



Inception report:

CPW&F Project 42

Groundwater Governance in Asia:

**Capacity Building through Action Research
in Indo-Gangetic (IGB) and Yellow River (YRB)
Basins**

**IWMI
May, 2005**

Inception report:

Groundwater Governance in Asia: Capacity Building through Action Research in Indo-Gangetic (IGB) and Yellow River (YRB) Basins

Introduction, background, project objective

The project was conceived in 2003, primarily by Tushaar Shah and his team of researchers at the IWMI-Tata Water Policy Program office in Anand, Gujarat, India. Tushaar Shah was the original project leader, but this role has now been taken over by Karen Villholth, IWMI, Colombo.

The background for the project was the perceived general problems and gaps in groundwater governance in the region, i.e. in South and East Asia, with focus on the areas within the IGB (Indo-Gangetic Basin) and YRB (Yellow River Basin). More specifically, the gaps identified were:

- Groundwater governance is lacking behind the level of groundwater development and the scale of importance that the exploitation of this resource displays today
- Lack of ‘Good Practices’ in the region (South Asia and China)
- Limited awareness of groundwater and associated emanating problems and how to solve them in general and in particular in institutions charged with groundwater development and management
- Lack of solutions from the developed world that can be prescribed and transferred to the Asian context
- Limited coherent research on region-specific practical solutions to implement
- Little focus on/understanding of link to people (socio-economic drives for groundwater development, livelihoods, participation, demand management)
- No effective dialogue and coordination within management institutions and between science and management

The project **goal** is to promote conditions that facilitate proactive governance of the groundwater socio-economy for improved productivity, equity and sustainability of groundwater use in the region.

The **overall objective** of the project is to initiate and facilitate a process of strategic and organizational change in groundwater sectors of basin states through capacity building and the creation of an applied knowledge base necessary to strengthen groundwater governance.

The project **objectives** are:

- to develop and implement a research-based training program designed to develop a well-rounded, inter-disciplinary, problem-solving world-view amongst groundwater managers and researchers
- to produce a practical toolkit for improved groundwater governance in different socio-economical and physical settings in the basins
- to engage 80 young and senior functionaries from government, civil society, media and academia in an inter-disciplinary inter-regional program of training and applied policy research to create and disseminate a base of practical knowledge that helps develop a better understanding of the groundwater socio-economy, their own roles and practical groundwater management

Objectives of Inception Workshop

The objectives of the Inception Workshop were:

- To introduce partners and organizations of the project to each other
- To describe and discuss the overall project goals and ideas
- To get feedback from partners on capacity building and research needs
- To discuss preferred training methods and approaches
- To discuss and plan timing of courses
- Develop draft outline of content of course
- Preliminary identification of people responsible for the various parts of the project
- Discuss course fellow selection
- Develop overall plan of activities for the project

Workshop Program

The organizations represented at the Workshop were:

- IWMI, International Water Management Institute
- Dept. of Agricultural and Resources Economics, UC Davis, USA
- CCAP, Chinese Academy of Sciences, China
- CGWB, Central Groundwater Board, India
- BWDB, Bangladesh Water Development Board, Bangladesh
- WAPDA/IWASRI, Water and Power Development Authority/ International Waterlogging and Salinity Research Institute, Pakistan
- DoI, Department of Irrigation, Government of Nepal

In addition, IRMA (Institute for Rural Management, Anand, India), YRCC (Yellow River Conservancy Commission) and the CPMT (Challenge Program Management Team) were invited. IRMA and YRCC were unable to come and from the CPMT, the benchmark basin coordinator from IGB came, but not the one from YRB. Also, the CP Theme leader – Integrated Basin Water Management Systems was invited but did not make it.

The Workshop program was divided into seven sessions:

1. Welcome and introduction
2. Presentation of the original project proposal
3. Input from partners on the experiences, perceptions of needs for capacity building and previous ways to address them
4. Framework for project implementation, discussion on various possible approaches
5. Administrative issues
6. Discussion of roles and responsibilities and financial planning
7. Outstanding issues and conclusion

The detailed program for the Inception Workshop is given in Appendix 1. The participants are given in Appendix 2. The workshop took place at IWMI, South Asia Liaison Office at the NASC (National Agricultural Science Centre) Complex in Delhi, India.

