



The Water Governance Challenge

The Discrepancy between 'What Is' and 'What Should Be'

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'What Is' 'What Should Be'

- **'What should be'**
- UN policy statements, Agenda 21, Johannesburg 2002
- Formal governance frameworks (water policies, water laws, institutions) prioritizing domestic over productive uses
- Normative models for 'good water governance' : IWRM, CZM, AWM

- **'What is'**
- What happens 'on the ground'?
- When stakeholders compete for water?
- When conflicts arise, what authorities/institutions are called upon?
- When local and national politics take over?



Water Research

Danish Institute for International Studies

”Competing for Water Programme”

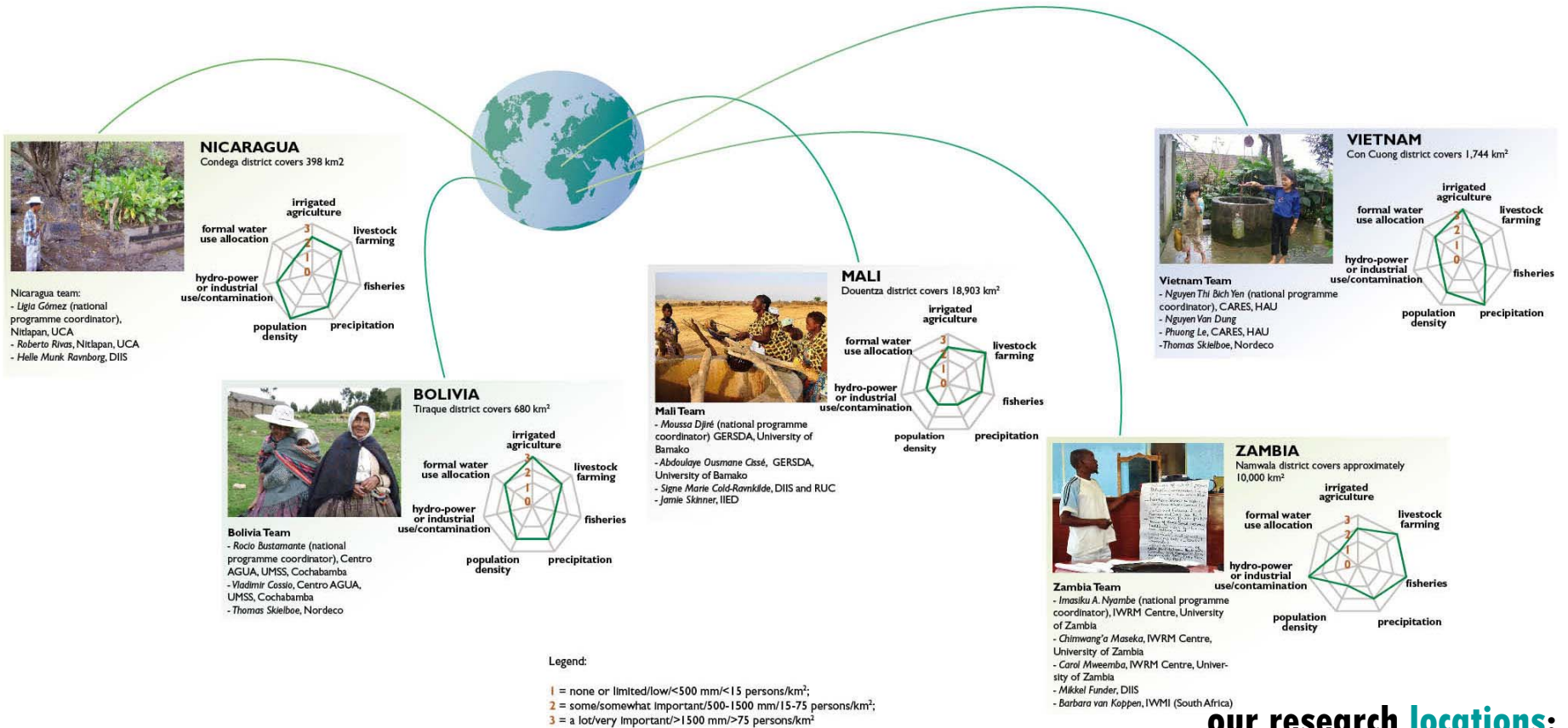
- **Local Water Governance and Conflicts**
- Explores local water conflict and cooperation (Bolivia, Mali, Nicaragua, Vietnam and Zambia)

”Water Governance Programme”

- **National and Transboundary Water Governance**
- Explores politics/political economy in national and transboundary water governance (India, Denmark, Mekong/Nile/Zambezi)



Competing for Water: Cases



our research locations:

... **5** districts out of more than a **thousand** districts

... in **5** countries out of more than a **hundred** developing countries

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Water events & situations



Water event

- Actions securing one or more party's access to water by:
 - (i) challenging other parties' access
 - (ii) confirming own or other parties' access
 - (iii) collaborating with other parties to secure access.

