



Multi-stakeholder Platform – an innovative mechanism for promoting integrated decision making in the Stung Pursat catchment

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Multi-stakeholder Platform

Water is essential for all life and plays a vital role in economic growth, food security, biodiversity, and sustainable development. To ensure that the needs of all are met, without compromising either the quality or quantity of water, integrated resource planning and development are required.

A multi-stakeholder platform (MSP) is a forum for stakeholders using and/or regulating the development and management of water. MSP's promote integrated decision-making by providing stakeholders a platform to share and learn from their varied knowledge, needs and perspectives.

Introduced as an innovation in the Stung Pursat catchment of Cambodia, a MSP was piloted to promote integrated water resource management (IWRM). The "Fostering-Evidence-based IWRM in Stung Pursat catchment, Cambodia project¹ (MK 16)" supported three MSP sessions in Pursat, and brought-together over 40 participants from government (national, provincial, and municipal), civil society organizations (including academic institutions), and community-based natural resource communities.

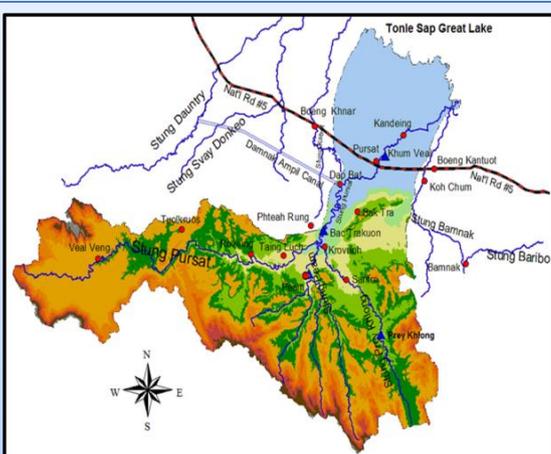
To facilitate dialogue during MSP sessions, a number of participatory approaches were used including; problem tree analysis, scenario building, parameter ranking, focus group discussions, participatory-mapping, and questionnaires.

Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) is "a process that promotes the coordinated development of water, land and related resources in order to maximize the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems" (Global Water Partnership, 2000)

The MK 16 project

The MK 16 project is being collaboratively implemented by the Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology (MOWRAM), Tonle Sap Authority (TSA), Supreme National Economic Council (SNEC), Hatfield Consultants Partnership (HCP), and Culture and Environment Preservation Association (CEPA) between December 2012 and December 2013.

The MK 16 project promotes informed, integrated decision-making designed to address multiple demands for water; irrigated agriculture, hydropower, domestic water supply and sanitation, fisheries, etc.



The Stung Pursat is one of the 12 perennial rivers contributing to the flow of the Tonle Sap Great Lake – the largest freshwater body in Southeast Asia. About 75% of this river's catchment is composed of mountainous and hilly areas with land elevation of 30 m or more.

The three inter-related components of the project are:
Component 1: Data review and stakeholder analysis;
Component 2: Development of a multi-stakeholder platform;
Component 3: Research.

STUNG PURSAT MSP MISSION

To serve as a problem-solving and planning platform for concerned Pursat stakeholders to agree on action and strategies for solving the identified problem based on knowledge and a strong convening power to help increase trust/confidence among stakeholders and facilitate agreements between various interest holders/groups

Stakeholders exhibited varying degrees of power (influence), and sensitivities to changes in access to water and related resources. Backed by research, MSP participants were informed about current and planned developments in Stung Pursat, and potential impacts on flows. Participants also learnt about changes and trends in demography and land-use patterns within Pursat, which have a bearing on the catchment and will require resources to manage. Finally, participants discussed and debated actions to resolve identified problems. This latter discussion was informed by a variety of IWRM tools; namely water resources assessments and demand analysis, water balance and allocation models, and multi-criteria analysis (a decision-support tool that compares different development options using criteria to reflect priorities and needs of stakeholders).

