SDG 6 IWRM SUPPORT PROGRAMME

# SDG 6.5.1 Stakeholder Consultation Report

## Cambodia

2 December 2023

# Cambodia's Optional Stakeholder Consultation Report

## Executive Summary

Cambodia accepted invitation from the UNEP to contribute to the 3rd Round SDG 6.5.1 Global Monitoring for 2023. The SDG 6.5.1 Focal Point for Cambodia from the Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology in collaboration with the GWP Cambodia with the support from GWPO, coordinated the Survey through Stakeholder Consultation Workshop held on 31 August with 13 participants from Non-Government institutions and on 20 October 2023 with 24 participants from the Government Line Ministries and Institutions. The participants included relevant water and related Line Ministries, Research and Academia, NGO, Civil Societies, and Independent Professionals (Annex 1).

The Stakeholder Consultation Workshop started with an overview of the previous monitoring and instruction of the current one, then the stakeholders were facilitated to review 33 sub-indicators one by one, discuss, and compare the progress made with the baseline in 2017 and progress made in the 2nd Round Monitoring in 2020 and make judgement on the score based on evidence (Annex 2). In addition to Stakeholder Consultation Workshop, experiences from the activities and projects implementation, the literatures search for evidence, and personal communication with relevant persons were also approached for additional information to fill up data/information gaps in the report. After completing the first draft, the draft report was sent to the SDG 6.5.1 Focal Point and Team of GWP Cambodia for review, then the final comments were incorporated, and draft was cleaned and consolidated and finalized for requesting approval from the Minister of Water Resources and Meteorology. After approval, the report with official cover letter was submitted to the UNEP.

The main findings from this survey is that Cambodia has made only a slight progress compared to the Second Round Monitoring (59) with an overall score 62 (Medium-high), with some improvement in Enabling Environment (66), Institutions and Participation (68) and Management Instruments (63), and without improvement in Financing (52). The present status of IWRM implementation in Cambodia has not moved further from the medium-high as there is insufficient fund for addressing challenges raised under each element and for taking recommended actions, and at the same time there are limited understanding and capacity in leading and implementing IWRM at all level, particularly at the sub-national level. If certain measures are not put in place immediately, Cambodia likely could not attain the global target by 2030.

The participants still strongly suggests that two critical actions leading to increase progress of IWRM implementation toward achieving target in 2030 should be in place, including:

(1) Capacity development and strengthening of the stakeholders, particularly at sub-national level for in-depth understanding and adequate practical skill to continue IWRM implementation; and

(2) Ensure budget availability through raising more fund, and mainstreaming IWRM elements into the national and sub-national plans for budget security.

The completed Survey Report for 2023 can be found in the document enclosed, namely "Cambodia_SDG6.5.1_3rdRound_Survey_FINAL_20Nov23".

## 1. Conclusions from facilitated discussions on Section 1: 'Enabling Environment'

Overall, the Government of Cambodia has created enabling environment for IWRM implementation across the country as can be reflected in the policies, laws and plans to support the IWRM implementation at national and sub-national level and regional levels that are in place to be used for guiding the works across the country. The key point from the discussion is that the status of Enabling Environment depends on the understanding, use and application of its elements by institutions at the national and other levels. The relevant points for score justification were the understanding, level of application, and commitment of relevant actors, implementors and beneficiaries of the water and related resources.

### a. What are the main challenges to progress in the country?

The main challenges to progress in the country for Enabling Environment continue to be the limited capacity and funding, particularly at sub-national level.

### b. How can the main challenges be addressed?

Develop and strengthen capacity of IWRM implementors at all level, particularly at sub-national and community levels; increase fund raising; and ensure that IWRM activities and principle are well integrated into their respective development plans with budget allocated for implementation.

### c. At the question level or in general, what is the perceived rate of progress, and what is the likelihood of reaching High or Very high implementation by 2030? Is there a need for national (interim) target setting (which may be taken up in more detail in Stage 2 of the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme)?

