



SDG 6.5.1 Stakeholder Consultation Report

Lesotho

PREPARED BY

SGD 6.5.1 FOCAL POINT: MRS. LINEO RAMAISA

ORGANISATION: DEPARTMENT OF WATER AFFAIRS

**CONSULTATION FACILITATOR: MRS. MATSOLO MIGWI, INTERGRATED
CATCHMENT MANAGENT**

REPORTING PERIOD: OCTOBER 2023

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Consultation was done by means of phone calls, whatsapp and a workshop. The main convening organisations were both governmental and non governmental organisations, present institutions included Department of Water Affairs, Commissioner of Water, All 4 projects within the water sector (LLRWSSP, LLWDP-II, LLWDP-III, and ICM/ReNoka), Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Technologies for Development, Department of Range Resources Management, Department of Environment and others. The institution responsible for reporting/focal point is The Department of Water Affairs. It was concurred that there is indeed room for improvement, especially on Enabling Environment and Institutions and Participation more especially with current implementation of ICM. However, stakeholders were a bit worried on issues of finance and management instruments. They felt like the government is not committing enough investment in those two thematic areas and the county still has a long way to go. The completed survey document for Lesotho reporting on SDG 6.5.1 can be found at <http://iwrmdataportal.unepdhi.org/>

2. CONCLUSIONS FROM FACILITATED DISCUSSIONS ON ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

(a). STATUS AND PROGRESS

Based on discussion from the stakeholder workshop it was clear that the Policies, Laws and Strategies that govern water resources management exist in Lesotho and are based on IWRM. Since the last reporting which was in 2020, water resources monitoring has been ongoing through implementation of various projects in the water sector including the major one which is implementation of Integrated Catchment Management in Lesotho. The objectives of the Lesotho Water and Sanitation Policy (**LWSP**) are to promote: a) the proper management of the country's water resources and its sustainable utilization; b) coordination and coherence in the management and development of water and other related natural resources, in order to maximize the resultant socio-economic benefits without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems; and c) harmonisation of processes and procedures followed by different development partners and other stakeholders in order to optimise available internal and external resources as well as ensure timely implementation of sector programmes

On national water resources law, Lesotho still operate under the Water Act 2008, however it must be noted that for the first time, Lesotho is now in the process of developing a National Irrigation Policy. The stakeholder validation workshop for such a policy has been conducted. Issues of Water Resources management, allocation and permitting are addressed in that upcoming policy. Again

another development is that Soil and Water Conservation Bill is also underway. The Current Environmental Act of 2008 has seen quite a huge development, especially on mechanisms of enforcement. The Country has now incorporated Defence and National Security under the Ministry of Environment to ensure that people comply with laws regarding management of water resources. Again there are now cases awaiting in courts of law against those who violate environmental laws, compliance is now a national priority. On the issue of whether the country has an IWRM Plan, It was concurred that the country does not have a national IWRM plan, at the same time it was concluded that since the entire Lesotho falls within Orange Senqu River basin, that ORASECOM IWRM Plan for 2014 indeed belongs to Lesotho. Through the ORASECOM IWRM plan Lesotho is now implementing The SAP/NAP implementation project on Mohokare River – Reducing Stress on Water Quality.

On issues of climate change, whenever Department of Meteorology (LMS) do weather forecast, they normally invite The Department of Water Affairs to present water situation and to convey the messages to the nation. The Climate Change Policy 2017, encapsulate water resource as one of its key thematic areas under policy statement 2. It advocates for enhancement and resilience of water resources by promoting Integrated Catchment Management, ensuring access, supply and sanitation. In addition, The Long term Water and Sanitation Strategy 2016 under key focus area II, advocates for climate change and water resource monitoring and assessment. As a result, of this key focus area, the water sector holds Water Sector Coordination Meeting every year to gather progress from all water departments including Lesotho Meteorological Services.

On Sub-national water resources policies or similar, Lesotho operates on one policy. It is geographically unique, in that all laws governing the country are national, and it is worth mentioning that the National ICM plans which emanates from The Long Term Water and Sanitation Strategy, 2016, cascades to the grassroots level through implementation at sub-catchment level. The Department of Water Affairs (DWA) through with the support of Millennium Development Challenge (MCA) have so far developed The National IWRM framework, which will later be followed by a fully National IWRM Plan. On the other hand ICM plans are being developed for 2 sub catchments, namely, Mohokare and Makhalleng. For **Basin/aquifer management plans** or similar, **based on IWRM**, Lesotho operates under The ORANGE SENQU IWRM PLAN 2014 (entire Lesotho covered) and as mentioned previously the IWRM Plan is now implementing The SAP/NAP implementation project on Mohokare River – Reducing Stress on Water Quality and The SADC GMI implementation of groundwater monitoring boreholes in Lesotho. So far 20 boreholes have been constructed.

