

Terms of Reference
for
LCG Working Group on Water Management (WM)

Introduction

The LCG Sub-Group on Water Management (LCG-WM) has until recently provided for an interactive and broad communication and information sharing mechanism for donors operating in the water sector in Bangladesh.

Based, among others, on the outcome of a review of the LCG mechanism in Bangladesh carried out in 2011/2012, the group reviewed its functioning and decided that there was a need to use the WG not just for donor coordination/exchange of information purposes but as a forum also to facilitate a more active dialogue with the government partners. Apart from formally introducing a co-chairing arrangement with the Ministry of Water, membership of the group will furthermore gradually expand to also include also representatives from non-government and sector support organizations.

As part of the process to improve its functioning and keeping in mind the recommendations of the above said review of LCG mechanism, the LCG working group on WM has formulated a new TOR to clarify its purpose, its scope of work and its organization.

Issues to be addressed in the WM Sub-sector

Bangladesh is a rapidly developing country, envisaging to be middle income country in 2021, though currently dealing with complex problems on safety, (food) security, population pressure and prone to natural calamities like floods, cyclones, and droughts. Currently there is already a high pressure on the available land and water resources in the delta. Due to population growth, economic development and climate change, the pressures will only increase in future.

Issues to be addressed in the WM Sub-sector are presented in the National Water Policy (1999) and, in more detail, in a number of national (sub-)sector plans such as the Sixth Five Year Plan (2011), the National Water Management Plan (2004), the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Policy and Plan (2005), the IWT Master Plan, the Dredging Master Plan, the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, Southern delta (agriculture) master plan, Hoar Master Plan, Ganges dependent area development plan, coastal embankment protection, National Strategy for Sustainable Development Plan (already approved) etc. including polder and char management issues. The estuary dynamics will be considered as a topic for 'island and estuary management'. The National Water Act and Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 will also be looked into. The issue of capacity development/absorption capacity of the concerned agencies will be dealt with.

A long-term vision and holistic approach is required which addresses land management/spatial planning and integrated water resources management and climate change related issues such as water safety and availability, food production and food security, salt intrusion, shortage of land, environmental and ecological problems in order to reach an adequate level of safety and food security as well as sustainable economic growth for the whole of Bangladesh. Since the Bangladesh delta is directly impacted/influenced by water resources, the water management issues in different sectors (e.g. agriculture, public health, environment, etc.) would need to be better integrated.

More specifically, the sector will among others have to address the need to: -

- Enable the government to formulate and implement climate change adaptation programs in a more consistent way, ensuring efficient utilization of limited natural and economic resources in Bangladesh;
- Promote/facilitate conservation of natural resources, especially the river floodplains and coastal ecosystems that will eventually ensure sustainable provisions and delivery of services to the life and livelihoods of vulnerable people;

- Improve (water) governance through better institutional arrangements, strengthening and capacity building;
- Harmonize plans and improve coordination of activities within and amongst sectors, thus allowing limited funds to be used more effectively; and
- Strengthen cross-boundary/international dialogue and cooperation with neighboring countries on bilateral or regional basin management.

Objectives

The overarching objective of the Working Group on Water Resources Management is to contribute to the achievement of MDGs, PRSP, NWMP and other sector objectives and targets within the stipulated timeframes by contributing towards effective and coordinated implementation of National Policies, Strategies, Plans and Programs on Water, land and related resources Management in Bangladesh.

The specific objectives are to:

- provide a forum for development dialogue with sector development partners and promotion of donor coordination; contribute to ensuring accountability amongst development partners for their engagement within the sector;
- exchange information between DPs, GoB and possibly also other (non-government) stakeholders related to progress, constraints, best practices etc in the achievement of goals set by the GoB in the sector and take a lead in developing coordinated responses in mitigating these constraints;
- facilitate common understanding and integration of policies, approaches and efforts of development partners in the sector; this would include an inventory of GoB and donor activities in the sector to be updated regularly;
- coordinate activities to avoid duplication and encourage complementarity in programming;
- provide feedback to the government and other concerned agencies;
- report to the LCG Plenary/ExComm and bring important questions up for discussion at their level as and when necessary;
- actively share and coordinate with other relevant LCG working groups, esp. the working groups for Water Supply and Sanitation, Environment, Agriculture, Climate Change and Disaster Management;
- develop and monitor progress on the sector results framework and contribute to the development and monitoring of the national-level Development Results Framework (DRF);
- active contribution towards formulation and implementation of Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100

Membership

Membership will be open to representatives from the Government, development partners, NGOs and universities. The membership list will be regularly reviewed by the working group, will be kept up to date by the secretariat and will be published on the WG WM web-page on the LCG web-site.

In addition to the regular members, resource persons will be invited from relevant organizations/agencies as and when required.

As and when required, joint meetings may be organized on common issues with other LCG working groups, in particular those addressing water supply and sanitation, disaster management, climate change, food security, transport and environment.

Members who are not able to attend any of the meetings of the working group will be kept informed of the proceedings of the meetings and their inputs and suggestions will be solicited as feasible.

Organizational set-up

The group will have two co-chairs and a secretariat. One co-chair will represent the GoB whereas the other will come from DP side. On the government side the position of Co-Chair will be occupied by the Secretary, Ministry of Water whereas on the DP side, a co-chair will be appointed for a period of two years by general consensus of the members of the working group.

The Co-chairs will jointly agree on the organization and composition of the secretariat. Whereas the relevant co-chairing DP is expected to facilitate the functioning of the secretariat, primary responsibility for the secretariat will be with the GoB.

The secretariat will maintain contact with the LCG Secretariat located in UNDP, will ensure that the information provided on the working group web page (i.e., ToR, membership list, inventory of ongoing programs, list of documents, links, etc.) will be kept up to date.

Functioning of the Working Group

The overall functioning of the working group will be guided by these ToR and, in relation to the wider context of the LCG, the attached LCG Working Group Guidelines (<http://www.lcgbangladesh.org/pages/guidelines.htm>).

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed and revised as appropriate at least every second year.

The working group will meet quarterly and more often if required. The two co-chairs will propose an annual meeting schedule and will, before each meeting, jointly decide on date, venue and agenda. With regard to the latter, a proposed agenda will be shared with the members well before each meeting and suggestions for additional points will as much as possible be taken into consideration.

Minutes of meetings will be prepared and a first draft circulated within two weeks of each meeting for members to review/comment to. The minutes will clearly distinguish concrete action points and progress on these action points will be presented for information and discussion as part of the agenda.

The working group will have an action-oriented character, and will when necessary utilize small thematic working groups to help achieve its objectives. These would be based on topics of relevance and may have short or long-term lives. The working groups may adopt member(s) from outside the full member agencies where expertise and technical input is needed.

Joint field trips and informal activities to strengthen the functioning of the Sub-group might be conducted.

An annual plan with tentative agenda (priority issues to be addressed) should be prepared and an annual summary report may be prepared at the end of the year. Both will be presented to and formally approved by the working group at the first meeting of each calendar year.