At the question level, the perceived rate of progress is Medium-high (66) with 5 score increased compared to the Second Monitoring in 2020 (61). The likelihood of reaching High implementation within the next 7 years by 2030 will be possible if recommended priorities and actions will be put in place immediately starting from 2024. To reach this achievement, there is need to set interim target in Stage 2 of the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme.

### d. What are the major points stakeholders do not agree on and why?

No

**e. Other interesting points of note from the discussion?**

- The Government tends to invest less in IWRM activities than in water infrastructures projects.
- Providing the Govenrment efforts and supports from Development Partners, it is hope that the policy for safe dringking water will be achieved by 2030.

2. **Conclusions from facilitated discussions on Section 2: 'Institutions and Participation'**

Instituitons and Participation is very important to the rest three components as it is about the range and roles of political, social, economic and administrative institutions that support the implementation of IWRM. It includes institutional capacity and effectiveness, cross-sector coordination, stakeholder participation and gender mainstreaming. The 2030 Agenda stresses the importance of partnerships that will require public participation and creating synergies with the private sector.

Overall, this component has made the most progress with 68 score. The key points is that all participants are well aware that participation and gender sensitivity in planning and all development activities is a must for Cambodia, and institutions and their capability (Human resources, capacity and finance) are driving force for the progress of this component. Communication with relevant persons revealed that the River Basin Management Committee established to take important role in IWRM implementation since its sub-decree was enacted has not been functioning due to limited or no capability to operate. The relevant points made around score justification were institutions and human resources, IWRM understanding, capacity to engage stakeholder participation and coordinate them, operate, and ensure sustainable function of the institutions that implement the IWRM, and funding.

**a. What are the main challenges to progress in the country?**

The main challenges to progress in the country is that institution at the sub-national level, that support the national level, is struggling with limited capacity (IWRM knowledge and practices as well as facilitation skills) and fund for strengthening the institutions and for stakeholders' engagement. A real example is the River Basin Management Committee.

**b. How can the main challenges be addressed?**

i) Capacity development on IWRM and skill in facilitating multi-stakeholders is critical for both national and sub-national level, particularly for the River Basin Management Committee Members; and
ii) Ensure fund security for plans implementation at sub-national level.

**c. At the question level or in general, what is the perceived rate of progress, and what is the likelihood of reaching High or Very high implementation by 2030? Is there a need for national (interim) target setting (which may be taken up in more detail in Stage 2 of the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme)?**

In general, the perceived rate of progress has been Medium-high (68) with an increased score of 4 compared to 2020 Monitoring (64). The likelihood of reaching High implementation within the next 7 years by 2030 will be possible if recommended actions will be highly committed in the real situation. To reach this achievement, there is need to set interim target in Stage 2 of the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme.

**d. What are the major points stakeholders do not agree on and why?**

No

**e. Other interesting points of note from the discussion?**

The River Basin Management Committee (RBMC) for managing the water resources and the river basin is a feasible institution for promoting the IWRM implementation at sub-national level. Nevertheless, the established RBMCs are not active due to limited capacity and funding, and their IWRM-based Basin Management Plan have not been implemented. It found that the planned activities of IWRM-based basin management plan are not integrated into the provincial development plan. Therefore, a close understanding of the RBMs' situation is needed.

## 3. Conclusions from facilitated discussions on Section 3: 'Management Instruments'

The key points from the discussions and inputs from relevant persons are that despite relevant management instruments are in place, understanding and know how to use those instruments by the implementors, actors and beneficiaries across the country are crucial. The relevant points made around justifying the rational for certain scoring were that: (1) There has been still limited dissemination and awareness raising as well as technical orientation of the management instruments at the sub-national level, particularly the river basin level; and (2) Budget and technical support should be available to activate the use of management instruments.

**a. What are the main challenges to progress in the country?**

The main challenges to progress in the country have been the lack of understanding of the management instruments due to limited dissemination to the practitioners and implementors at all levels, and the limited capacity in development of national knowledge hub for the water and related resources management due to limited technical human resources and funding.