Water situation

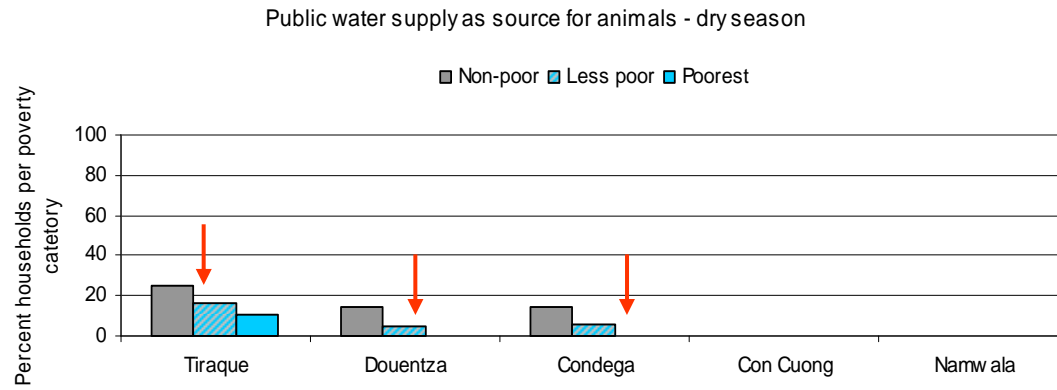
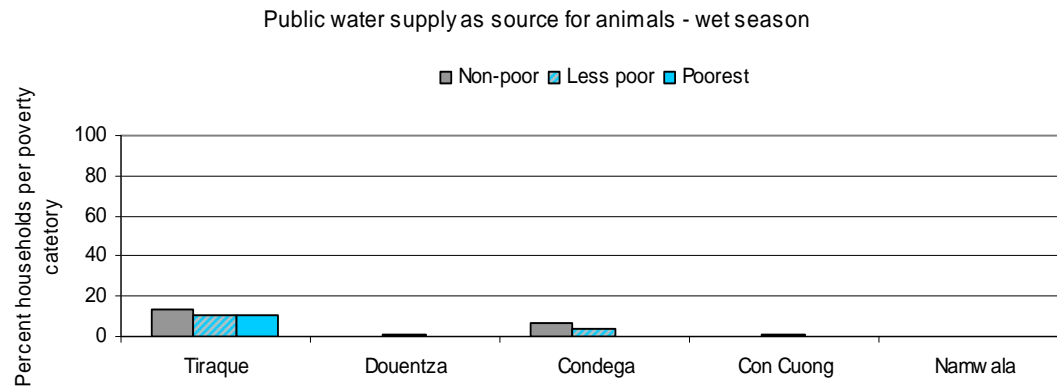
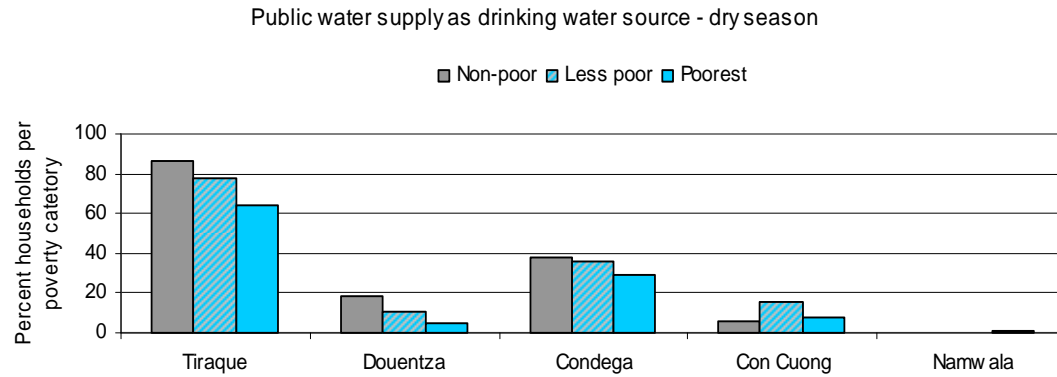
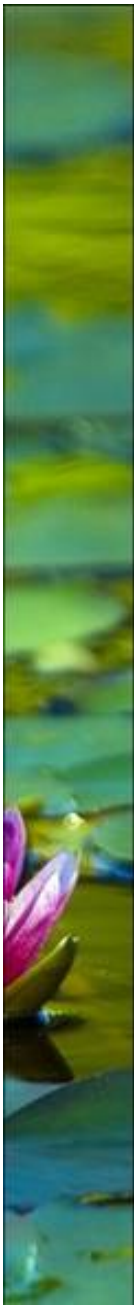
- A social situation where two or more parties have competing interests over the same water resource. The competition takes place through water events. Competitive water situations can be characterized as 'mainly cooperative', 'mainly conflictive' or an equal mix of both

