

Subject : Report on lessons (new ideas) learnt from the NARBO 2nd Training Workshop on River Basin Management and Organizations held on 23rd to 30th April 2005 at Sri Lanka

Background : Nominated by Bangladesh Water Development Board, I, along with 03 other BWDB engineers participated in the subject mentioned workshop. Total participants in the workshop was 27; 3 from Afghanistan, 4 from Bangladesh, 5 from India, 6 from Nepal, 4 from Pakistan and 5 from Sri Lanka.

The workshop was arranged in three different modes : 1) theoretical lectures on various issues on River Basin Management and Organizations, 2) group discussions among the participants on the theoretical lectures, preparation of report by the group, presentation of report and finally question/answer session on the presentation, and 3) field visit to a small river basin in Sri Lanka named “Maha Oya” river basin.

Arrangement of the workshop : The organizers arranged the workshop in a nicely professional manner. Classroom sessions and the field trip were held in a lively environment with the active participation of all participants. The regional distribution of the participants (among different countries) was also wise and representative.

Lessons (new ideas) learnt : I learnt many new aspects of integrated river basin management from

1. theoretical lectures
2. sharing experiences with different participants from different countries, and
3. field visit.

As Bangladesh is a lower riparian country sharing 57 rivers entering from upstream countries, I had only experience about the management and organizational problems of lower reach of the river.

I had only ideas about upper catchment problem by reading books but this workshop created the opportunity for me to learn by practical demonstration about the management and organizational difficulties of integrated river basin development. Thanks to the organizers for the opportunity.

My new ideas developed from this workshop are:

- ❖ The whole river basin should be treated as a single entity, it should not be divided into separate geographical boundary.
- ❖ All the stakeholders (different users such as domestic, agriculture, navigation, hydropower, fisheries, industry, tourism, etc.) right from the upper catchment up to the outfall) should be involved in all water related (and associated) issues to take decisions.
- ❖ Strong vertical and horizontal integration and coordination mechanism need to be developed among politicians, government ministries, agencies/departments, local institutions, CBOs, NGOs and water users associations (stakeholders) immediately.

Application of the ideas in BWDB (Bangladesh) : My organization is trying to develop vertical and horizontal integration mechanism for practicing IWRM in my

country. I will report to my organization that this mechanism will be effective on two conditions.

1. Strong commitment from the politician to be involved without any political biasness in the process and
2. Negotiation with the upper riparian countries to form a total river basin authority including all stakeholders irrespective of geographical boundary without which IWRM cannot be achieved.

Conclusion : The workshop is a unique platform to update the knowledge base of the participants of different countries by theoretical lecture, and practical demonstrations. This process may please be continued for betterment of millions of people of the region as educating the professions working in river basin management will help to mitigate the ever deteriorating water related issues of river basins.

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