**b. How can the main challenges be addressed?**

The above challenges can be addressed by: (1) Promote understanding of the management instruments, (2) Develop and strengthen technical capacity of the relevant practitioners, implementors and beneficiaries at all levels, (3) Improve technical capacity in knowledge hub for the water and related resources management, and (4) Ensure funding.

**c. At the question level or in general, what is the perceived rate of progress, and what is the likelihood of reaching High or Very high implementation by 2030? Is there a**

**need for national (interim) target setting (which may be taken up in more detail in Stage 2 of the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme)?**

In general, the rate of progress for this component has moved out from Medium-low (58) to Medium-high rate (63). The likelihood of reaching High or Very high rate of implementation by 2030 will be possible since many related activities are taken place, and if recommended actions will be committed in the real situation. At the same time, improvement in development of knowledge hub and data sharing network, particularly at the river basin level for RBMC is needed. To reach High or Very High implementation by 2030, there is need to set interim target in Stage 2 of the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme.

**d. What are the major points stakeholders do not agree on and why?**

There were some different opinions relating to definition of instruments, one participant suggested that it should refer to both, hard and soft technical instrument (Including equipment for measuring water level, modelling tool, etc.), and another one suggested that it refers to soft instruments (Such as framework, guideline, sub-decree, procedures, etc.) only.

**e. Other interesting points of note from the discussion?**

- Data sharing at national and Mekong regional level needs to be strengthened for increasing cooperation at national and regional level, particularly data and information on dam operation from upstream member countries.
- Aquifer of the whole country and Transboundary Aquifer need to be closey studied, their status assessed; management instruments identified; and management plan for their protection formulated and implemented.

## 4. Conclusions from facilitated discussions on Section 4: 'Financing'

Financing is a big challenge for improving progress of IWRM implementation in Cambodia, and result from the discussion during this Third Round Monitoring revealed that there has not been any improvement in this Financing compared to 2020 and the score remains 52. Relevant persons who were communicated outside the workshop provided the same comments. The relevant points made around score justification were that the recommended actions from 2020 monitoring were not taken, particularly at the basin level by the RBMCs, which are not active at present. All participants suggested that the issues of financing should be addressed urgently for improving the progress of the Enabling Environment, Istitutions and Participation and Management Instruments, and thus degree of IWRM implementation.

**a. What are the main challenges to progress in the country?**

The main challenges to progress in Financing have been the lower priority given to the investment on IWRM elements at national and sub-national level.

**b. How can the main challenges be addressed?**

(i) Integrate IWRM elements/activities into all water and water-related plans and infrastructures development and management projects in order to ensure funding and their implementation;
(ii) The budget for the implementation of the IWRM, shall be prepared from the bottom, one through the provincial budget and another through the concern sectoral ministry; and
(iii) Monitor the achievement by incorporating relevant indicators.

**c. At the question level or in general, what is the perceived rate of progress, and what is the likelihood of reaching High or Very high implementation by 2030? Is there a need for national (interim) target setting (which may be taken up in more detail in Stage 2 of the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme)?**

In general, there has not been progress compared to the Second Monitoring in 2020, and Financing remains to be Medium-low (52). The likelihood of reaching High implementation by 2030 will be likely possible, if all recommended actions will be implemented with strong commitment, and the national (interim) target will be set in more detail in Stage 2 of the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme.

**d. What are the major points stakeholders do not agree on and why?**

No

**e. Other interesting points of note from the discussion?**

Financing continues to be the main constraint and challenges for IWRM implementation in Cambodia, if this issue is not addressed at present, Cambodia will not achieve the Global Target by 2030.

## 5. Next steps

The key points from the consultation process regarding next steps are ways to ensure that recommended activities, particularly for activate the function and operation of the RBMCs need to be taken with high commitment, because they can push the progress.

