

Report on the Workshop: Lessons /Ideas learnt from it

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In our organization we are planning to start an action research programme on River basin Management in India. We have already completed a short study on Water Resources Management in a small basin in India. Based on this, we like to take up the action research project in the basin. The purpose is to form an informal organization to involve the stakeholders in the negotiations on the contentious issues related to water allocation, upstream –down stream problem and water pollution in the basin.

From the workshop, I understood the importance of definition of water rights of different stakeholders clearly so that conflicts can be avoided through negotiations. The workshop also helped me in understanding the importance of developing data base on the basin on water availability, utilization, environmental problems, etc. across different parts of the basin so that correct and scientific decisions can be made. This will also help people to gain confidence in the decisions taken so that the implementation is smooth.

I also understood that bringing institutional changes towards Basin Management is a slow process and one has to be patient in experimenting the concept in a real world situation.

It is also understood that there may not be necessity to create new institutional agencies unless it is an utmost necessity. The purpose can be served through a simple coordination mechanism among existing agencies thus reducing enormous costs.

Financial management of the project is an important aspect in RBM. RBO has to be self reliant. Dependence of government for finance will create its own problem of interference from them.

Regular consultations with stakeholders and coordination among them is yet another important dimension of RBM. Creation of public awareness about the practical usefulness of RBM in solving the conflicting interests is important in seeking the support of the stakeholders.

The concept will not be effective unless it is demand based and must be taken up from below. It will fail if it is thrust upon people without their interests.

As most of the water management is done by Government their participation is important as a stakeholder in any programme on RBM

As RBM is a new concept in India, attending of the workshop has helped me to get some new ideas from the countries where they are already under implementation. However I have also to be careful as there is no best RBM approach suitable to all places. Presentation of practical case studies from other parts of the world will help in gaining more practical knowledge on RBM.