Since the previous reporting, the transboundary water resources management has realized some developments the basin has developed basin-wide Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Environmental flows in where all riparian states are required to follow a standard procedure in conducting EIA and e-flows. Again the Lesotho-Botswana Water Transfer project MOU has been signed. On the other hand, the Lesotho Highlands Water Development Authority (LHDA) is now

in the process of implementing Phase II which construction of (Polihali) dam, while the Joint Basin Survey (JBS 3) was conducted by ORASECOM riparian states in 2021 following JBS 2 which was conducted in 2015.

(b). CHALLENGES

The ecological aspect of the transboundary water resources management was still not yet addressed as was put forward in previous reporting. Most of our policies especially those relating to water resources management are outdated and some which never existed before are still on drafting stage. Previously stakeholders indicated that communities at grassroots level should be informed when the Policies and Laws are reviewed. Of course they are being informed, for instance, the Ministry of Natural Resources has undertaken extensive consultations for review of the Water Policy. All districts and local councils took part and the same has been happening for other related policies. However, stakeholders for this reporting year are still not satisfied, they indicated that even after the policy has been enacted into law, there should be ongoing monitoring to ensure enforcement. They clearly indicated that, there is a need to establish regulations and by-laws for Water Act and related laws. Silo mentality within water resources management is now being addressed by holding Water Sector Coordination Meetings each year to report on progress and to see how other departments are performing so that where there are synergies they can collaborate. The main objective on establishment of ICM was and is still is to ensure coordination on water and land initiatives within the country.

(c.) WAY FORWARD

The current Water and sanitation Policy 2007 is under review, it is only waiting for Cabinet approval. The recommendation was to give the new policy timeline. Other policies related to Water resources which were mentioned by the stakeholders during the workshop are The Water Act which is under review, the Lesotho National Irrigation Policy Bill which is being drafted for the first time in Lesotho and The Soil and Water Conservation Bill which is also still at draft stage. The new Water Bill, is purely based on Water Resources Management unlike the 2008 which was a combination of water resources and water supply and services. Through participatory approach, Lesotho has developed 2 IWRM plans for Upper Mohokare and Makhalaneng which are anticipated to be completed by March 2024 while IWRM plans for the entire 6 pilot areas within the ICM programme is anticipated to be completed by December 2024. In addition, MCA Caledon River Weir Plan is still under negotiations with government of South Africa. Lesotho wants to use water from the Mohokare Transboundary River to harness water for irrigation since Lesotho uses only 30% of the water from the entire SENQU basin.

The scoring for this section is 64 which is medium high but a bit lower than the previous reporting which was 68. Since previous reporting the country has seen various improvements on this section however most of the things are hindered by the review of the policy, once the policy is approved by the cabinet things will fall into place and by 2030 the country will manage to reach very high score.

3. CONCLUSIONS FROM FACILITATED DISCUSSIONS ON INSTITUTIONS AND PARTICIPATION

The status for institutions is that authorities have the capacity to effectively lead IWRM implementation because departments, Institutions and projects have their own plans and implement them, for example, Department of Water Affairs has share some activities with soil and water conservation, range resources management, environment and other land and water institutions. When it comes issues on involving mines and other developments, governments departments come together to address issues. However, it must be noted that the silo mentality is not hundred percent eradicated but there is improvement. With the implementation of Integrated Catchment Management, the country has seen such an improvement of at least 70 percent on a scale of 0-100. Stakeholders concurred that for the country to succeed on this issue, there a need to intensify coordination, to work on the periodic M&E which should be more integrate and to ensure regular interactions among stakeholders. They clearly felt that “symbolic consultation should get high level buy-in.

Inclusion of all stakeholders, such as women, youth and vulnerable people is still a challenge. Inclusion of all groups appears in most policies and legal instruments but there are no follow-ups on whether this is occurring. The Ministry responsible for gender highlighted that because of poor coordination, IWRM may even be doing more however, they feel like they are not normally given platform as people coordinating gender issues to participate in some planeriess. Regardless they felt that indeed as compared to others, IWRM is doing much better because for example, they mentioned that the new water policy has indeed incorporated gender issues, the policy bill even has dedicated Policy Statement No. 12 to Gender Issues.

