



Global Water
Partnership
Philippines



SDG 6.5.1 Stakeholder Consultation Report Philippines

December 2023

Stakeholder Consultation Report for SDG 6.5.1 Philippines

Executive Summary

The United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) invited the National Focal Point (NFP) to report on the SDG Indicator 6.5.1 in April 2023.

The National Water Resources Board (NWRB) as the SDG indicator 6.5.1 Focal Point bears the primary responsibility of coordinating the monitoring process, which encompasses stakeholders' consultations. Furthermore, the NWRB is accountable for presenting both preliminary and final survey reports to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), which acts as the custodian agency for the indicator.

As part of the commitment, every three (3) years, NWRB spearheads the country level monitoring and reporting on the progress and status of SDG indicator 6.5.1; "Degree of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) implementation. The 2023 Country Reporting initiatives was conducted by the NWRB along with the Philippine Water Partnership (PWP). An external consultant was hired to design and facilitate the conduct of stakeholders' consultation as well as further enhance the customized local survey questionnaire for various sectors/stakeholders.

An inception/orientation meeting for 2023 IWRM Country Report/Survey was conducted for two (2) days at the University Hotel of the University of the Philippines from August 2-3, 2023 to enable sector focused discussion of issues relative to the progress of IWRM implementation and localization. The first day was attended by key staff and representatives of the National Government Agencies (NGAs) and focused on the review of the customized local survey questionnaire for NGAs as well as policy and program developments, emerging issues, concerns, and challenges relative to IWRM implementation by NGAs. The second day attendees were from the Local Government Units (LGUs), River Basin Organizations (RBO), Private Sector, Non-government Organizations (NGOs) and Academic institutions with IWRM related initiatives. It surfaced enablers and barriers to IWRM implementation as well as stakeholders' engagement and intersectoral collaboration. It also pinpointed areas for strengthening as well as pathways for advancing more synergetic and effective IWRM implementation and localization in RBO's and LGU's. The meeting was conducted both onsite and online.

During the conduct of the two days meeting, key stakeholders were oriented/re-oriented on

the IWRM, SDG 6.5.1, survey questionnaire and the matrix used to assess key elements and dimensions of IWRM implementation. Furthermore, it allowed review and enhancement of the existing customized IWRM questionnaire for various types of stakeholders. It was also done to ensure accurate capturing of the Degree of IWRM implementation in the country and increase cross-sectoral collaboration and common understating.

Agenda for the conducted inception meeting included discussion on the following four key dimensions for IWRM Global survey:

- Enabling environment: Policies, laws and plans to support IWRM implementation.
- Institutions and participation: The range and roles of political, social, economic and administrative institutions and other stakeholder groups that help to support implementation.
- Management Instruments: The tools and activities that enable decision-makers and users to make rational and informed choices between alternative actions.
- Financing: Budgeting and financing for water resources development and management

There were refinements of the draft survey that the participants will accomplish. The survey form using google form link was given to participants for easy collection of data and survey process. Four customized online survey forms were developed and sent to different stakeholders at the national and sub-national level. This was discussed with the NWRB management and the consultant for validation and additional comments and inputs to the result of the IWRM survey. The result of the google survey was consolidated, summarized and presented to the stakeholders on November 29, 2023 through zoom meeting.

The outcome of the consultation process and the final score indicated that Philippines is dedicated to achieving implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management by 2030. In the first state of the nation address of President Ferdinand Marcos, he mentioned of the creation of the Department of Water Resources (DWR) and adopting the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) as the strategic framework for national water management. There are many challenges in the management of water resources specifically on water governance. The creation of the Water Resources Management Office (WRMO) under Executive Order No. 22 is the first step to water reforms while the DWR is not yet in placed. The WRMO is crafting the Integrated Water Resources Management Plan to serve as a national policy to harness water supply to capitalize benefit to society and environment, harmonize plans and policies of various government agencies with water related functions, ensure programs are resilient to extreme events and engage LGUs, private sector and civil society in creating new policies that will result in better management of water resources. The WRMO is also mobilizing private sector to invest in water resources projects.

The result of the degree of IWRM in the Philippines is summarized below:

Section	Average Scores (all values rounded to nearest whole number)
Section 1 Enabling Environment	68
Section 2 Institutions and participation	68
Section 3 Management Instruments	64
Section 4 Financing	48
Indicator 6.5.1 score=Degree of IWRM * implementation (0-100)*	62

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

The Philippines government adopted the IWRM as a collaborative framework for planning and coordinating the management and use of water resources. This was used in crafting other water related plans for water sector. The survey respondents in the E-dialogues were aware of the need to ensure alignment and harmonization of different types of policies and the need to ensure that policies were easily translated or transformed into action.