In the following section, the salient points that were discussed more intensively during the workshop are highlighted and treated separately. Rather than going into details and covering each point of the workshop program this is done in order to make the report as concise and short as possible.

Discussion points and decisions made

These were the points that were discussed during the workshop at somewhat more length, reflecting either their difficulty in solving or a level of divergence of opinions.

Budget restrictions

Due to overall cuts in the CP, the project was subjected to a budget cut of 22 %. Furthermore, it was realized that a significant amount of core funding from IWMI, originally budgeted for this project, was not available. This in combination implies that the project is entitled to a total funding of USD 1,519,713 rather than USD 2,447,750. This significant reduction of 38 % necessitates a reassessment and readjustment of the original project activities and outputs.

Some agreed ways of achieving this are:

- a. Cut the number of courses from three to two. The number of course participants in each course is maintained but the total number of fellows will be reduced from 120 to 80 (Appropriately the number of YPRFs (young professional research fellows) reduce to 60 and SPRFs (senior professional research fellows) and MPRFs (media professional research fellows) to 10 each).
- b. Research would be performed only by the participating fellows and project participants. There would be no provision for seed grants as originally planned.
- c. Reduce the number of international meetings and workshops.
- d. Associate two IWMI-supported Post Docs with the project and utilize their contribution to the coordination and implementation of the project.

In effect, the structure of the project will remain the same, i.e., a teaching school geared towards training the:

1. YPRFs for performing research on multi-disciplinary groundwater socio-ecology at different locations .
2. SPRFs so that they can perform insightful case studies of best practices in groundwater governance from basins outside the study areas
3. MPRFs so that they can produce well-informed media articles on groundwater issues

Note that the training component is being maintained in the same fashion as in the original proposal. The changes will primarily be reflected in the total quantum of fellows trained and research performed in the overall duration of the project. As envisaged earlier, the research methodology and instruments will be designed by the principal researchers so as to ensure coherence and coordination, e.g. by enabling cross-comparison between the different groundwater socio-ecology studies to be conducted at various locations. The initial proposal was to have 7 locations in each year with a total of 21 in three years. This would be reduced to 7 (x 2) in two years. The initial 21 locations were proposed to be divided as 15 in IGB and 6 in YRB basins. The revised number of 14 locations could be divided as 10 in IGB and 4 in YRB.

The original proposal had provision for research performed through seed grants in these basins that would complement these research activities. However, with new budgetary constraints, there will be no provision for those activities.

With the revised budget, it is not possible to have international meetings and workshops as frequent as envisaged in the original proposal. Therefore, it will be necessary to have most of the planning performed with remote communication as much as possible. One option is to have targeted e-groups for each activity. But, it is highly doubtful if this kind of arrangement would be successful and interactive communication can be achieved. Another option is to organize coordinated e-conferences. Again, this needs to be coordinated well for having good communication. Two annual meets, where the outcome and synthesis of the research are presented, mainly by fellows, and where the project is evaluated are maintained as the major events of the project. Also, a follow-up and policy

(de)briefing tour or workshop will be organized at the conclusion of the project, and hence the dissemination and outreach activities of the project will not be compromised.

Language issue

This was mainly brought forward by Scott Rozelle, the argument being that it will be difficult to identify sufficient course fellows from China with, at the same time, sufficient seniority and English literacy to participate in the courses.

A proposed way to overcome this problem:

- a. Conduct the first course as originally scheduled since a small number of eligible English-speaking candidates from China should be obtainable
- b. Based on the outcome of the first course and the possibility of recruiting yet a batch of eligible Chinese fellows, the second course will be planned. A certain part of the budget will be reserved for this course, which in principle will enable the repetition of the first course as originally planned, but with the option to reformulate the approach if the language problem persists. The Steering Committee will make the final decision on the approach to the second course at an evaluation meeting following the completion of the first course.

