

USAID Knowledge Management Inventory –
USAID Water Team Activities:
Lessons Learned in Case Studies Developed for the GWP Interactive
Toolbox in IWRM;
Dynamic Database of USAID Obligations and Activities in IWRM; and
Information Sharing Workshops

1. Describe your knowledge sharing activity - what did you do? – how did you do it?

Case Studies and Lessons Learned for the GWP Interactive Toolbox in IWRM

The USAID Water Team is working with partners to prepare nearly 25 case studies to the Global Water Partnership (GWP) interactive Toolbox in integrated water resources management (IWRM). Eighteen of these cases highlight USAID’s experience and lessons learned in IWRM, while the remaining cases represent best practices promoted by USAID from other U.S. government agencies and USAID partners. The toolbox is the first of its kind to collectively organize experience from a broad array of donors and managers into an interactive database of management tools.

Dynamic Database of USAID Obligations and Activities in IWRM

The Water Team has developed a unique methodology for quantitatively describing the diverse portfolio of USAID water activities. Not previously captured by a single yet comprehensive set of budget codes or results indicators, this system has helped the Agency understand the breadth and scope of its water portfolio that is shared across a variety of Bureaus, Missions, offices and programs. The database is current and dynamic in that it is constantly updated as new information becomes available, and can be used to provide unique, customized reports based on specific requests from interested parties.

Workshops on Lessons Learned and USAID Activities

The Water Team has planned and hosted three different workshops aimed at sharing experiences and best practices in IWRM and key issues among field staff and participating partner countries:

- 2000 “Private Sector Participation in Water Supply and Sanitation”, Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt, September.
- 2001 “USAID Environment Officers’ Workshop in IWRM,” Cumberland, Maryland, July.
- 2002 “Mayors’ Asia-Pacific Environmental Summit Leadership Seminar in Urban IWRM,” Honolulu, Hawaii, April.

2. Describe your motivation / value proposition / business case for the initiative – why did you do it? – for whom?

Case Studies and Lessons Learned for the GWP Interactive Toolbox in IWRM

The GWP is a working international partnership among all those involved in water management: government agencies, public institutions, private companies, professional organizations, multilateral development agencies and others committed to the Dublin-Rio principles. The USAID Water Team is a member of this partnership, sharing with the GWP its mission to "*support countries in the sustainable management of their water resources.*"

Part of this effort involves the development of a toolbox in IWRM best practices, providing water management professionals clear examples of good and bad practices and lessons learned from real life experiences of implementing IWRM. The Toolbox is an interactive web-based database of cases, reference information, and contact people, to promote dialogue and information sharing among water resources managers throughout the world. The cases are stored in a database of over 50 IWRM tools and best practices. Cases and topics can be searched and sorted easily and quickly.

Dynamic Database of USAID Obligations and Activities in IWRM

The study was conducted to gain an understanding of "What" the Agency was doing in water, "Where" USAID was working in water, and "How much" USAID obligated for water resources management programs. This information was needed for the Water Team and other management units within the Agency to strategically plan for future directions of program goals and funding in IWRM.

Workshops on Lessons Learned and USAID Activities

The Water Team aims to actively promote sustainable water resources management and sound practices to help alleviate impacts to developing countries of the emerging global water crisis. One way to get the word out on IWRM is to host workshops on information sharing and learning. These three workshops have helped raise the awareness on the importance of sound water resources management to many different facets of USAID's development programs in a variety of settings by working with a variety of audiences and partners.

3. Describe the results of the effort – who and/or what was impacted and how? – what are the benefits?

Case Studies and Lessons Learned for the GWP Interactive Toolbox in IWRM

The Water Team's contribution of cases to the GWP Toolbox activity has helped raise awareness of USAID's expertise and experience in IWRM within the global development community. USAID was highlighted as a major contributor to the Toolbox at the 2001 International Conference on Freshwater in Bonn, and will also be part of the Toolbox that will be presented at the 3rd World Water Forum in Kyoto, March 2003. The activity helps the Water Team communicate the wealth of its own experience and lessons learned in sound IWRM projects over the last 5-8 years. The cases are also used to help support our database on USAID obligations as they illustrate how funds are used by different regions and programs.

Dynamic Database of USAID Obligations and Activities in IWRM

We have since used the database gleaned from this exercise for many other purposes: to include in AA and DAAs speeches and briefing books, to send up to LPA when they needed material, to inform Congressional inquiries about the program, to participate in interagency working groups on water, and to collaborate with the Department of State on developing new initiative.

The database's initial purpose, to help us understand what and where USAID is working in water, has saved us a LOT of time. We have been able to respond immediately to detailed requests on funding and activities from the AA, DAAs, and the Department of State.

Workshops on Lessons Learned and USAID Activities

The information presented at the workshops has been posted on web sites and CDs for ease of access. Evaluations and interactive debriefing activities following each workshop have helped enhance successive learning events. The Water Team has also gained useful knowledge in the sharing of ideas at the workshops that have enhanced program effectiveness in a number of ways that are difficult to measure.

- 4. Describe any future implications or issues related to the initiative, e.g., what plans are in place? What current constraints or challenges are you facing? How is the initiative being sustained / maintained? How can it be replicated or scaled up?**

Case Studies and Lessons Learned for the GWP Interactive Toolbox in IWRM

The cases are developed with information and resources from missions and implementing partners. A "point person" is necessary to screen the material coming in to ensure that the story successfully communicates valuable lessons learned, and edit them into a standard format. In addition to posting on the GWP interactive Toolbox web site, the cases and lessons learned will also soon be published as USAID's own *Case Study Series in IWRM*. A workshop or round table discussion to summarize the aggregate lessons learned from all of these cases is one way the activity can be continued and scaled up.

Analysis of USAID Activities in IWRM

The major issue is taking the time to maintain the database with current material. To be done properly, one person has to accept responsibility for maintaining the database and updating the material. Attention to methodology is important to ensure that activities and funding levels are neither double-counted nor omitted. It is anticipated that the information will soon be readily accessible via the USAID internal web site.

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