To be able to achieve a higher score, recommended steps include involvement of key stakeholders from the grass root level to management level at the national in IWRM implementation. There is also a need for more robust systems and cost-effective processes in documenting public participation and stakeholder engagement as well as capturing best practices and good practices model for stakeholder consultation and collaboration.

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

There are so many challenges in the water sector such as fragmented water and sanitation sector, increasing demand for water due to pollution and economic growth, lack of infrastructure leading to uneven distribution of water resources and inconsistent government regulations that adversely affect the management of water resources.

To avert water crisis, minimize water use conflicts and to integrate and harmonize policies, programs and projects of all water related agencies, the WRMO is created under the DENR. The WRMO shall implement IWRM in line with UN SDG and formulate Integrated Water Resources Management Plan. It will shepherd the passage of the Department of Water Resources and the Water Regulatory Commission. The presence of Water Resources Utilization Section (WRUS) in the field also contributed to the increase of NWRB's targets and in the conduct of operation in regions.

This new reform will improve water governance, promote multi-level and inter-sectoral river basin planning and coordination. It will also expand access to water supply and sanitation, improving water services especially to the most vulnerable. All this new development have contributed to the increase in the score for Section 2.

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

The main challenge lies in identifying methods and technology for keeping up with the frequency and severity of disasters brought about by climate change, and the hazards which are constantly testing the limits of the country's institutions and preparedness mechanisms that have been put in place. One of the highest priorities is the strengthening of LGU capacity to technical support from NGAs and academia towards a more tangible IWRM

implementation at the local level.

Some of the suggested key actions include the ff:

1. Installation of more gauging stations in river basins
2. Undertake more water resources assessment in the remaining major river basins.
3. Strengthen and upgrade tools/approaches for water quality monitoring.
4. Provide guidance for science-based climate risk assessments.

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

Allocations of funding for water resources may be included in several budget categories or in different investment documents. Respondents are thus encouraged to examine different sources for this information. When assessing the allocations, respondents should take account of funds from government budgets and any co-funding from other sources such as banks or donor.

Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028 Infrastructure Flagship released by NEDA, 22% or 44 out of the 197 projects are for the water sector. The Department of Public Works and Highways was lodged with P14.68B for water infrastructure projects. Programs and Projects (PAPs) of the government may be sourced from national government financing, partnership with private sector or public-private partnership (PPP), and through official development assistance (ODA).

In the submission of duly endorsed/approved PAPs, a system called PIPOL (PIP Online) is being utilized which is web-based project database system that manages data entry and updates on programs and projects, including the generation of reports. However, inclusion of PAPs in the PIP is not an assurance that projects will be funded.

5. **Next steps**

The next steps for Philippines to achieve global targets and higher score for IWRM implementation by 2030, the Philippines need to strengthen water governance through the creation of Department of water Resources and the Water Regulatory Commission. The existing programs and projects that are beneficial to water sector should be continued, enhanced, and expanded. It also includes crafting of new policies, undertake national water resources assessment, involvement of LGUs and other stakeholders in IWRM implementation, installation of more gauging stations for rainfall and streamflow measurements, and data integration.

Continuous engagement with vulnerable groups and gender mainstreaming, such as indigenous communities, is crucial for advancing IWRM and achieving higher scores. To promote gender mainstreaming in water resources management, essential actions include capacity-building, women's involvement in decision-making and water projects, gender budgeting, and women's leadership, reinforced by awareness campaigns and strategic partnerships.

The way forward to overcome inadequate financing for IWRM related activities include increase collaboration with other sectors such as private organizations, capacitate RBOs and LGUs on Payment Ecosystem/Environmental Payment (PES). This PES should be institutionalized to increase sub national budget for IWRM. Performance based sharing of revenues generated can be adopted. There is also a need to establish mechanism on resource allocation based on basin plans including monitoring on the attainment of objectives of master plans.

6. **Annexes**

Annex 1: List of Participants

Annex 2: Agenda

Annex 3: Facilitators Comments

Annex 4: Photos

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August 2, 2023

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Annex 2 :Agenda

Inception/Orientation Meeting Agenda

August 2, 2023 (National Government Agencies)

August 3, 2023 (River Basin Organizations, Private Sector, Non-Government Organizations, Academe, Local Government Units)

TIME	ACTIVITY	ASSIGNED PERSON
9:00 AM	Registration	Secretariat
9:30 AM	Opening Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invocation • National Anthem 	Ms. Heleena Claire P. Espina Information Officer IV (Host)
9:40 AM	Welcome Remarks	Dr. Seville D. David, Jr. Executive Director, NWRB
9:50 AM	Introduction of Participants	Ms. Heleena Claire P. Espina Information Officer IV (Host)
10:00 AM	Rationale and Overview of Process for National and Sub National Monitoring for SDG 6.5.1 Progress and Status / Degree of IWRM Implementation	Engr. Susan P. Abaño Chief, Policy and Program Division
10:30 AM	Overview of Global IWRM Monitoring Survey Framework: Components and Scoring	Engr. Susan P. Abaño Chief, Policy and Program Division
11:00 AM	Highlights of Results of 2017 and 2020 National and Regional IWRM Assessment	Engr. Susan P. Abaño Chief, Policy and Program Division
11:30 AM	Review of 2020 Way forward recommendations	Engr. Susan P. Abaño Chief, Policy and Program

Annex 3: Facilitator's Comments

The inception meetings were successful in developing a shared understanding of what the country monitoring was all about: its focus, importance and use for planning programmatic interventions.