Course timing

There are several considerations to make when deciding the time for the training course. Some of the important points were: to avoid field research during the peak of the summer, optimize the timing so as to avoid festivals, holidays, elections etc. in the different countries, take care of the CP requirements on when to begin work on the project, avoid important events of participating institutions such as ITP's annual partner's meet.

Keeping in mind all these constraints, the best time for the course would be beginning of October, 2006. The field work would then begin in November, which is winter time in South Asia. In the YRB, cultivation is year round and hence does not represent any constraints for the course in terms of timing of field research.

Sensitization of the project

There was a feeling that simply sending out a brochure to the partner institutions as part of the sensitization and recruitment of course fellows would not suffice and convey the spirit behind the project. Also, there is a need to identify and pre-assess the organizations and institutions that could provide fellows for the courses. It was decided to make sensitization visits to the five project countries in order to:

- Identify, visit and initiate collaboration with organizations and institutions involved in groundwater management, research and media coverage that may provide fellows and participate in action research within the project
- Present the project, its scope and to advocate for active involvement and commitment
- Present a draft proposal for a research agenda for the project
- Get an idea of the capacity and potential commitment from these institutions towards the project and future capacity building efforts in their country
- Make initial steps towards recruiting the fellows for the courses
- Get feedback from the institutions in terms of capacity building needs and priority research topics that could prove valuable in the more detailed planning of the courses and the research agenda

The sensitization tour would consist of 1-2 day visits to one or more government departments/universities/ research organizations with competence in groundwater management or research within each country. This sensitization process is planned to begin in Sep., 2005.

Remuneration of participants

The YPRFs and SPRFs are expected to be paid remuneration by their respective organizations during the duration of the course and research training activities of the project. This is in addition to the per diem that will be paid by the project to the participants.

Steering committee

A steering committee will guide the overall process of the project, right from identifying responsibilities in designing the course, selecting the fellows, designing the research methodology and coordinating research activities, etc. It will be composed of senior project researchers of IWMI and some of the partnering institutions.

Rewards and Incentives

During the workshops, there were several suggestions about providing incentives to the training participants. One incentive suggested was providing Ph.D. scholarships to deserving fellows. There was concern regarding this that: 1. not all fellows would want to pursue a Ph.D.; 2. The Ph.D. would not end during the course of this project.

Instead, it was suggested to provide means for:

1. Research grants to deserving candidates: This research grant will be provided based on the submission of a higher-than-average quality research proposal by the fellow. The proposal could be for say, starting a research group, or conducting a research study, initiating a monitoring program, etc.
2. Funding for conferences: The project can provide some participants to travel to conferences. The conference would need to be related to the subject of groundwater management.

Roles and Responsibilities

The workshop also dwelled on the various roles that the project team would assume. These roles and their respective responsibilities are mentioned here:

1. **Course coordinator:** The *Course Coordinator* would be responsible for the designing of curriculum, putting together all course material for the various components, identifying the instructors, thinking about teaching methodologies and arranging various logistics related to the course such as the venue, arranging for field trips, managing for infrastructure such as computers, projectors etc. He/she would also be responsible for maintaining the course webpage and arranging for making available all relevant material on this website. Also, he/she will monitor the course activities of the 1st School and note down the possible changes in curriculum/teaching methodologies/instructors required for the second School. It is possible that there might be more than one person involved as the *Course Coordinator* because of the multi-disciplinary nature of the curriculum involved. This *Course Coordinator(s)* needs to work in close cooperation with the below *Research Coordinator(s)* so that the requirements for the research activities are adequately addressed by the course. At the end of the two Schools, the *Course coordinator* will work on documenting all course material, teaching aids and activities. The *Course coordinator* has to explore best ways of publishing/presenting this entire material so that the work performed for this School becomes a *public good* as envisaged by the project goals.

