

Methodology of seeking after the approach to improvements

Michitaro Nakai, NARBO Associate, ADB Institute

I Preface

This paper summarizes the methodology of seeking after the approach to improvements, which is my suggestion about how to draft the action plan for improving the status of water allocation. As mentioned in the below, step-by-step processes are suggested drafting the action plan.

II Methodology

Introduction

With regard to proposals of the approach to improvements, it is effective to consider in the following order in a step-by-step manner.

- (i) Grasping issues
- (ii) Analysis of the causes of the issues
- (iii) Proposals (approach to improvement) and processes/procedures
- (iv) Evaluation of the proposals considered in the step (iii)
- (v) Draft of the "Action Plan"

Through the first and second workshops, we have gone through from step (i) to step (iv). In the third workshop, (a) first, we narrow down the number of issues to three or four, and (b) we review the step (i)-(iv) regarding the limited issues.

Grasping issues

The first step is to define the issues, that is, it is necessary to clarify what the issues are. This is the step of "Grasping issues". This time, the discussion papers have been prepared the same as the 1st workshop, in which issues are sorted out with several categories, policy, legal framework, organization, financial, technical, participation, and others.

With regard to the step (i), specific and accurate descriptions of the issues are needed. I recommend that the participants look into again the issues from the viewpoint of specificness and accuracy though we have finalized this first step in the 1st workshop. For example, some participants listed the overlap of government mandates as an issue, but in this case, it should be clarified what kind of mandates overlaps which organizations, and what the practical troubles are derived from the mandate overlaps.

In addition, we have to select the prioritized issues to be solved from the grasped ones because we will not be able to propose the solution of all the issues in all together. Due to that, the grasped issues need to get sorted out in order of importance (for example, high, middle and low).

Analysis of the causes of the issues

The next step is to analyze the causes of the issues grasped in the step (i) because issues can have their causes, which just have to be solved. It is also quite natural that the analysis of the causes should be specific as well as accurate. Then, accurate and specific analysis of the causes can lead to the proposals considered in the step (iii).

Proposals (approach to improvement) and processes/procedures

Third step is, proposals of solutions and processes/procedures for them should be carried out on the basis of the analysis conducted in the step (ii).

Proposals should be considered to remove the causes analyzed through the step (ii). For example, you may propose the establishment or revision of new legal frameworks if the lack or dysfunction of a certain framework is the cause of the water allocation issue. The proposals need to be specific. The objectives of the proposals are also important.

At the same time, it is necessary to confirm the processes/procedures for reaching the proposals. The processes/procedures are important because they are a kind of strategies for realizing your proposal. Also, the processes/procedures have close relationship with the feasibility of the proposals as mentioned later.

Evaluation of the proposals considered in the step (iii)

The forth step is the evaluation of the proposals and processes/procedures considered in the former step. The proposals and the processes/procedures have to be effective, feasible, and sustainable, and we need to verify them from the viewpoint of **effectiveness, feasibility, sustainability and others**. Short explanations are shown in the below regarding effectiveness, feasibility, sustainability.

Effectiveness: Here, “effectiveness” means how the proposals can give good effects on improvement of the water allocation status. Concretely speaking, we should examine whether the proposals can remove the causes of the issues (analyzed in the step (ii)).

Feasibility: Proposals should be feasible in the context of the present situation of each participant’s country. Not-realistic proposal is meaningless. Therefore, processes/procedures for realizing the proposals should be examined from the viewpoint of feasibility. For example,

possibility of consensus building is to be examined regarding the development of legal framework.

Sustainability: Measurements in your proposal should be sustainable. For example, if you propose the establishment of a new organizational framework, you should verify the sustainability from the viewpoint of organizational capacity, finance.

After this evaluation, we will be able to recognize obstacles, difficulties or problems against the realization of the proposals. Thus, we need to consider the ways for overcoming such obstacles, difficulties or problems. **The considered ways are just the strategies for the proposals.** This strategy affair will be treated in the next workshop.

Draft of the “Action Plan”

Finally, “Action Plan” (for approach to improvement) will be prepared on the basis of the outcome obtained through the step (i)-(iv). We plan to deal with this step in the third and fourth workshops.

If you have questions or comments, please contact.