Water event intensity scale



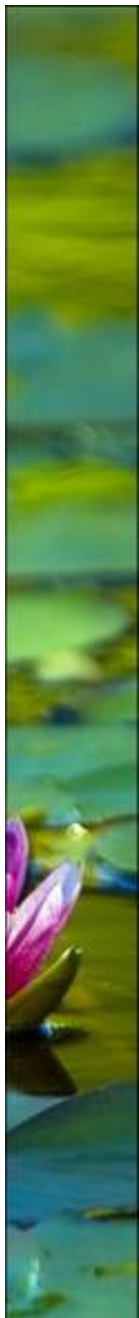
Conflicting	Intensity	Collaborative
Engage in organized collective violence/warfare	-7	7 Merge formerly individual access rights
Engage in unplanned collective violence, riots	-6	6 Joint decision-making authority and/or rules development for water use and allocation
Undertake collective large-scale violation of other party's access rights	-5	5 Establish joint organisational forum
Stage public protests/demonstrations (peaceful)	-4	4 Commit to written or verbal agreements and plans that are sanctioned by a third party
Denounce to authorities and/or third party (formal or customary)	-3	3 Commit to written or verbal agreements and plans that are not sanctioned by a third party
Engage in sporadic/small scale violation or sabotage of other's access rights	-2	2 Engage in sporadic/occasional joint activities
Engage in informal verbal dispute/expression of discontent	-1	1 Express casual verbal recognition of each other's access rights

Competition for water during the dry season – piped water

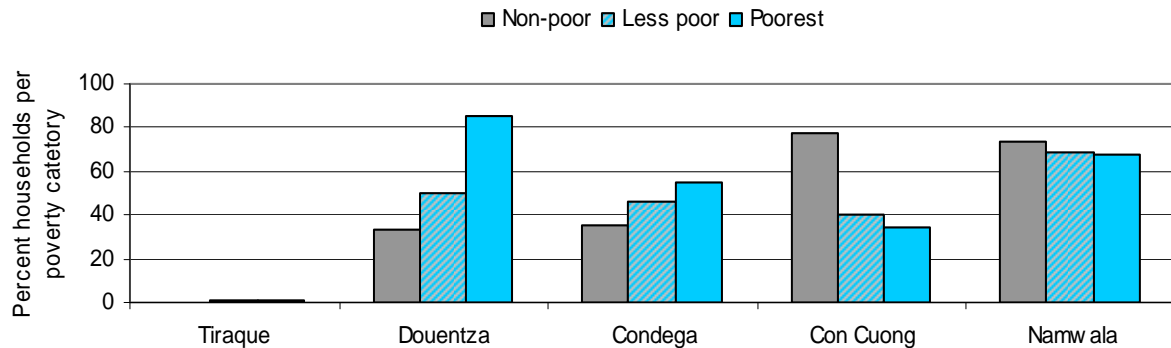


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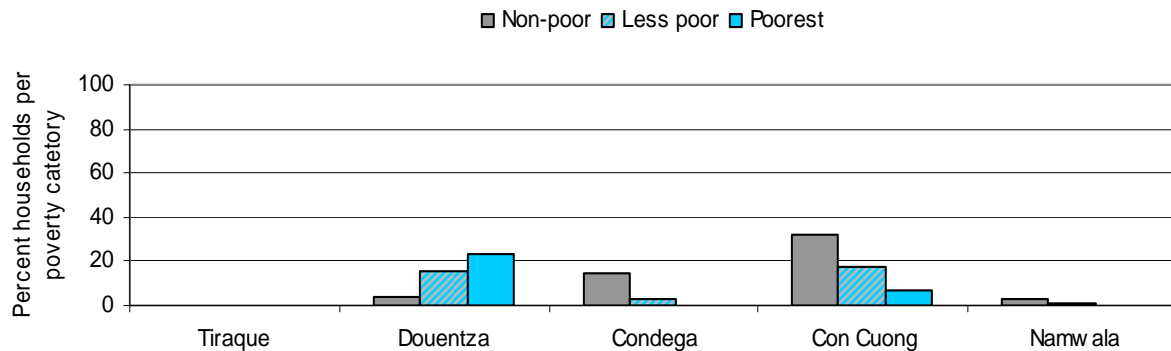
Competition for water during the dry season – boreholes and deep wells