The main challenges faced in this monitoring and reporting process were:

- The participants attending the workshop tend to be different persons and they are new to monitoring SDG 6.5.1. To address this challenge, the facilitator should be very knowledgeable in integration approach and integrated sectors, IWRM topics, and up to date of relevant documents, and skillful in leading the discussion and helping the participants to make judgement in scoring.
- To be able to agree on the status of each parameter of the four components, it needs to integrate opinions, it is time consuming. Thus, it needs to engage the right and relevant stakeholders in the monitoring process.

- The report preparation also is challenging, it requires person familiar with integration approach of IWRM implementation in the context of Cambodia and Mekong Region, as well as rich knowledge and experience related to all 33 detailed questions with supporting evidence.

It is pretty sure that Cambodia will not achieve the global target by 2030, providing the rate of progress for Business-As-Usual and National Targets set for 2030 during the consultation workshop (Target Setting under Annex B of the Survey Template). Our target setting was based on the fact that the degree of IWRM implementation in Cambodia faces budget gaps and the efforts that can be made by all with the future scenario of financing situation.

For accelerating degree of IWRM implementation, there is need to improve Financing at all, national and sub-national levels. Three main priorities below are recommended:

1. Development of IWRM Strategy 2024-2028 for funding and implementation at the country level,
2. Long-term IWRM Capacity Development Program at all levels, and
3. Revenue raising for IWRM elements at the community and river basin level, needs to to be assessed and planned for implementation.

The follow-up actions for the continuous monitoring of SDG Indicator 6.5.1 in the country will be: (1) Conduct the same survey with the Farmer Water User Community, the River Basin Committee and the Private Sector for assessing other relevant challenges to inform recommended actions for improving the progress of IWRM implementation; and (2) Follow up implementation of recommended actions.

## 6. Annexes

Annex 1: List of Participants
Annex 2: Agenda
Annex 3: Facilitator's Comments
Annex 4: Photos

## Annex 1: List of participants

| Name | Organisation | Position | Email address/ Contact No. |
|---|---|---|---|
| H.E. Mr Chhea Bunarith | MOWRAM | Permanent Secretary of State | 012890321 |
| Mr Thach Sovanna | MOWRAM | Director, Dep of Water Resources Mgt. and Conservatation | 012890321 |
| Ms Dom Thach | MOWRAM | Deputy Director, Dep. of Planning | 011930096 |
| Mr Ung Dararath | MOWRAM | Deputy Director | 017797937 |
| Mr Ly Chay | MOWRAM | Deputy Director | 012888937 |
| Mr Huy Danin | MOWRAM | Vice Chief Office | 017788875 |
| Mr Yuan Vanny | PDWRAM, Kompong Thom Proince | Chief office | 0978826888 |
| Mr Ros Rithy | PDWRAM, Prey Veng Province | Deputy Director | 012955967 |
| Mr Heng Rath Monida | PDWRAM of Kratie Province | Director | 012751285 |
| Mr Khai Soda | PDWRAM, Battambong Province | Deputy Director | 12828351 |
| Mr. Prak Lak | PDWRAM, Kandal Province | Deputy Director | 012828351 |
| Mr Oum Sovanna | PDWRAM, Ratanakiri Province | Director | 078275527 |
| Mr Khvan Pheaktra | TSA | Deputy Director | 011322118 |
| Mr Nie Tola | CNMC | Vice Chief, Planning Office | 016990933 |
| Ms Keo Thavy | CNMC | Gender Officer | 012 9155 79 |
| Mr Meas Sivoun | MOWA | Chief office | 0882015224 |
| Mr Sam Chanrith | MPWT | Deputy Director | 099666277 |
| Mr Nut Savat | FiA/MAFF | Officer | 086 292827 |
| Mr Kan Salan | GDA/MAFF | Deputy Director | 012620012 |
| Mr Ing Sokun | GDP/MOP | Deputy Secretary General | 087231230 |
| Mr Hearn Veasna | MME | Deputy Director | 012996334 |
| Mr Seng Eam Hor | MRD | Deputy Director | 011527211 |
| Ms Chhun Monika | MOE | Chief office | 077701333 |
| Mr Pok Chanty | MISTI | Director | 012799058 |
| Dr Pheng Sophea | B.N. Consultant | SDG 6.5.1 Facilitator | 012548964 |
| Ms Chea Seila | Wonders of the Mekong | Project Manager | 077555804 |

