

*TA 6325 Piloting an Adaptive Approach
to Implement Integrated Water Resources
Management (IWRM) in Yom River Basin*

Final Report

Submitted by

**Thailand Water Resources Association
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1. Background

Letter of Agreement

The Department of Water Resources in cooperation with Thailand Water Resources Association submitted a proposal titled Piloting an adaptive Approach to implement Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) in the Yom River Basin to ADB requesting financial support under the Pilot and Demonstration Activities program for water (the PDA program). ADB approved the proposal and provided funding through the PDA program.

Letter of Agreement (LOA) for TA 6325-REG : Promoting Effective Water Policies and Practices (Phase 5) – Piloting and Demonstration Activity of Thailand : Piloting an Adaptive Approach to implement Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) in the Yom Basin was signed between the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Thailand Water Resources Association (TWRA) on 8 January 2008, and the project period is from 2 January 2008 to 31 October 2008. TWRA is the Executing Agency (EA) of the project in close cooperation with the Department of Water Resources (DWR).

Objective of the project/ expected results

The objectives of the PDA are to:

- (i) test the application of adaptive management approach to assist local government administrations, including YRBC, and civil society to implement IWRM principles in basin water resources management in the Yom River; and
- (ii) foster a consultative process where the relevant agencies are able to cooperate and pool their resources to support IWRM initiatives sponsored by the basin and sub-basin committees.

The expected results are :

- (i) provision of knowledge on IWRM principles to the local government administrations and civil society.
- (ii) creation of opportunities for the basin and sub-basin committees and stakeholders to formulate short term plans based on adaptive management approach and also begin to develop an over all basin plan with independent facilitation
- (iii) establishment of working procedures for all concerned agencies to support the local development initiatives with technical and financial assistance; and
- (iv) development and implementation of monitoring and evaluation processes to measure the performance of the basin organization, provincial and local administrations as a basis for determination of future assistance requirements.

2. Management Set-up

Management process

Since this PDA project is a result of close cooperation between the Department of Water Resources (DWR) and Thailand Water Resources Association (TWRA), and with the aim also to assist the work of the DWR as well as its regional office which over see the Yom River. Therefore, it was agreed that while TWRA serving as EA of the project, DWR will also appoint a working group within the department for implementation of the project and coordinate with TWRA. Furthermore it was necessary to have a regional working group to actually carrying out the activities within the basin.

Hence the management and implementation of the project fall under the responsibilities of two working groups, one within DWR and the other consists of members from key concerned agencies and representative of stakeholders.

2.2 The working groups

The central level working groups is a working consists of members within the DWR with the responsibility to coordinate and manage the implementation of the project, and names of the members shown in Appendix 1.

The regional working group consists of representatives from other key agencies and stakeholders within the Yom Basin with the responsibilities to formulate and execute the activities resulted from the adaptive management approach. Detailed responsibilities and names of the members shown in Appendix 2.

Furthermore, for convenient in communication and organization of small stakeholders group meetings, it was resolved to appoint two sub-working groups, one for the upper Yom which consists of Phayao and Phrae provinces and one of the lower Yom which consists of Sukhothai, Pichit and Pitsanulok provinces. Members of the sub-working groups drawn from the stakeholders representatives in the regional work group, and hence no duplication of work.

2.3 Resource Persons

As TWRA is the executing agent EA of the project, so Dr. Apichart Anukularmphai serves as project coordinator and resource person to assist in preparing the project activities as well as to facilitate meetings during the start up of the project, while for other meetings the chairs of the regional working group serves as chair of the meetings. The project also drawn resources persons from Naresuan University as well as Chiangmai University to assist in the training, preparation of work programs and data base. An evaluation of the project was also conducted by resource person from Naresuan University toward the end of the project.

3. Project Implementation

Implementation approach

The concept of this pilot project is different from the so called “Basin Planning” in two aspects; first the pilot project does not aim to come up with a basin plan as such, but rather it aims to get stakeholders involvement in identifying problems and possible solution based on local knowledge and the needs of the local people. Secondly, the project focuses on defining process and model for stakeholders participation in managing water resources through strengthening of local organizations rather than focusing on a basin plan which usually contains a lot of infrastructure projects.