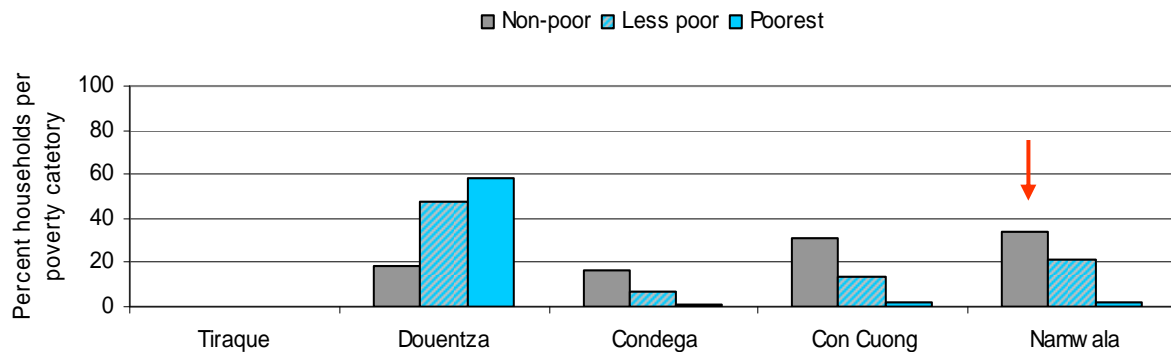
Ground water (deep wells & boreholes) as drinking water source - dry season