2. **Research coordinator:** The *Research Coordinator* would be responsible for identifying the broader research questions towards designing the Groundwater governance toolkit and exploring how this project would best address these questions. Towards that end, he/she has to identify how the research performed by YPRF, SPRF and the project leaders could be synthesized into this envisaged toolkit. The research component to be performed by the YPRFs should be designed such that the various (14 overall) multi-location research topics on local groundwater socio-ecology can represent adequately the different typologies within the IGB and YRB. He/she also needs to think about how this research could complement/enhance other research activities already being performed within this region. All these considerations would go into *designing the research methodology and research instruments* for the multi-location research and *identifying locations and partners* for performing this research so that a) cross-comparisons between these sites is made possible and b) the research results coming from

these individual efforts fits well into the overall toolkit. He/she will be responsible for forming the different teams (7 each year), arranging for local logistics in field research and monitoring/supervising this research. Apart from this, the *Research coordinator* will identify case studies for the SPRFs such that these studies document various types of groundwater governance strategies from different places outside the study basins. The *Research coordinator* will also monitor the activity of the MPRFs and ensure that the media reports stand to technical rigor.

After these research studies are performed and synthesized, the *Research coordinator* needs to be involved in the dissemination of these results through Policy papers. After the end of the first School and research, this *Research coordinator* needs to reflect on the research methodology and instruments and revise them, if necessary, for the Second phase. Research activities are repeated/continued for the Second phase.

At the end of the Second phase, the *Research coordinator* would be responsible for putting together all gathered knowledge into the Groundwater Governance toolkit in the form of a book. The generation of this toolkit is one of the primary goals of the entire project and the *Research coordinator* needs to be active on the design of this work all through the duration of the project. Also, the *Research coordinator* needs to work closely with the *Course coordinator* to make sure that the training School addresses the various requirements of the research work to be performed by the fellows. Again, due to the multidisciplinary nature of work involved, there might be a need for having more than one *Research coordinator*.

Timeline

The overall project commenced in April, 2005 with the inception workshop. The designing of courses and research activities commence in July/August, prior to the beginning of the sensitization program. With selection of fellows completing in Apr., 2007, the first school will be held in Oct., 2006. The tentative location for the first school is in IRMA campus, Anand, Gujarat, India. But this needs to be confirmed from IRMA officials.

The research activity in this first cycle would end by Feb., 2007 and the results would be synthesized and presented in the 1st Annual meet to be held in Apr., 2007. This will also be the time to take stock of the 1st cycle, suggest improvements in overall structure and design and assess the possible involvement of sufficient Chinese fellow candidates for the second course.

The second cycle commences in May, 2007 with selection of the fellows. The course and research design would be updated and revised as necessary. As far as possible,

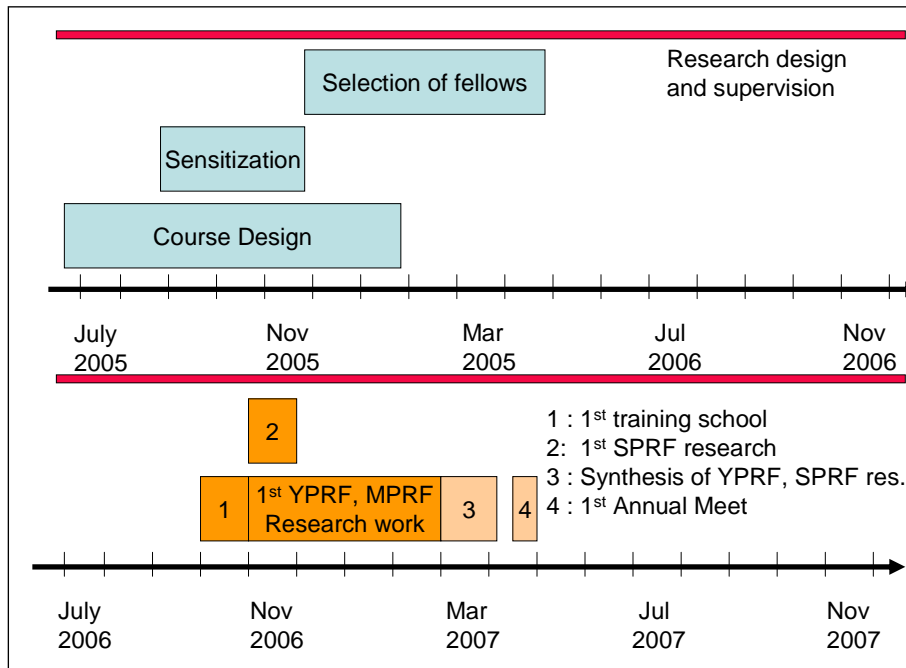


Figure 1: Simplified timeline for the 1st Cycle of Groundwater governance project (Detailed Gantt Chart is provided in the Revised Proposal report)