In order to achieve the aforementioned differences, it is necessary to change the management approach of the project and to change the mind-set of those involved i.e. the two working groups of the project and selected stakeholders. Hence, the management approach was to undertake the project with two distinctive but parallel steps. The first step is to educate and raise awareness about Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), for there are still misunderstandings about IWRM. To some it means holistic planning approach which leads to the integration of other resources into a basin plan without much participation of stakeholder, or stakeholders participation was wrongly interpreted as to be informed by arranging meetings for stakeholders to be briefed about plans of projects without real participation of the stakeholder holder in the whole planning process. Actually, IWRM is a process which three practical principles, namely; to create an enabling environment for moving the IWRM process such as having a clear policy, having laws or regulations, provision of budget for water resources management. To define institutions’ role and organization set up which lead to organization set-up a various levels with clear responsibilities and strengthening of those organizations through training and awareness raising. Finally, to bring in the various management techniques such as creation of data base, new technology, enhancement of local knowledge etc. The second step is introducing IWRM into the implementation stage of the process. It is irony that to change the mind set or way of thinking from previous way into IWRM in a sudden or a short time is not possible, therefore the adaptive management approach was employed. The implementation of the project is a learning by doing process, by which simple objectives were set, and by carrying out the activities of the set objectives, results were discussed and new idea or objectives were set. Hence, through a series of workshops and some actual field activities, the project team learn to change and come up with the different ideas based on the realization of local conditions, constrains and new options provided by IWRM.

Implementation plan

The project work plan proposed under the project proposal was adopted as initial work plan for project implementation. However, with the adaptive management concept in mind, the agenda or activity of each meeting was opened for the working group to decide. Hence, after each meeting, activities to be followed and agenda for next meeting were adopted, then the outcomes or results were presented in the subsequent meeting. It was up to the working group to decide what next step or what activities they want to follow based on the field work or information they received through the various local stakeholders meetings they conducted. But this does not mean that there is no guideline or direction, actually the IWRM principle and process were followed. The activities undertaken during the project implementation shown in table 1

Table 1 Activities undertaken during the project

Activities	Actions	Time frame	Responsible party
1. Preparation for project start up	Explain the objective of the project and discuss implementation procedure with the target group	24- 25 January 2008	DWR region 9
2. To set up project's working groups	Prepare appointment orders to be signed by DG of DWR	First week of February 2008	DWR region 9
3. Collection of Yom basin information	Coordinate with concerned agencies to obtain relevant data	From February 2008 onward	DWR region 9
4. Conduct local stakeholders workshop to gather their perceived problems and suggestion to solve this problems	Conduct stakeholders meetings in Upper and Lower Yom	February 2008	Yom working group
5. To identify priority problems to be tackled	Conduct the second meeting to receive feed back from stakeholders workshop in order to formulate priority problems of Yom basin	3-4 March 2008	DWR region 9 and Yom working group
6. Formulate main issues and determine measures for solving the immediate issues	Conduct stakeholders meetings to gather their views on what to do with Yom	March 2008	Yom working group

Activities	Actions	Time frame	Responsible party
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7. Prepare short term activities through a series of meetings	1) Yom working group to gather opinions from stakeholders for setting up short term activities	April 2008	Yom working group
	2) Organize the third meeting to formulate short term plan	9-10 April 2008	DWR region 9
	3) Organize the fourth meeting to decide on immediate field actions	15 – 16 May 2008	DWR region 9
	4) Organize the fifth meeting to follow up	26 June 2008	DWR region 9
	5) Organize the sixth meeting to follow up	28 October 2008	DWR region 9
	6) Organize the seventh meeting to identify activities for next phase	16 November 2008	DWR region 9
8. Set up network of Sub-districts on both banks of Yom river	1) 1 st meeting of the network	19 August 2008	Yom working group
	2) 2 nd meeting of the network	20 August 2008	Yom working group
	3) 3 rd meeting of the network	9 September 2008	Yom working group
	4) 4 th meeting of the network	10 September 2008	Yom working group
	5) 5 th meeting of the network	11 September 2008	Yom working group
	6) 6 th meeting of the network	12 September 2008	Yom working group
	7) 7 th meeting of the network	13 September 2008	Yom working group
	8) Final meeting to summarize results of the network meetings	6-7 October 2008	Yom working group
9. Finalize results of the project	Final meeting to conclude work of the first phase and way forward	17 – 18 November 2008	DWR region 9