Ground water (deep wells & boreholes) as source for animals - wet season



Ground water (deep wells & boreholes) as source for animals - dry season

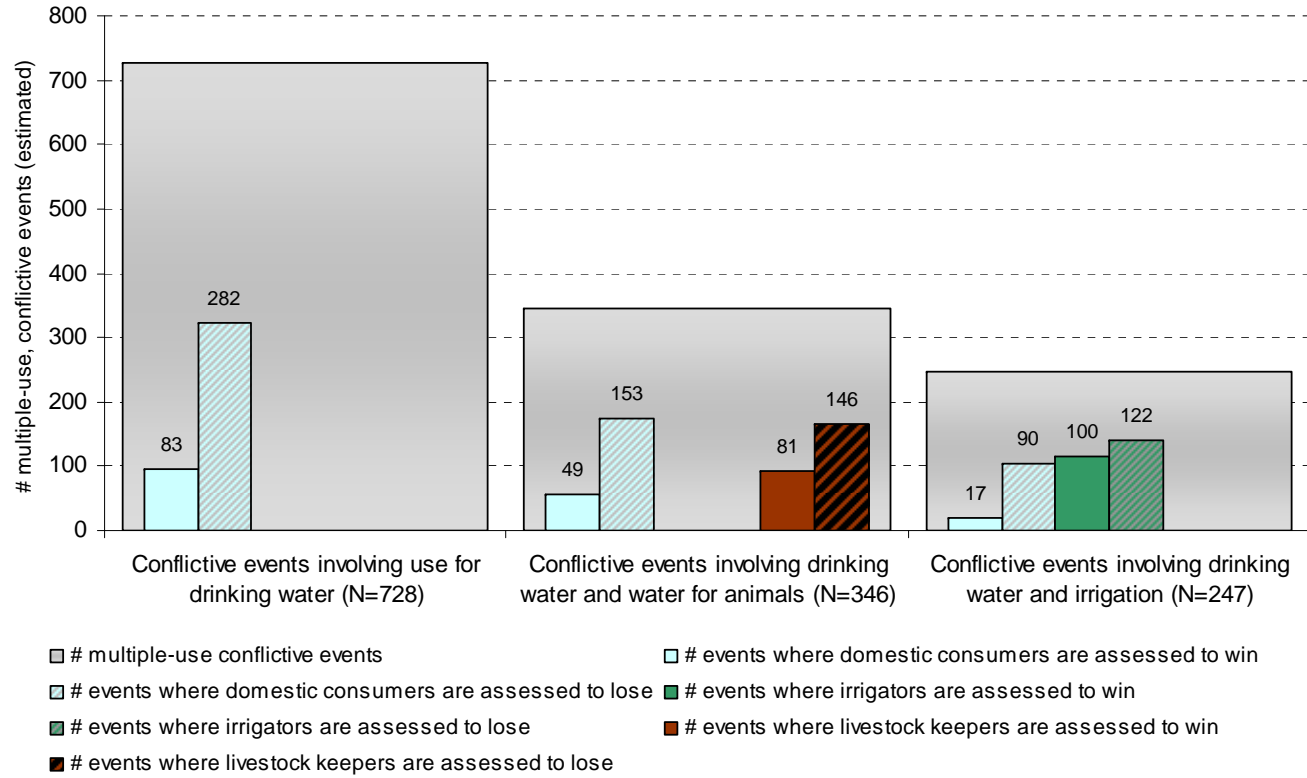


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Drinking water users loose to productive users in conflictive multiple-use events

– *despite priority assigned to drinking water*

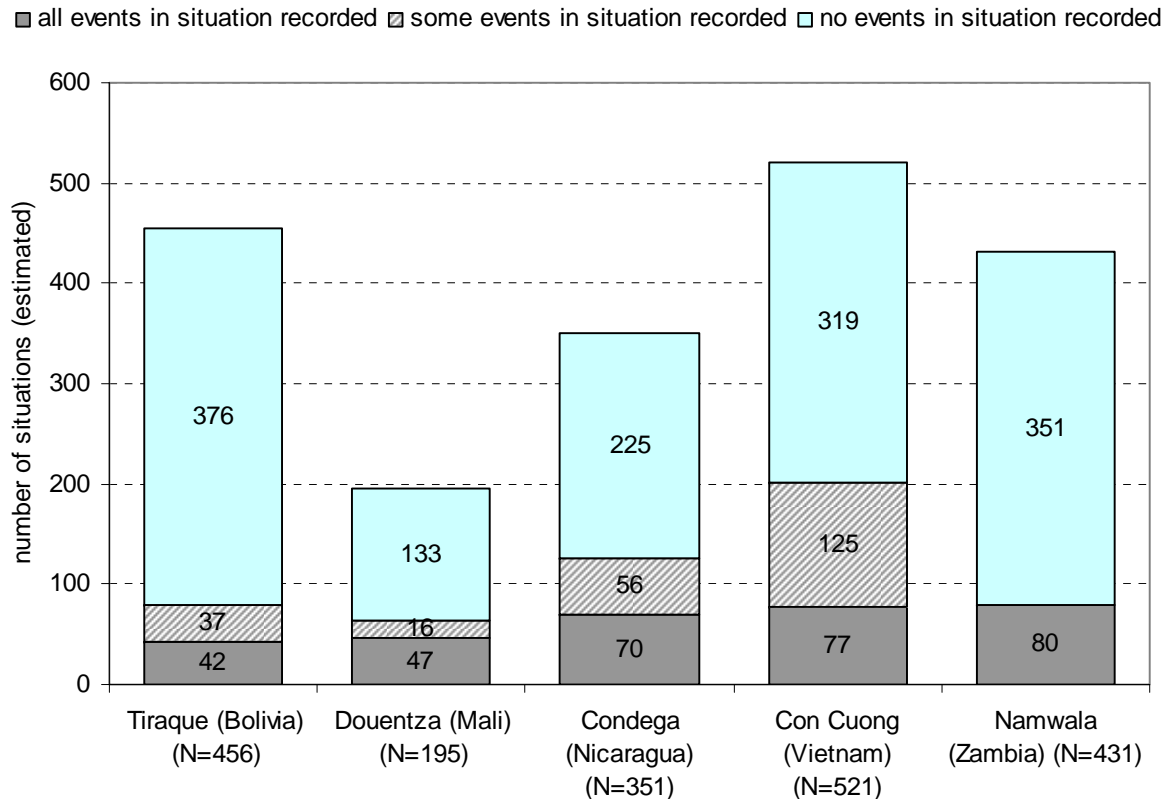


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Third parties (outside actors)