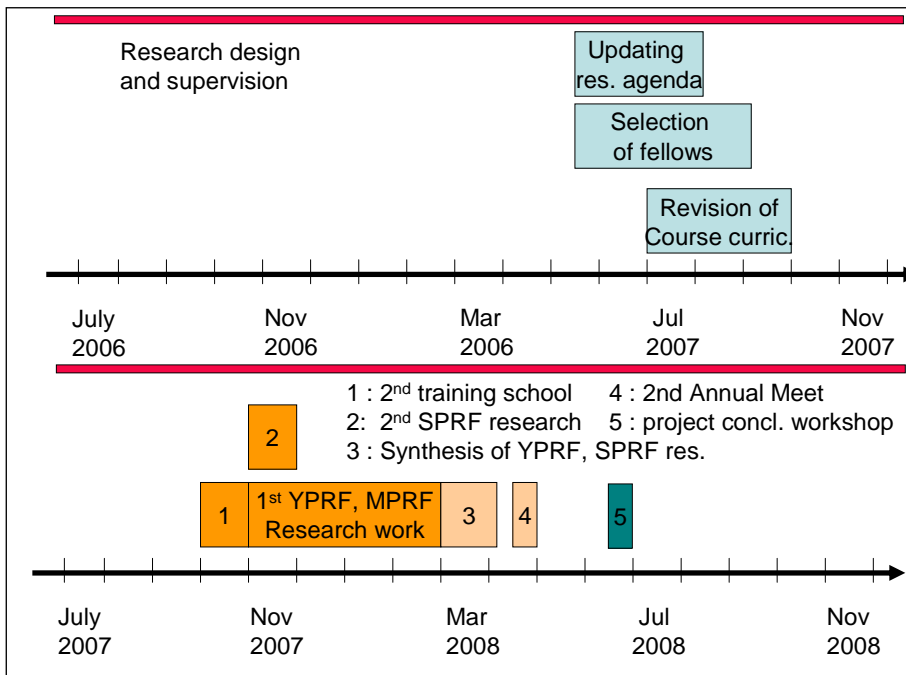


Figure 2: Simplified timeline for the 2nd cycle of Groundwater governance project (Detailed Gantt Chart is provided in the Revised Proposal report)

the results from the first cycle will be synthesized into policy documents and disseminated.

The second school will be held in Oct., 2007, with research activities commencing in Nov., 2007 and ending in Feb., 2008. Then, as in the first cycle, these results will be synthesized and presented in the 2nd Annual Meet in April, 2008. This will be time to take overall stock of the project, compile and synthesize the research results into a toolkit and a book on groundwater governance in South Asia and consider how the partnerships and networks generated by this project can be nurtured and sustained. The next few months till June would go into this overall synthesis and then a policy dialogue tour/workshop will conclude the project in July, 2008.

The project would therefore go on for a period of 39 months beginning April, 2005 and ending July, 2008.

Conclusions

This report summarizes the different issues, which came to light during the April, 2005 inception workshop for the overall project implementation and suggestions for addressing the most pertinent ones. An overall project implementation plan is sketched and different suggestions to accommodate the revised budget have been identified. The detailed budget and Gantt chart is presented in the revised and final project document, which is derived from the inception workshop.

