
PREFACE: THE PROCESS FOLLOWED

The idea of this report was motivated by two ideas. First, an important element of the World Bank's 2003 Water Resources Strategy was to translate the general principles governing Bank engagement in the water sector into "Country Water Resource Assistance Strategies" which were tailored to the requirements of specific countries. Second, the 2004 World Bank Country Assistance Strategy for India signaled a major increase in Bank lending for water (including water resources, irrigation, water and sanitation and hydropower).

In discussions with the Ministry of Water Resources and the Planning Commission of the Government of India it was agreed that the Bank would undertake a study of the strategic challenges facing the water sector in India, and provide more specificity than the CAS on what the "trademark" ideas would be for the Bank's lending and non-lending activities in India.

The Bank commissioned the following background papers by prominent Indian practitioners and policy analysts:

- The evolution of national policies and programs (Mr. A.D. Mohile, former Chair, Central Water Commission)
- The evolution of water development and management: the perspective of the Planning Commission (Mr. A Sekhar, Adviser, Planning Commission)
- The evolution and performance of World Bank work on water in India (Dr. R.P.S. Malik, Delhi University)
- Water and growth (Prof. Ramesh Bhatia, Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi University)
- Water and poverty (Dr R.P.S. Malik, Delhi University)
- Water and environmental sustainability (George Varughese, Development Alternatives)
- Water and energy (Prof. Ramesh Bhatia, Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi University)
- Pricing and financing (Prof. Sebastian Morris, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad)
- Water rights and entitlements (Dr. Maria Saleth, International Water Management Institute, Colombo)
- Accountable institutions (Dr. Tushaar Shah, International Institute of Water Management, Anand)
- Moving to scale (Dr. Nirmal Mohanty, Infrastructure Finance Development Corporation)
- The political economy of change (Prof. V.S. Vyas, Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur)

The process included two major stakeholder consultations. In a Bank-hosted multi-stakeholder consultation in August 2004, the idea of the study was presented, and inputs on substance and process were made by about 50 individuals from the Union Government, Planning Commission, State Governments, the private sector, financial institutions, urban water supply utilities, NGOs, academics, professional associations, chambers of industry, bilateral and multilateral aid agencies, and UN agencies.

In January of 2005 the Ministry of Water Resources hosted a major consultation on "Challenges for Water Development and Management in India and Future Strategies", which was addressed by the Ministers and Secretaries of Finance and Water Resources, the Member for Water and Power of the Planning Commission, and the World Bank Country Director for India. The focus of the consultation was on the emerging themes from the Bank's study, the views of the Union and State governments, and the implications for World Bank involvement in water in India.

The title for this report is stolen – with kind permission from Tushaar Shah -- from that of the 2005 annual meeting of the IWMI-Tata Water Program, one of the many fora at which the ideas in this Report were discussed and refined.