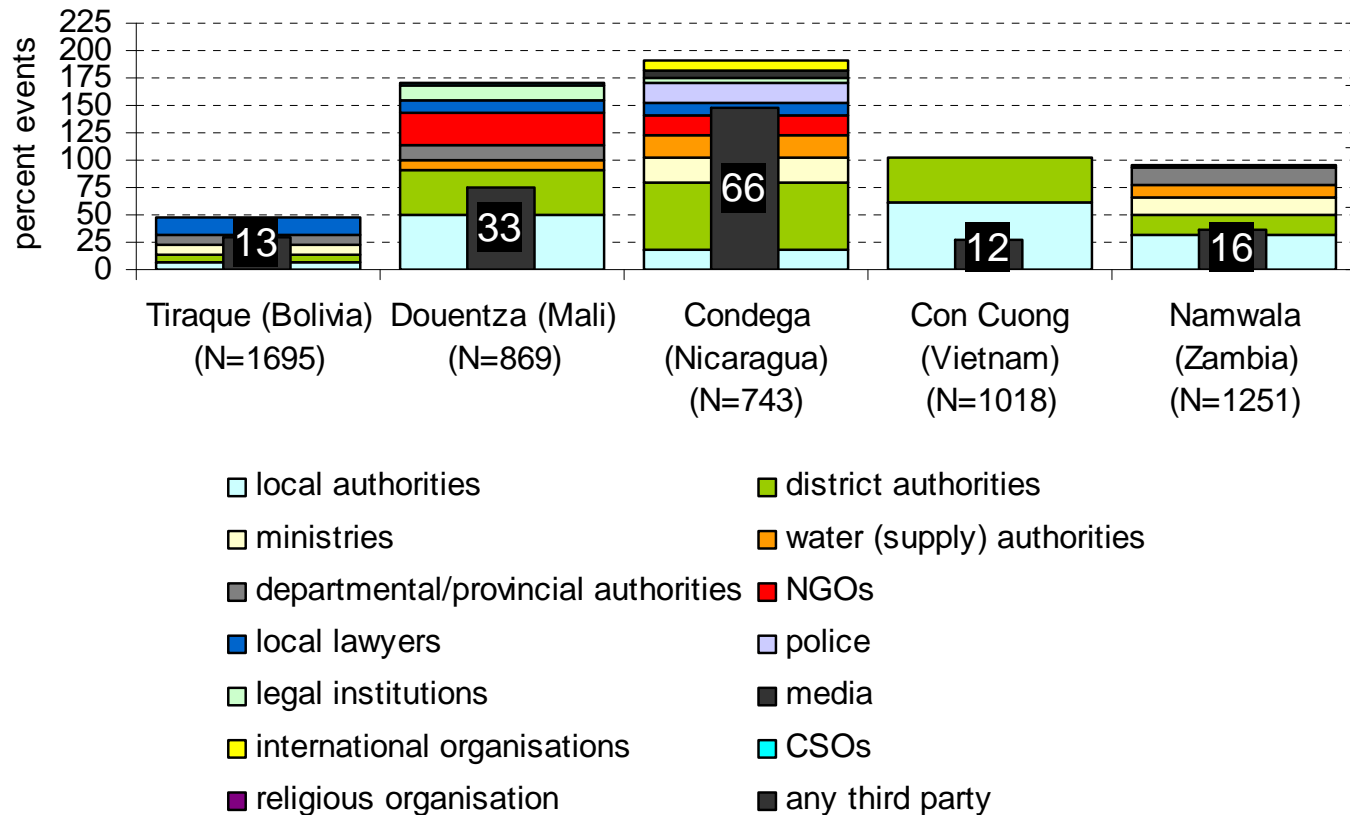
- *little involvement in water-related situations*
- *... and not called upon by the parties very often*





Third parties

– *anything but institutions with a designated water governance mandate*





Conclusions

- There is a gap between 'What is' and 'What Should Be'
- Conflict over domestic and productive uses of water are mainly caused by elite capture and lack of enforcement capacity to ensure equal access
- Water management institutions and authorities are not called upon in any significant scale by local communities
- Appeals are made to well-established and more legitimate institutions (e.g district authorities) within immediate reach



Revisiting 'What is' and 'What Should Be'

How do we close the gap?

We need to think water governance out of the box

- Water governance problems and their solutions need a wider array of 'good governance' conditions e.g. political representation, transparency, rule of law, monitoring capacity etc.
- Water committees and basin organizations have limitations. 'Reality water governance' involve a wide array of statutory, customary and private institutions outside the water sector
- Adaptive Water Management , Polycentric Governance
- The importance of politics and the prevailing political economy of water for water management and reform

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