

Name of Participant : **JESUSA T. ROQUE**  
Country : Philippines

## **INDIVIDUAL REPORT**

### **1. Definition of IWRM (Personal Point of View)**

Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) is a process which calls for a holistic approach in the management of water taking into consideration the entire ecosystem and all its resources consistent with the principles of optimum utilization, conservation and protection to meet present and future needs.

IWRM plays a vital role in the attainment of an effective, efficient and equitable water resources management system which varies depending on the development stage of the country.

It is not merely a plan, but it is a participatory planning and implementation process using an intersectoral approach to decision making which considers the balancing of economic and social impact for coordinated development and management of all the resources within a watershed.

### **2. Lessons learned from the training course:**

During the course, I realized that IWRM is not new in the Philippines because the birth of IWRM as a policy direction can be traced through policies on water resources management as embodied in several enabling laws starting with the creation of NWRC, now NWRB in 1974, until the country's water summit endorsed integrated water resources management based on river basin approach mechanism.

From the different country papers presented, I was able to know and compare the different experiences, water resources management practices, water policies and arrangement of different Asian countries. With these, I confirmed that IWRM can be implemented in different ways/approaches and strategies depending on the country's development stage.

During the field trips, I learned that participation is the most important factor for a successful management of River Basin Organizations. I was really impressed with the initiativeness of the village people of Dui Poi and Chiang Dao in supporting all the plans and programs being implemented in their area. The same with the people of Chian Tong district, the last village that the group visited. Their system is a participation of stakeholders officials and various users to solve the problems in a most harmonized way.

Strict implementation by the enforcers and compliance with the rules and regulations and cooperation among the various water users are necessary for an effective utilization of resources within the basin.

Participation therefore can be best implemented through conduct of consultations, negotiations and meetings among the stakeholders and various users.

Culture (e.g. self discipline, trust, religion and gender issues) is also one of the key elements in the management of a basin as demonstrated in the Chiang Dao Village. However, policies sometimes spoil culture. Government policies on water management contradict mostly the culture of some minorities and indigenous people.

Capability building is also demonstrated in Huai Hon Khrai Royal Development Study Center. Development studies and experimentation are being conducted to improve the technical know-how of the people. The most emphasized management tools of IWRM here are the technical and financial support from the government.

One of simple examples of application of integrated water resources management is how the farmer who lives in one of the villages visited was able to develop a system wherein he applies the optimum utilization of all the resources within his 800 square meters lot and he is making profit out of his innovations. IWRM therefore is a process that could be accomplished by provision of different mechanisms and strategies.

River basins form the natural unit to manage water resources, so IWRM should be undertaken in a river basin context. This calls for the establishment of River Basin Organizations.

### **3. Plans for myself and my organization:**

- a. I will continue disseminating and advocating IWRM to my family, relatives and colleagues and participate in the conduct of dissemination and advocacy training programs by NWRB or any water related agencies.
- b. Resolution of conflicts in the distribution and allocation of water resources is one of the main problems in the Philippines. NWRB is the agency responsible for this task and one of the implementors of the Water Law (Philippine Water Code with a set on Implementing Rules and Regulations). Revision of the IRR is now an on-going activity of NWRB. In this task, I can make recommendations in defining further implementing guidelines, taking into consideration the basic principles of IWRM.
- c. One of the proposed frameworks for action towards integrated river basin management in the previously conducted vision to action is to increase the number of river basin organizations from 2 to 18 by year 2025. NWRB, as a coordinating and integrating agency will have active involvement in the pursuit of this proposal.

- At present, NWRB is a member of the Steering Committee on the preparation of a River Basin and Watershed Management Project (RBWMP), a 6-year development initiative that will pilot a comprehensive program on natural resources management within the context of a river basin planning and management strategically at all levels of governance in the Bicol Region and in the water-deficit areas of Metro Cebu and Manila. NWRB will serve as the projects overall policy Board to formulate guidelines directions and advice on the project and coordinate the action plans of the task forces. As one of the staff of Policy and Program Division this calls for my active participation on the project.
  - Master Plan Study on Comprehensive Agusan River Basin Development is one of the project proposals of NWRB towards the application of IWRM. Terms of Reference is being prepared for approval by the National Economic Development Authority.
- d. NWRB is also a member of the Steering Committee on the drafting and finalization of Clean Water Act, a law which integrates the sustainability of a good water quality in the management and development of water and related resources. This law was just approved last March 2004, and with Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) as the lead agency, we are now in the stage of preparation of draft of the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). I am a member of the Technical Working Group on the activity and this training would be of great help in doing my part. The preparation of the IRR and public consultations would be conducted until the first quarter of year 2005.
- e. Proposal on the updating of the Master Plan Study on Water Resources Management of the Philippines of 1998 is made to provide a framework for the management of resources including IWRM concept. All the technical staff are required to participate on this project and I know that I am better equipped now to do my job after this training.