

**Report on
The Second Training Workshop in River Basin Management and Organizations
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THE PROGRAM

This report has been prepared as part of the Training Workshop in River Basin Management and Organizations held in Sri Lanka from 24 to 29 April 2005.

The training program has been structured in such a way that it enhances knowledge of the participants on different aspects of the RBO. This was done by presentations by different resource persons, module analysis and field observations.

RBO IN SPECIFIC COUNTRIES

Presentations were made by several resource persons to impart and share the country specific experience on RBO development and implementation. Case studies were presented. Developed situation in Japan and efforts made in Indonesia were informed to the participants.

In addition, training participants presented their country specific report to share the information on the RBO among all the participants. Brief status of each participant country has been noted below:

Afghanistan

Afghanistan is at the stage of reconstruction after long war. At this stage, the country is at an advantageous position to plan and introduce IWRM in the river basin management (RBM).

Bangladesh

Bangladesh is a low lying country. Its large rivers are trans-boundary type. River basin management is complex in nature. Water uses are dependent on groundwater abstraction.

India

Numerous river systems exist in India. River basin management in the country involves several and complex activities.

Nepal

Efforts on RBM are being made with formulation national water strategy and national water plan. Some activities are being done, on pilot basis, by non-governmental organizations with the help of Country Water Partnership.

Pakistan

Water resources development in the country has a long history. However, RBM approach has recently been initiated.

Sri Lanka

The country has comparatively smaller basins. RBM has been initiated in some river basins.

FIELD OBSERVATIONS

In the field visit, several issues/problems have been observed. The Maha Oya River has a basin area of 1,528 km². Most of the basin area is vegetated. Soil cover is thin i.e. rock formation is at shallow depth. Irrigation area is very small. So water use for irrigation is of less concern. The main concerns in the basin are related to environment and drinking water. Except minor issue of water shortage during the dry season, water related issues on its availability and demand are not noted.

ENHANCEMENT OF THE KNOWLEDGE

Although complete process of RBM has not been able to implement in the participant countries, issues on different aspects of RBM in different countries have been noted. These aspects have been focused to and analyzed in terms of a) Organization and coordination, b) People's participation, and c) Environment and water quality.

The Maha Oya River has an ideal basin size for initiation of RBM. However, the identified issues in the basin are mainly related to environment and community awareness concerning to effective program implementation. It does not contain various water resources projects and lacks a holistic approach to water resources development that integrates hydrological, engineering, policy, social and economic aspects. However, isolated specific issues/problems are considered as lessons learned.

In an effort of introducing RBM in the Nepalese context, a bottom up approach is needed. For this, suitable policies and regulations related to various WRD components need to be in place. Several aspects leading to a holistic approach to RBM are as follows:

Suitable Organization

A suitable organization shall be established to control and regulate the water related development works undertaken by different agencies – public as well as private sector. It shall be empowered with adequate legal as well as other administrative provisions.

Effective and Adequate Coordination

All the water related agencies involved in formulation and development shall have effective and adequate coordination among themselves. Same shall be applied to grassroots level organizations – line agencies and local NGOs and social groups.

Legal Provisions

Adequate legal provisions in the related sectors shall be made.

Adequate Database and Correct WR Assessment

For any water resources development activity, sufficient database shall be prepared and/or generated. Based on these data, correct water resources assessment shall be carried out considering technical, social, economic and environmental aspects.

Effective and Meaningful Participation by the Communities

All the stakeholders and the local communities who are directly influenced by the development activities need to be included in all the stages of project implementation. It can be anticipated that effective and meaningful participation by the communities can lead to successful performance of the project.

Environmental and Social Concerns

Environmental and social concerns shall be incorporated in the project design and implementation. These concerns shall be visualized considering a longer period where there is possibility of future project developments. Such considerations are expected to leading to sustainability of all the WR projects undertaken within the basin.

NEPALESE CONTEXT

In Nepal, hydrological and meteorological data are available mainly for major rivers. Majority of the rivers are originated in high and mid-mountains. Data for some of these rivers are available.

In this context, Nepal Water Partnership/Jalshrot Vikas Sanstha and local NGO has supported to establish a AWP in the Mai Khola River basin in the eastern hills which has a basin area of about 1,150 km². In the Mai Khola (river) basin, there are numerous water systems – both community and public managed. Irrigation is the major user. Small-scale hydropower generation is in operation. Rural water supply is using the river water.

In the Mai Khola basin, adequate data have been documented that are needed to assess present water uses, water availability, water balance and water demand in 14 sub-basins of the basin. District Development Committee, which is a local government body, is responsible to undertake planning and development of all district level development programs. NWP is providing continual supports to the local NGO in the development process within the Mai Khola Basin.