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| Mr Mak Buntheun | NGO Forum on Cambodia | Project Manager | 012396050 |
| Mr Peng Saroeun | Taket Farmer Water User Community | Leader | 061333423 |
| Mr Hor Sam At | Sdeykraum-Rohalsuong Fisheries Community | Deputy Leader | 077226022 |
| Mr So Unn | Boeung Krochap, Fisheries Community | Leader | 0884589059 |
| Mr Tes Sopharith | RFDMC, MRC Secretariat | Hydrologist Consultant | 012865061 |
| Mr Huot Khiev | CNMC | National Consultant | 012832489 |
| Mr Soun Nhak | Prek Te River Basin Community | Leader | 0883181929 |
| Ms Sin Angkear Sat | MOWRAM | National Consultant | 092232416 |
| Dr Mak Solieng | GWP Cambodia | Chair | maksolieng@gmail.com |
| Mr Khuon Komar | GWP Cambodia | Vice-Chair | ksamuon@gmail.com |
| Mr Kim Lay | GWP Cambodia | Assistant | Kimlay79@gmail.com |

**Other stakeholders engaged (not in workshops)**

| Name | Organization/Position | Email address / Contact no. | Summary of inputs provided |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ms Thin Saro | Ministry of Economics and Finance, Director, Department of General Affairs | Saro_thin@mef.gov.kh | Information on budget allocation at the sub-national level |
| Ms Ngin Navirak | UNOPS/GEF, Small Grants Project Manager | (+855) (0)12 844083 | Information related to access to small grants by the water communities |
| H.E. Mr Hell Tony | Tonle Sap Authority, Permanent Vice-Chairman | (+855) (0)12 883783 | Information on the River Basin Management Commitee |
| H.E. Mr Sin Visith | MOWRAM, Under Secretary of State | (+855) (0)88 8008006 | Information related to the River Basin Management Committee |
| Mr Dim Ratha | PDOWRAM Prey Veng Province, Technical Officer for FWUC in Prey Veng Province | (+855) (0)92 667646 | Information on FWUCs |

## Annex 2: Agenda

| Time | Activities | Responsibilities |
|---|---|---|
| 08:00-08:30 | Registration | Assistant, GWP Cambodia |
| 08:30-08:40 | Welcome & Opening Remarks | H.E. Chhea Bunrith<br>Permanent Secretary of State, MOWRAM |
| 08:40-08:50 | Overview of the SDG 6.5.1 Monitoring in Cambodia | Mr Thach Sovanna<br>Cambodia SDG6.5.1 Focal Point |
| 08:50-09:00 | 3rd Round SDG 6.5.1 Survey for 2023: Monitoring process and Technical Orientation | Dr Mak Solieng<br>Chair, GWP Cambodia |
| 09:00-10:00 | Review of monitoring results in 2020 and assess the progress of each indicator for 2023: ***Component 1: Enabling Environment*** | Facilitator and all Participants, chaired by H.E. Chhea Bunrith |
| 10:00-10:30 | Coffee break | |
| 10:30-12:00 | Review of monitoring results in 2020 and assess the progress of each indicator for 2023: ***Component 2: Institutions & Participation*** | Facilitator and all Participants, chaired by H.E. Chhea Bunrith |
| 12:00-13:30 | Lunch break | |
| 13:30-15:00 | Review of monitoring results in 2020 and assess the progress of each indicator for 2023: ***Component 3: Management Instruments*** | Facilitator and all Participants, chaired by H.E. Chhea Bunrith |
| 15:00-15:30 | Coffee break | |
| 15:30-16:30 | Review of monitoring results in 2020 and assess the progress of each indicator for 2023: ***Component 4: Financing*** | Facilitator and all Participants, chaired by H.E. Chhea Bunrith |
| 16:30-16:45 | Participants feedback on consultation process | Cambodia SDG6.5.1 Focal Point |
| 16:45 | Wrap up the results & Closing Remarks | H.E. Chhea Bunrith |