Even though coordination needs to be strengthened, Coordination between national government authorities representing different sectors on water resources policy, planning and management was seen during the review of Water Act, water and sanitation policy and water services bill whereby the coordinated efforts were taken nationwide with all national authorities involved. On Climate Change, specific cross-sectoral coordination mechanisms between water and climate (adaptation and mitigation) policy, planning and management at the institutional level and their degree of functionality is done every year through the Office of The Commissioner of Water. In that Water Sector Coordination Meeting all water institutes, including Lesotho Meteorological Services are represented. Again Lesotho’s Long Term Water and Sanitation Strategy (2016) under Key Focus Area II call for collaboration on climate change, water resources and water infrastructure development. It clearly stipulates that issues of climate change adaptation and mitigation should be taken into consideration in implementing water sector projects. In addition, stakeholders agreed that public gatherings are public engagements are conducted. There are community committees that engage often with government institutions about water. On way forward, the recommendation was that here is need to improve more on engagements and advocacy on Climate change and

adaptation. There is need for improvements in sectorial-coordination for improved planning and implementation.

The progress is 61 which is medium-high. The issue of stakeholder engagement and participation is at the core in the implementation of the ICM and IWRM Programme. One of the outputs in this programme is effective, efficient and inclusive institutions. There are activities that are dedicated in developing mechanisms and systems of including all stakeholders at all levels. The importance of capacity development of all stakeholders, especially of communities to develop their own plans for implementation as well as to monitor and evaluate them cannot be over-emphasised. ICM has been facilitating and still continues to undertake capacity, skills and knowledge of public, private sector and civil society for sustainable ICM and IWRM development. What is preventing the country to get to high or very high is the fact that there are neither regulations bio-laws for water resources laws and relating ones. There is a likelihood of the country reaching very high score in 2030.

(a).The stakeholders agreed on all the points addressed.

(b.) Other interesting points of note from the discussion

Creation of a shared vision about water resources must be done so that motivation is the same. This can be done by creating tools or guidelines for planning and management of water resources that must be followed by every stakeholder.

Since previous reporting, ICM/ReNoka in collaboration with WaterNet and The National University of Lesotho has developed IWRM and ICM Master's Degree Programme for students including those who are already employed in land and water sectors. Students can now even apply for internships in the water sector, not only that, all stakeholders from natural resources were involved in developing modules for the programme. The Water sector can now give students problems they need solutions on. There are now exchange programmes for officers to appreciate IWRM more from other countries. In fact some of our colleagues from Department of Water Affairs and now on exchange programme in Zimbabwe.

When it comes to private sector participation in water resources development, management and use, it was clear that private sector participation unlike public sector is a huge challenge. Stakeholders came to the conclusion that, even though sectors such as mining, construction, industries etc., are engaged and involved in water resources management, development and use, the issue of protection, compliance and adherence to the law is still a big stumbling block. Stakeholders called for a need to establish a formal platform of communication with the private sector. **The status of Basin/aquifer level organizations** for leading implementation of IWRM is deemed very high due to the fact that ORASECOM and SADC GMI are assisting with the implementation of IWRM nationally.

4. CONCLUSIONS FROM FACILITATED DISCUSSIONS ON MANAGEMENT INSTRUMENTS

Since the previous reporting, there is not much change or improvement when it comes to management instruments. The main challenges in the country were found to be lack of funds, lack of human resource, lack of enforcement as well as lack of up to date tools, equipment and models to assist in making well informed decisions. Monitoring is mostly activity-oriented, coverage is limited because monitoring is project/activity based, data is not consistent and as such cannot be relied upon in decisions making. Some of the available information is in raw form and becomes difficult to understand and use to useable produce information. Equipment available is outdated and there is a lack of maintenance plan. There are a few people with the technical expertise to maintain the available instruments. There is also limited geo-referencing for the water supply network that hinders monitoring in real-time water use. To monitor who has water permits the Department of Water Affairs is mapping water users although this also has technical limitations.

To address the out dated instruments challenge, new and improved instruments can be used such as the automatic tools being used in developed countries. This prevents data gaps by providing consistent data. Through localization of project related material, new and up to date instruments will be kept functional well beyond the project's life. To further ensure the safety of the instruments, a bottom-up approach should be used in which people at the grass-roots are also included in the decision making process. The country through the Mohokare Water Quality Project is undertaking citizen science however, it still needs to be further developed. Management Instruments should be included in the curriculum to help in addressing the main challenges. Making informative reports and managing interactions was also suggested as a way to address the main challenges. Integration between all sectors involved is also one of the ways to address the main challenges. An increase in the budget allocated towards the water sector also help increase the lack of funds challenge. Constant field work with user-friendly frameworks (data sharing protocols), and requesting for support from development planning so that it informs national reporting also can help in national monitoring of water availability (surface and groundwater. On sustainable and efficient water use management the water sector is advised to initiate outreach projects to raise awareness on reducing water use and sustainable use of water resources. The sector should be deliberate about programs on water reuse and recycling to feed into other programs such as agricultural programs. The water utilities should have a clear water leakage management and instruments and improve on their recording system of water allocation and users to monitor use.