The participants were a mix of those who had previously been involved in the prior SDG monitoring and those who were new to their posts and were unaware of IWRM focus, implementation principles and processes, country specific challenges. Thus, the framing presentation on the basics of IWRM was deemed most useful, both by the newbies and those who had previous inputs, and became aware that they needed a timely refresher and updating of what they already knew/learned about IWRM and country situation/challenges.

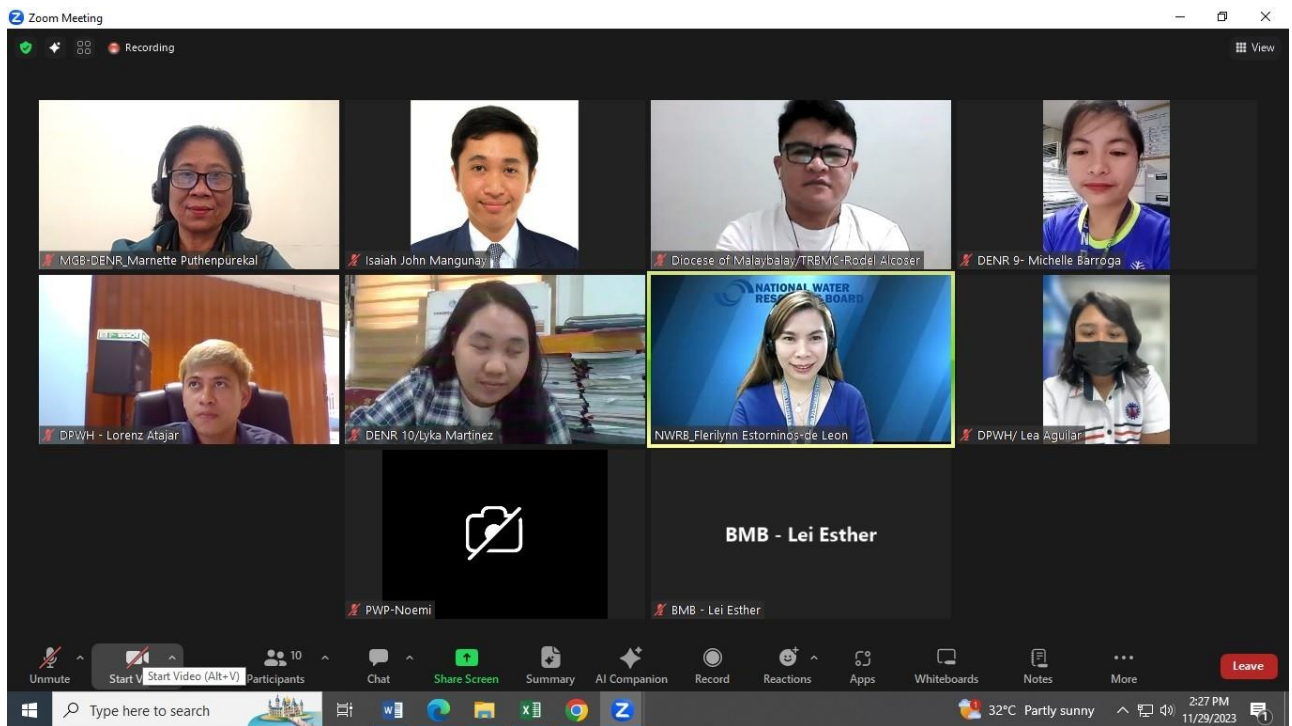
In addition, in the process of reviewing the country level, sector focused, survey questionnaire, it became apparent that there was inadequate information and experience sharing between agencies and sectors. The participants recommended that there should be a regular, at least annually or semestral sharing of experiences, best practices, good practice program or

implementation models, effective innovations and lessons learned. It should be noted that in the previous country monitoring this was also a recommendation and proposed way forward. However, resource constraints hindered its implementation. Another recommendation previously raised and again reiterated, was the need to popularize and update the IWRM Framework Plan.

The participatory and interactive nature of the consultation encouraged maximum exchange of ideas, opinions and experiences. It also led to development of desire to continue the conversations with newly “discovered” peers and colleagues from other offices or organizations.

Annex 4: Photos





Final Stakeholders Consultation meeting conducted last November 29, 2023