## Annex 3: Facilitator's Comments

Overall, the workshop worked well and enabled us to reach into complete gathering of information needed on progress of IWRM implementation for the Third Round SDG 6.5.1 Survey Report for 2023. We had good interventions from the Chairman and SDG 6.5.1 Focal Point, Facilitators with high experience and the participants were fairly represented and actively engaged. As promised, the Farmer Water User Community was engaged in this round. The participants were well facilitated and they were enthusiastic and dynamic in the discussion and had made significant contribution to the survey and some of them even sent documents, data and information to us after the workshop. Important point to be noted is that in the future, we should not separate the Government and Non-Government participants in two different workshops, because we experienced no interaction of inputs between both groups of participants and missed the interaction between actors and beneficiaries. Ensuring more representatives to contribute their voices and inputs in the monitoring process is very important. In the future, we will try to engage the private sector and more River Basin Management Committee Members in the monitoring process.

With reference to the Survey Instrument, most questions are clear for the technical experts and facilitators, while for some participants, particularly new participants and those of sub-national and community levels, they need some clarification and explanation. The criteria for rating in combination with narrative answers are very useful and helpful in the progress assessment and scoring, without which it would be difficult to assess the degree of implementation and reach into consensus from all participants. One participant suggested that the survey template should be sent to the participants one week before the workshop for pre-understanding the questions. Actuslly, the questionnaires was sent to those invited participants who confirmed their attendance. This can be improved in the future.

From our role as facilitators, we observe this workshop a well coordinating process of participatory monitoring, which also enabled understanding of the SDG 6.5.1 survey. Most participants also observed the same (Based on their feedback below) and suggested to maintain this approach.

From the Participants Feedback Survey, it shown that most of participants (89%) were in active age (between 35-65) and only four were aged from 66 up, but they are still very active, and at the same time most of them were men (84%) and only 6 were women. They were categorized into Government Line Ministries and Institutions (65%), Research/Academia, Independent Professionals, Civil societies (Fisheries Communities, Farmer Water User Community, River Basin Community), Non-Governmental Organization, and Other: GWP Cambodia.

Their feedback based on the survey questions can be summarized as follows:

1) The consultation process met its objectives very much so and satisfactorily.
2) The consultation process was very much so and satisfactorily well organised.
3) Extent of expressing their opinion during the consultation process was high for the majority of them (very much so, satisfactory), and partly only for a very few of them.

4) Extent that their opinions reflected in the final country response of the SDG 6.5.1 survey also was high for most of them (very much so and satisfactory), and partly only for a very few of them.
5) Extent that the final country response of the SDG 6.5.1 survey identified relevant challenges to IWRM implementation in Cambodia was high for all of them (Some said very much so, and some said satisfactory).
6) The participants had the following suggestions regarding possibility for the SDG 6.5.1 consultation process in Cambodia to be improved in the future:
    - Most participants were satisfied with the consultation process and commented that it was already adequate, good enough, and should maintain this good process in the future.
    - One participant suggested that the consultation process should gather all stakeholders, including both Government and Non-Government in one workshop only, and one participant suggested to allow individual scoring.
7) Other comments on the SDG 6.5.1 consultation process from the participants were:
    - The workshop enabled environment for expressing opinions, induced high interests, and good discussion.
    - The participants who were invited to express their opinions and inputs in the consultation process were diverse stakeholders, and this was very relevant for monitoring degree of IWRM implementation.
    - Monitoring process was very good that enabled more understanding on the SDG 6.5.1 Indicators.
    - The Questionnaires should be provided to the participant one week before the workshop for pre-understanding the questions.