When it comes to pollution control from the national level, it was established that indeed the country has instruments but law enforcement is very low. Verbal and written warnings to illegal water users are done but limitations on delivery of letter across the country catalyses zero compliance. Stakeholders on way forward came to conclusion that "polluter pays principle" must be enforces while at the same time revising fees and taxes to the polluters. On issues of

management of water-related ecosystems and biodiversity from the national level it was clearly stipulated that there are plans for water allocation, ICM project focuses on ecosystem services approach. Piloting ICM management plans on sub-catchment level is an ongoing program it is anticipated that by the end of 2014 all six pilot sub-catchments will have complete catchment management plans. Currently ICM is working on plans for 2 pilot sub-catchments which are anticipated to be completed by March 2024. It must be highlighted that the issue of “payment for ecosystems services”, has not yet been incorporated in national management plans. On way forward, stakeholders advocated for scaling-up deep and out to inform best practice on ecosystem-based adaptation measures. Targets and indicators of ecosystem management must align with SGD 13 and 15.

On reduction of water related disasters, Lesotho Meteorological Services normally issues weather and climatology status warning citizens of possible disasters. There is still lack of advocacy to citizens on the importance of avoiding disasters. e.g. no preparedness on agricultural practice that are resilient to drought, or people driving during snow season. Approach is still very proactive when dealing with disasters e.g. Disaster Management Authority (DMA) approach. Projects still lack mainstreaming climate adaptation principles in the execution therefore compromising the health and sustainability. There is lack of data aggregation and no clear data sharing protocols across various stakeholders. The recommendation was to encourage compressive data and information management amongst water users. Technical data must be analysed so that it useful, have a dissemination plan of climate projects. Existing policies touching on data management should have regulations that guide data management and there is a need for national data base.

When it comes to basin management instruments, ORASECOM conducts Joint Basin Surveys JBS (2021) every five years and the environmental flows. These give the member states adequate information and hence limited stakeholder groups an access to the information. Results from JBS and E-flows should give information on river morphology. Results of such basin level survey should inform national policies and priorities so that everyone can adhere. **On aquifer management instruments** monitoring coverage is very low, done through boreholes that are sometimes vandalised, captured for community use or yield gets low. It was therefore recommended that the results from the surveys should be packaged and disseminated in such a manner that it benefits all stakeholders, at national and grassroots level. At the same time for basin aquifer management stakeholders agreed that there is a need to sensitise users about the importance of protecting monitoring boreholes and promoting multi-level cooperation within the water sector.

On Data Information sharing and transboundary data and information sharing stakeholders concluded that operation is still in silos however, through ICM project, there is an initiative to push for data and information management to create an enabling environment for data sharing within the water sector. Revision of geo-spatial regulations on the table. Moreover, ORASECOM through joint surveys share data, water treaties also have the component. Despite these improvements, stakeholders recommended that there is a need for inclusive data and information

governance legislative frameworks. Push for political will in various departments to prioritise legislative frameworks for data management and M&E.

The perceived rate of progress is very slow and as such it is highly unlikely that by 2030 there will be Very high implementation. This section score 48 which is an improvement from 37 which was scored in 2020. This is evident given the ever decreasing budget allocation for management instruments. The score could have been much higher, it was hindered by the fact that the country does not have sub national water authorities for water resources management, however it is believed that once the Water act has been reviewed such hindrances will be addressed. Again there is a need to establish a formal communication platform for private sector on issues of IWRM and water resources management at large. The New Bill will also address the issue of gender which seems to have greatly affected the score negatively.

(a).What are the major point's stakeholders do not agree on and why?

There were no major points stakeholders did not agree upon.

(c.).Other interesting points of note from the discussion?

Lesotho Meteorological Services convey technical language in conveying messages, such technical terminology is not coined for a typical Mosotho to understand. Information should be user-friendly and must be disseminated in Sesotho.

5. CONCLUSIONS FROM FACILITATED DISCUSSIONS ON FINANCING

Key points and overall messages from the roundtable discussions and reporting back, as well as inputs received outside of the workshop. Include relevant points made around justifying the rationale for certain scoring, or divergences in scoring where applicable (e.g. between different stakeholder groups, differences in scores from different areas/levels).