4. Results

Outcome of the series of meetings

The working group meetings and stakeholders meetings were aim to gather information and views from all the participants, and at the same time to discuss the issues together and to come up with new idea to solve the problems together with proposed activities. At the beginning of the project, participants follow the old process by raising a lot of water resources related issues and proposed projects to solve their problems. But as they understand more about IWRM and the need to manage rather than

to construct, then the focus start to shift from proposing a wide range of projects to classification of problem issues and small number of projects. The clear achievement is that stakeholders from Upper and Lower Yom begin to understand each other better and construction of Kaen Seurtang Dam was not an issue any more among them. Furthermore, a good relationship between the stakeholders and key agencies start to develop during the project period which is evident by the cooperation shown between the stakeholders and key agencies in conducting field survey and listen to the need of local people for some proposed project, and the agency quick respond in putting those requests into their annual plan.

Proposed short term plan and activities

As mentioned in 4.1, at the beginning there were a lot of projects from their own previous perception proposed, but as they realized that to really get all those projects implemented take time and may not solve their immediate problem. So the working group start to focus more on what are possible and also look to projects which can be done locally with their own resources or with minimum financial assistance from agencies. With this new idea, four small projects were selected and carried out with financial assistance from DWR for three projects while another one was financed by Local Administration fund. It is an encouraging development that while still waiting for big projects, the working group start to realize that there are potential for small projects with self help style, and focus on their real need.

Network of Sub-districts located along both banks of Yom river

It was during the fourth meeting that the participants come up with new idea that in order to get something really done, may be to tackle the Yom basin as a whole will take time and require much more effort and resources, so it is more logical to start with a small committed network to start some immediate actions and then to involve more stakeholders as well as expansion of area covered. The idea was enthusiastically accepted, and the formation of a network of Sub-districts located along both banks of the Yom river was created with participants from 98 Sub-districts, names of contact persons/ representative were identified (detailed can be found in the Network's meeting reports). It was the exercise in creating this Network that activities for the next phase were identified, and tentative work programs were proposed.

5. Lessons Learned

Changing of attitude/ thinking

The process in organizing meetings for real participations from both stakeholders and key line agencies create opportunities for exchange and understanding of views of other side which lead to frank exchange and cooperation. Also with the raising of awareness in IWRM and the adaptive management approach, new thinking emerged and the management aspect

of water resources was getting more attention than the development aspect. The creation of the Network of Sub-districts located along both banks of the Yom river was aimed to have a large group of stakeholders which share same idea and committed to solve priority problems with the local knowledge in managing the water and at the same time to carry out activities/ projects in a more coherent manner from the up-stream to down-stream.

Collection of simple data base

The idea of creating a simple data base from simple maps provided by each Sub-district is to prepare a practical information system which the stakeholders can readily understand and utilize. The priority issues identified can be used for setting up joint project between Sub-districts, between Districts and between Provinces. It is hope that the process will eventually lead to integration of projects for the whole basin through close cooperation and good understanding of the over all basin issues. Practical ideas for solving problems and interpretation of problems from stakeholders point of view will certainly help the line agencies to come up with better plan and projects.

Stakeholders participation

In most of the meetings, it was planned to have the working group met one day for follow-up of the progress of last meeting, and followed by another day with participation from group of selected stakeholder to discuss and exchange the result of the first day meeting. Participants of both groups learned to engage in dialogue and most of the invited stakeholders participate in active discussion. Though all the participants receive a small per diem and travel cost which just to cover their actual expenses, while they have to leave their work for the meeting. There were no complains and most of them show up regularly. This is a good sign that they got interested and are supportive of the project. Hence, it can be concluded that if the stakeholders were given opportunity to real participation and that they see benefit from their participation, then they are ready to play their role with minimum compensation required.

IWRM training

The IWRM concept was explained to the participants at the beginning, and the process was applied throughout the project, which is significant that representatives from key line agencies start to understand the process and engage in dialogue with stakeholders directly. Also, there were clear sign of closer cooperation between stakeholders and officials from line agencies. Training about the wetland rehabilitation, role of change agent and report writing were also conducted for the secretariat staff of DWR region 9, with the aim to strengthen their capacity to serve the working group and to serve the Yom river basin committee as well. These trainings were also part of the IWRM concept “the management instrument”, however the outcomes clearly point to the necessity to conduct more trainings for DWR region 9 staff in order for them to be really of help to the Yom River Basin Committee (YRBC).

