustainable use of resources. |

4 Key activities carried out

- Capacity building of FANCA-Honduras: staff recruitment and development of network activities.
- Strengthening national network through constant contact with network member organisations and establishing partnerships and linkages with sectors involved in integrated water resources management, water and sanitation, as well as local governments, roundtables, the National Commission for Transparency and other initiatives that may develop advocacy.
- Building capacity of the water boards, grassroots organisations and members of the network through training and education on environmental and water law, accountability, management of water systems, integrated water management, gender disparities, and other issues that have been prioritised by the Education and Training Programme of FANCA.
- Promotion of accountability by water boards: selecting eight communities in the Valle Department for the implementation of accountability mechanisms.

5 Key achievements so far

- FANCA Honduras consolidated and implemented network programmes nationwide.
- Designed a manual accounting system and management boards of directors for potable water and sanitation.
- Governance, transparency and accountability for administration boards for potable water and sanitation.
- Participation in panels on ‘The role of state institutions in community management of water’ and ‘Transparency, integrity and accountability in community water management’ on the issue of governance in the first Central Community Water Management Fair.
- Systems management boards of water supply and sanitation: eight communities implemented mechanisms of accountability and participatory planning.
- Eight communities benefiting from the programme have developed the ability to demand accountability and participate fully in the WASH provision process.
- Nine major water board departments in the country were invited to and participated in forums to discuss the proposed regulations of the General Water Law. The participation of the boards was led by members of AHJASA.
6 The way forward

- **Capacity building:** Capacity building will be directed internally (FANCA-Honduras) and at community organisations through the development of a socialisation process and work on transparency and accountability in ten communities.

- **Advocacy and governance:** Achieved through the creation of opportunities for participation and socialisation of the General Water Law to create mechanisms for monitoring implementation of the law.

- **Promoting transparency and accountability:** This process involves building the capacities of the water boards for accountability with regards the General Water Law and its regulations, to analyse and reflect on aspects related to context and whether the organisations meet the needs of the population and can address threats that arise. In addition, the media will be invited to these events for dissemination of the most important treaties and to raise awareness and public participation in the processes.
Nicaragua

1 Context statement – what is the issue in terms of water governance at local, regional and/or national level?

In Nicaragua, water governance is handled by the private sector which does not involve citizens in decision-making processes. A network of water boards has been set up which recognises the need to involve communities in water management.

2 Objectives of the programme

- Alternative country report on the Human Right to Water issue, monitoring of the municipal budget related to the allocation of funds for the APS (Agua Potable y Saneamento – Clean Water and Sanitation) sector where FANCA is a member.

3 Partners implementing the programme

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| Grupo de Promoción de las Agrocultura Ecológica (GPAE) | • Social projects – access to safe water and sanitation.  
• Impact on public policy related to water supply and sanitation, as well as promotion of agro-ecological production. |

4 Key activities carried out

- Alternative country report on the Human Right to Water issue, monitoring of the municipal budget related to the allocation of funds for the APS (Agua Potable y Saneamento – Clean Water and Sanitation) sector where FANCA is a member.
• Work with CAPS (Comités de Agua potable y Saneamiento – Water and Sanitation Committees) to raise awareness of the General Water Law No 620 and the Special CAPS Law No 722 with their respective regulations.
• Capacity building of the CAPs.

5 Key achievements so far
• Adoption of Law No 722 and its regulations. Working with CAPS to shape the boards. This will allow us to start the process of legalisation and recognition as a water service provider.
• Alternative country report on the theme of the Human Right to Water which reflects the failure of the Nicaraguan Government in relation to the international commitments of the MDGs.
• Strengthening FANCA membership.
• Community involvement in CAPS regionally and nationally.

6 The way forward
• Strengthening members’ and communities’ local capacities through training workshops in selected subjects. Examining the contents of the General Water Law with regards to general domestic water regulations and special laws relating to CAPS and its regulations.
• To exchange and strengthen experiences between national communities in areas where there are weaknesses, and multi-national exchanges on the experiences of community water management in other countries in Central America.
• To influence decision-makers so they become accountable for public investment in the area of drinking water and sanitation.
• Participation in national forums, on regional and international topics related to water, such as membership meetings, regional and international forums.
Costa Rica

1 Context statement – what is the issue in terms of water governance at local, regional and/or national level?

The main challenges of water governance issues in Costa Rica have to do with the need for a new comprehensive legal framework that ensures access to water for future generations. Firstly, a Constitutional amendment declaring water as a public good and access as a human right is required. Secondly, a water Bill that promotes integrated and participatory management, protects water-related ecosystems and establishes an appropriate institutional framework for the resource. Finally, there is a need for a legal framework that strengthens community water systems, for sustainable community management of water.

Transparency and accountability are issues that are becoming more important in the country in different sectors. However, in terms of clean water and sanitation there is still progress to be made particularly on the institutional side, so efforts should be made to foster a culture of transparency and accountability in the sector.

2 Objectives of the programme

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<td>Centro de Derecho Ambiental y de los Recursos Naturales (CEDARENA) <a href="http://www.cedarena.org">www.cedarena.org</a></td>
<td>Rights, environmental management and facilitating training to promote sustainable, equitable and inclusive societies. All of this through research, consulting and social extension.</td>
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4 Key activities carried out

- Advocacy towards including the human right to access to water and sanitation in the Constitutional reform.
- Presentation of a draft water law by popular initiative.
- Presentation of a Bill to strengthen community water systems developed in a participatory manner with the water boards.
- Survey of mechanisms for transparency and accountability for community water systems.

5 Key achievements so far

- Strengthened national networks for civil society participation and the water boards national network (COFORSA).
- Draft law on water moving through the legislature.
- Progress of Aqueducts Bill through the legislature.
- Transparency and accountability in the agenda of the communal water supply.
- Organisation of multi-stakeholders’ dialogue as part of the consultation to get the signatories to put the Bill in congress.

6 The way forward

- Continue to advocate and monitor progress of the Law for Integrated Management of Water Resources so that it advances through the legislature.
- Regarding the Law on Communal Water Supply, advocacy activities are intended to be performed so the law can get approved as soon as possible in accordance with the importance it has for drinking water and sanitation.
- At the same time, the plan is to consolidate the process of creating a National Union of Communal Aqueducts so that communities take ownership in monitoring both the law and other advocacy activities necessary for the sector.

Demonstration against an open mine and to defend the right to water of local communities.