(a). CHALLENGES

Stakeholders agreed that, budgets for water resources infrastructure and development at all levels are limited and sources of funding even though are available, allocation of funds is however misplaced because the current monetary value of IWRM does not speak the layman's language for everyone to understand. Only minimum funds are allocated to green infrastructure. ICM plans are not fully developed, therefore there are no structures to guide needs for our budgets. However, it was noted that there is a Bill proposing mechanisms for fund-raising, Biodiversity bill 2021. Moreover there is revenue from water us permits, leboella, permits and sand mining, however it is

not enough to cover issues of water resources management. They concluded that the budget is low for protection and management of water resources compared to the budget for development of infrastructure.

b). WAY FORWARD

To address these challenges, it was suggested monetary value of IWRM should be presented in layman's language so that even Planners representing Project Steering Committee made up of Economists can understand. Moreover, stakeholders suggested development of funding programme specifically dedicated to IWRM. Eventhough it is not at a bigger scale, ICM to a larger extend still do provide finance for other activities related to IWRM. On financing transboundary Cooperation, Lesotho is contributing subscriptions in platforms like ORASECOM, and SADC, LHWP and RAMSAR Convention on Wetlands of International Importance. Stakeholders further indicated that, there's a need for IWRM fund with proper mechanisms and it should be institutionalised, with regulations and mandate. That will attract even more funding.

The progress is medium-low for financing and this section scored the lowest at 40 which is defined as medium low as compared to the previous scoring which was at 15 (very low).This means that the country may have improved by 2030.

ICM Programme is facilitating the development of the Lesotho Water Security Investment Programme (LWSIP). LWSSIP aims at leveraging financial resources from various sources such as development partners, private sector actors and regional and national stakeholders to support IWRM implementation. The Programme will also determine a sustainable, long-term, financing, and investment mechanism based on revenues (levies, tariffs, fees, investments) collected from the catchment services on the other hand. Hopefully the country will improve its financing mechanisms that it goes to a higher score.

(a). What are the major points stakeholders do not agree on and why?

Stakeholders agreed on all points.

(c.) Other interesting points of note from the discussion?

Involvement of technical officers in budget planning for water resources management and development was an interesting point as stakeholders shared the same view on how this can help to enhance appropriate budget for water resources management infrastructure and development in the country. The need to instill urgency for water budget allocation with planners during budgeting was similarly underscored

6. NEXT STEPS

Key points from the closing remarks and comments, including cross-cutting challenges and ways to overcome them, reflections on the overall rate of progress and likelihood of achieving global targets by 2030, recommendations for next steps for accelerating IWRM implementation, and follow-up actions for the continuous monitoring of the SDG 6.5.1 indicator in the country.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: List of Participants

Annex 2: Agenda

Annex 3: Facilitator's Comments

Annex 4: Photos

Annex 1: List of participants

Name	Organization	Position	Email address
S. Phate	Lesotho Water Partnership	Chairperson	seritiphate@gmail.com
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Other stakeholders engaged (not in workshops)

Name	Organization/Position	Email address	Summary of inputs (e.g. question number(s), or full survey)

Lineo Rakaibe	Department of Gender	lineorakaibe@gmail.com	S 2 (c) and (d)
Manthati Sekhamane	Department of Crops	msmanthati@gmail.com	S 1 (a).
Hlabaki Khalala	Lesotho Meterology Services	jkhalala@gmail.com	4.1 (b),3.1(c),2.1(b) and 1.1 (c).

Please note that this Annex is supplemented by information in Annex E of the SDG 6.5.1 survey instrument, which reflects on the level of engagement from different stakeholder groups.

Annex 2: Agenda

LESOTHO IWRM SGD. 6.5.1 SURVEY SUPPORT
STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION & VALIDATION WORKSHOP

26 SEPTEMBER 2023

Time	Session Topic	Responsibility
08:30-09:00	Registration	DWA
09:00-09:10	Welcome by Chairperson LWP	LWP Chair
09:10- 09:20	Overview on Country Status	National Focal Person
09:20-09:30	Scoring	Consultant
09:30-10:00	Formulation of Groups	Consultant and Facilitator
10:00-10:30	Tea Break	All
10:30-13:00	Breakout-groups	All
13:00-14:00	Lunch	All
14:00-15:45	Feedback	All
15: 45-16:00	Tea Break	All
16:00-16:05	Wrap Up	National Focal Person
16:05-16:10	Closing Remarks	LWP Chair

Annex 3: Facilitator's Comments

No comments.

Annex 4: Photos



Workshop participants



Facilitator and Focal person