6. The way forward

The working group together with some key stakeholders from Upper and Lower Yom had a lengthy review of the information obtained through the establishment of the Network exercise and resolved to identify 4 priority water resources related issues of the Yom basin as follow

Flooding problems caused by human activities and by nature

Lack of water for agriculture and domestic uses

Degradation of water quality caused by agriculture, industry and community

Siltation and erosion

Also a work plan for the newly established Network was prepared in order to request assistance from related line agencies and ADB which contains the following ;

A. Network development

A.1 Strengthen the network

A.2 Promote signing of MOU of all members of the Network and between members/ Sub-districts

A.3 Promote role of local community in initiation, inspection and maintenance of projects

B. Creation of data base

B.1 Collect and up-date of information

B.2 Establish information centre, and construct a geographic model of the Yom river

C. Short term programs/ measures

C.1 Forest planting and registration of planted trees

C.2 Set-up flood warning center

C.3 Rehabilitation of water way and wetland

C.4 Revitalization of traditional way of life and promotion of indigenous knowhow

English Translation

Subject : Appointment of Project team for the implementation of the
Piloting an Adaptive Management to Implement Integrated Water
Resources Management in Yom River Basin Project

The Department of Water Resources was assigned as implementing agency for implementing the Piloting an Adaptive Management to Implement Integrated Water Resources Management in Yom River Basin in corporation with the Asia Development Bank (ADB).

Therefore, in order for the smooth implementation of the project and to achieve its main goal in solving the flood and drought problems of the Yom Basin through the participation of all stakeholders, a working group to over see the implementation of the project with the following set-up and responsibilities was appointed

Organization set-up

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1. Director of DWR regional office 9 | Chair |
| 2. Mrs. Chadaporn Unhapanee
Bureau of Mass Promotion and Coordination | Member |
| 3. Mr. Phadet Saengsawan
Water crisis Prevention Centre | Member |
| 4. Ms. Kanokwan Yuovongse
Bureau of International Cooperation | Member |
| 5. Ms. Pilailuk Aksonratana
DWR region 9 | Member and
Secretary |

Responsibilities

1. To coordinate and implement the project smoothly, effectively and successfully
2. To report the progress of the project to the superiors at least once a month.

To take effect from

7 January 2008

Signed
(Mr. Adisak Tongkaimuk)
Director General

Appendix 2

English Translation

Department of Water Resource
Order 55/2008

Subject : Appointment of Working group for the project
“Piloting an Adaptive Management to Implement Integrated Water
Resources Management in Yom River Basin”

The department of Water Resources was assigned to be the implementing agency for the Piloting an Adaptive Management to implement Integrated Water Resources Management in Yom River Basin, which is one of the 25 Pilot Basin projects in Asia under the Asia Development Bank (ADB) financial support.

Therefore, in order for the smooth implementation of the project, and achieving the main project goal in solving the flood and drought problems of the Yom Basin through a participatory process, a working group of the said project which comprises of representatives from the Government agencies, and civil society from the upper Yom and Lower Yom were appointed as follow ;

Organization set-up

1. Pra kru Vijitthamnitez	Chair
2. Representative of Centre for the Study and Conservation of Yom Basin	Member
3. Representative of RID region 4	Member
4. Representative of Marine Department	Member
5. Mrs. Pakping Bruns	Member
6. Mr. Saenk Kwanyuen	Member
7. Mr. Seree Supajai	Member
8. Mr. Peng Bunyatane	Member
9. Mr. Teera Sankyoo	Member
10. Director for the coordination of Yom Basin management DWR region 9	Member and Secretary
11. Staff of DWR region 9	Member and Assistant Secretary

Responsibilities

1. To set short term action plan
2. To conduct grass-root level workshops of the Upper and Lower Yom Basin in order to receive feed back on problem issues and solutions
3. To formulate Vision and strategy for Upper and Lower Yom Basin
4. To implement activities according to the set plan
5. To coordinate, collect relevant information, monitor and evaluate the program as well as prepare action plan for next year.
6. To conduct other activities as assigned

To take effect from

1 February 2008

Signed
(Mr. Adisak Tongkaimuk)
Director General