

# KEY POINTS RELATED TO WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN VIETNAM

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## **Public awareness program**

### *a. Second Red river Basin Sector Project*

The Second Red river Basin Sector Project aims to establish integrated water resource management (IWRM) and upgrade or repair priority water resources infrastructure. The objectives of the project are to improve agricultural performance and incomes of poorer communities in Red river Basin, through sustainable improvements in irrigation, drainage, flood protection and watershed management in an IWRM framework, and to promote stakeholder participation in integrated water resource management at provincial and local level with emphasis on women's participation

The Red river is formed by the confluence of the Da, Thao and Lo rivers at Viet Tri, just about 30 km upstream of Hanoi. Some of the major tributaries from particularly the Lo river are rising in the PR of China. The total basin area is about 170,000 km<sup>2</sup>, of which almost 50% is located in China. The delta of RR is formed by the Day-Nhue, lower Thai, Duong and lower Red river itself. Administratively the Red river Basin comprised 25 provinces till the end of 2003 (now 26). The Red river Delta (RRD) Region consists of 11 provinces and covers 17% (15,000 km<sup>2</sup>) of the basin in Vietnam. The upper basin covers about 70% of the Northern Highlands (NH) Region including 8 complete provinces and parts of 7 more. The total population of the RRB was about 25 million in 2000, of which 10 million (40%) were poor compared with the national average of 37%.

The project is focusing on capacity building and institutional strengthening: to build the capacity of the existing RRBB to develop and implement management capabilities for the RRBB through bringing participatory IWRM into the common planning process, and to supply the stakeholders with the information needed for balanced decision making. the project has put emphasis on the achieving broad stakeholder consensus regarding the priority IWRM issues, sectors and challenges in the basin. The approach and activities during the phase 1 project consisted of 2 major blocks: the so-called People's side, i.e. the series of participatory workshops in the provinces in Red river basin to identify the perception of the people living and working in the basin regarding water resources related problems, in their work, their income, their lives and their health, as well as the experts side, i.e. experts' analyses on water demand and availability, irrigation and drainage issues, flooding and flood protection, environment, water quality and pollution, the relation between water

poverty and health/disease, and poverty and gender issues. Apart from these blocks there is the RBO's side to integrate the people's side and the expert's side, i.e. to connect the participatory and the technical IWRM process, to facilitate informed inclusive decision making, and to guide and coordinate between stakeholders and administrative authorities. One result of this process is that over 600 of the river basin's key decision-makers and scientists have been actively involved and contributed to the project output.

As mentioned before, the subject project has a very strong focus on stakeholder involvement and public participation. The participatory approach from the 'awareness' level to the level of participation is as follows:

Empowerment	People have mandate to act
Ownership	People feel involved/committed
Participation	People are fully participating (two way)
Informed	People are informed (one way down)
Consultation	People are consulted (one way up)
Awareness	People know that something is happening
Ignorance	People do not know what is happening

For the execution of the participatory IWRM process and the public/stakeholder consensus building, the 2RRBSP has acquired the input and assistance of the World Village Foundation, an NGO representing the Institute for Cultural Affairs (ICA) in Vietnam. ICA has developed a sophisticated methodology involving carding, grouping and ranking issues, aimed primarily at company and project management, leading eventually to planning techniques. Eight lady facilitators were recruited and trained for successful guidance of all the workshops.

The participatory workshop process has started with an extensive analysis of potential stakeholders. The criteria and framework for decision-making of the World Commission on Dams have been a major starting point for this activity. Stakeholder involvement has been crucial through the whole process for connecting integrated water resource management with human well-being and poverty reduction.

Because of the large number of stakeholders in Red river Basin their initial participation was necessarily broad but shallow (i.e. 25 provincial workshops and 25 participants each, representing 25 million RRB people). A 3-layered setup of stakeholders workshops was agreed as follows:

- The first step consisted of 25 provincial workshops, conducted and reported upon by WVF. Broad participation was achieved via provincial departments re. various water resources issues, together with woman and farmers unions.

- The second step consisted of 5 synthesis workshops. The reports of the provincial workshops were grouped, based on provinces sharing a sub basin or with more or less similar geographical conditions (see Table ES-1). Technical experts provided inputs to support informed consensus building by stakeholders.
- The third step, the final River Basin workshop, was refinement of findings from these five synthesis workshops. It essentially verified the findings from the Synthesis Workshops and identified the proposed projects for next Phase.

All 31 workshops have generated remarkable consensus due to the process approach that pays tribute to stakeholders by involving them in a flexible consensus building. The result was a unanimous vote for hydraulic works in a sense extending beyond production into integrated water resource management. The other dominating issues were management problems relating to the hydraulic infrastructure, water supply & sanitation, pollution, watershed management and public awareness.

A number of conclusions from the combined provincial and synthesis workshops have been formulated in the Main report. One important conclusion handled about the present inefficiency in the irrigated agriculture sector and related management problems. Another is that improvement of hydraulic infrastructure in the irrigated agriculture and drainage sub-sector, if managed and maintained properly, will strongly contribute to solutions in the other sub-sectors as well. In other words, with proper Irrigation&Drainage systems together with good management, participants feel that problems with water quality, flood protection and water supply can be ‘managed’ as well.

In the framework of the water sub-sector performance, also an assessment of the water sub-sectors in a poverty and gender perspective has been executed and presented, together with an analysis in what respect integrated water resources management may contribute to poverty reduction.

An important conclusion drawn from the participatory approach is that the national policies on poverty, gender and socio-economic are suitable to the desires of stakeholders. This implies that the national policies already include the close links among stakeholders. The results of the project rank the 4 top priority sectors, namely:

#### **Priority water related sectors**

Ranking of priority orders for sub-sectors based on poverty assessment	Ranking of priority orders for sub-sectors based on gender assessment	Ranking of priority orders for sub-sectors based on provincial seminar results
Water supply and sanitation	Irrigation and drainage	Irrigation and drainage
Irrigation and drainage	Water supply and sanitation	Water supply and sanitation

Biodiversity	Flood control	Flood control
Flood control	Pollution	Pollution