STAKEHOLDERS OF THE STUNG PURSAT CATCHMENT

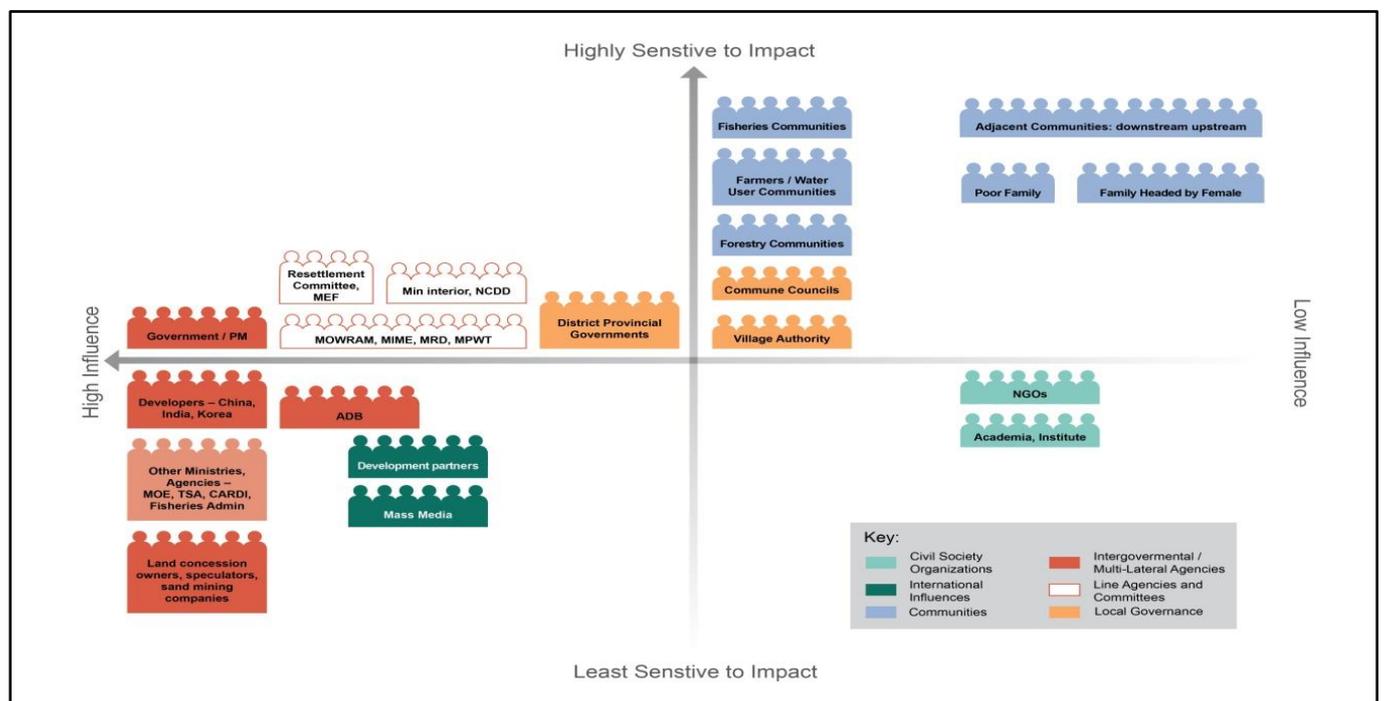
Water governance in Stung Pursat catchment is diverse and complex. The MK 16 project revealed eight primary resource users and fourteen secondary resource regulators. Stakeholder groups included: community groups, civil society organizations, government agencies at national, provincial, district and municipal levels, village communities, private companies, and development partners.



MSP participants considered the research results, and debated actions to resolve identified problems.

STUNG PURSAT MSP VISION

Green and prosperous Pursat catchment for meeting multiple needs and uses of its community, based on IWRM principles and informed and collaborative decisions, which ensure social equity and harmony, and long-term sustainable development.



SUSTAINABILITY PLAN FOR MSP IN STUNG PURSAT

The Tonle Sap Authority has requested the MK 16 to devise a plan for sustaining MSP in Pursaat, and for adapting it for use in other basins and sub-basins of Cambodia. Accordingly, the MK 16 project undertook the following steps:

- MK 16 team members conducted an initial discussion with individuals involved in the Water Resource Management Sector Development Project (WRMSDP), including the ADB Task Team Leader, H.E. Veng Sakhon, Director of WRMSDP and AusAID, to gain support for advancing integrated decision-making in Stung Pursat.
- A TSA Strategic Plan is being developed for 2014. MK 16 team members will support TSA to incorporate better basin and sub-basin management, particularly in the Pursat catchment.

- While in the transition phase, the MK 16 project has identified the TSA as the most relevant coordinating body for championing IWRM implementation and MSP sustainability. This is also in line with the Authority's mission statement to *"coordinate management, protection, conservation and development of water and other related resources in the Tonle Sap Great Lake and related region – the heart of the Mekong River basin."*



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