Appendix 1

Program

Project Inception Workshop:

“CPW&F Project 42 – Groundwater Governance in Asia: Capacity Building through Action Research in Indo-Gangetic (IGB) and Yellow River (YRB) Basins”

IWMI (International Water Management Institute), South Asia Liaison Office
C/O NASC (National Agricultural Science Centre) Complex, 2nd Floor, DPS Marg
Pusa Campus, New Delhi 110 012, India, April 27-28, 2005

		ACTIVITY	LEAD	RAPPORTEUR/ MODERATOR
	APRIL 26	Arrival of participants		
Session	APRIL 27			
1 a	08:30 – 09:00	Welcome/introduction from all participants	Karen	
1 b	09:00 – 09:20	Background of project Objectives of workshop	Karen	
1 c	09:20 – 09:30	Challenge Program for Water and Food (CPWF) http://www.waterforfood.org/	Mark/Francis	
2 a	09:30 – 10:00	Challenges to Groundwater Governance Project concept Original proposal	Tushaar	
	10:00 – 10:30	BREAK		
3 a	10:30 – 11:30	Participants’ perception of capacity building needs in groundwater management and experiences with ways to address them	CGWB BWDB IWASRI DoI IRMA	
3 b	11:30 – 12:00	Experiences and ideas from capacity building in China	Scott	
	12:00 – 13:00	LUNCH		
4 a	13:00 – 13:20	Framework for project implementation, presentation of various alternative approaches	Karen	

		ACTIVITY	LEAD	RAPPORTEUR/ MODERATOR
4 b	13:20 – 14:10	Breakout groups on specific approaches to project implementation	CGWB BWDB IWASRI DoI IRMA	M: Scott, Mark, Karen
4 c	14:10 – 15:00	Report from breakout groups	CGWB BWDB IWASRI DoI IRMA	R: Bharat
	15:00 – 15:30	BREAK		
4 d	15:30 – 15:50	Summary and conclusions from breakout groups	Bharat	
4 e	15:50 – 17:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining project phases, activities, roles and milestones Identification of fellows for courses Discussion of contentious issues 	Karen	
	APRIL 28			
4 f	09:00 – 9:30	Summary of outcome of yesterdays discussions	Bharat	
5a	09:30 – 10:00	Administrative issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter of Agreement CPWF and IWMI (inc. standard terms and conditions) MOUs between IWMI and partners Contractual agreements Intellectual property rights 	Mark	
	10:00 – 10:30	BREAK		
6 a	10:30 – 12:00	Project activities, scheduling and milestones: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gantt chart 	Karen	
	12:00 – 13:00	LUNCH		
6 b	13:00 – 14:00	Breakout groups on roles and responsibilities	Everybody	Karen
6 c	14:00 – 15:00	Financial planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall budget 	Karen/Mark	
	15:00 – 15:30	BREAK		
7 a	15:30 – 17:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outstanding issues Preparation of inception report Finalization of project document 	Karen/Mark	
	19:00	Workshop dinner		
	APRIL 28-29	Departure of participants		

Appendix 2

List of Participants

Inception Workshop
27-28 April 2005, New Delhi, India

CPWF Project 42 – Groundwater Governance in Asia: Capacity Building through Action Research
in Indo-Gangetic (IGB) and Yellow River (YRB) Basins*

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Discussion in breakout groups

A. Framework for courses

1. How to balance intensive vs. extensive parts
2. How to ensure interactiveness of courses
3. How to cater for special needs as well as inter-disciplinarity
4. Teachers and authors the same as far as possible
5. Commissioning some parts (guest lectures)
6. One institution responsible for overall coordination of the course (IRMA or CCAP)
7. One person responsible for each of the three themes (theme custodians)
8. Define a course committee (course coordinator + theme custodians)

B. Framework for research

1. Fellow research mandatoty vs. voluntary
2. Course of fellow research (timing, duration, etc.)
3. Funding principles for fellows
4. Requirements/deliverables of fellows
5. Selection of fellows
6. Difference between a YPRF and SPRF
7. Guided/mentored research, each fellow assigned to mentor
8. Identify themes and geographic areas to focus on throughout for efficiency, continued commitment and coherence
9. Combine media outputs with awareness raising

C. Roles and Responsibilities of the project

1. What are the roles of the project?
2. What are their responsibilities and who do they refer to?
3. Do we need a steering committee for the project?
4. If so, who should be represented and what should be its role and responsibility?
5. How do we draft good teachers? Do you know any?