

**MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING OF  
WORKING GROUP ON MODERNIZATION AND REVITALIZATION OF  
IRRIGATION SCHEMES (WG-M&R)  
10 May 2022, 14:00-15:20 hours (IST)**

**Year of Establishment: 2015**

**Completion of the Mandate: 2023**

**Scope of work:** To investigate, analyse, disseminate information on new developments and to formulate recommendations with respect to: Planning and preparation for modernization and revitalization of irrigation schemes; Interaction between modernization, revitalization and required operation and maintenance; Cost sharing for modernization, revitalization and required operation and maintenance; Institutional and organizational framework required for modernization, revitalization and operation and maintenance; Methods and techniques of lining of conveyance and distribution canals; Canal control systems with respect to their automation, using internet, mobile communication and remote monitoring in canal operation; Modification to improve communication, operational capacities and flexibility in operation and maintenance of systems; Standardization and codes of practice in irrigation systems.

**Members Present:** (1) VPH Ian Makin, Chair (UK); (2) Prof. Sunil D. Gorantiwar (India); (3) Dr. Neelam Patel (India); (4) Dr. Mohsen Barahimi (Iran); (5) Dr. Mona Liza Delos Reyes (Philippines); (6) Engr. Reyne B. Ugay (Philippines); (7) Executive Director Harish Kumar Varma, ICID Central Office (India).

**Webpage:** [https://icid-ciid.org/inner\\_page/117](https://icid-ciid.org/inner_page/117)

**WG-M&R Minutes Item 1: Confirmation of the Agenda**

1. At the outset, Dr. Mona Liza F. Delos Reyes (Philippines) chaired the meeting as requested by VPH Ian Makin (UK). She briefly presented the agenda which focuses on the filled-in questionnaires for the Working Group study on O&M Norms and Processes, then started the discussion with the members on each item.

**WG-M&R Minutes Item 2: Check on the Progress and Work Plan**

2. Dr. Delos Reyes informed the WG that there were 18 responses received from 14 countries, which includes 4 from China, 2 from Indonesia and one each from Bangladesh, Taiwan, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Russia, Sudan, Korea, Canada, Zimbabwe, Philippines, Pakistan, and the Netherlands. On the completeness of the responses of the returned questionnaires, Dr. Delos Reyes said majority of the questionnaires had several items left unanswered by the respondents and only few had most of the items answered. VPH Makin said he scanned the returned questionnaires and was not surprised and not disappointed with the level of details in many of them. However, he thinks that the WG study team would struggle in getting a sense of the overall picture of O&M. He added that such is expected because irrigation is vastly complicated and variable both locally and internationally, hence the study might have been over ambitious. Dr. Delos Reyes asked the study team if they would like to have copies of the returned questionnaires shared with them in a Google Drive. VPH Makin suggested to ask the group members for their opinions and suggestions on how group should move forward in handling or looking at the filled-in questionnaires. Dr. Delos Reyes inferred those suggestions might be given as the meeting continues and proceeded to verifying with the Central Office those emails notifying the NCs of the extension for submission of the questionnaire until May 9, 2022 have been sent. The Central Office confirmed such notice for extension of submission and said it would circulate to the NCs another extension notice of up to the 31<sup>st</sup> May if the group decided and advised it to do so. Also, the CO related that it has shared all the questionnaires sent to them by the respondents to Dr. Delos Reyes and VPH Makin. Dr. Delos Reyes noted that it was agreed during the last meeting that if the initial turnouts of questionnaires warrants, the deadline for submission will be extended until 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022 and asked confirmation from the group if it will go with the plan, hence, will request CO to notify NCs of this another extension. Dr. Sunil Gorantiwar (India) said he favours such extension of submission because there still not enough data. Also, he sought clarification from the CO if the questionnaires were sent only to the NCs or also to certain organizations at the provincial, river basin and command area levels. The CO confirmed that the questionnaires and reminders on returns of responses were sent to all NCs, international bodies, individual members and irrigation professionals engaged in irrigation and drainage listed in the CO's database. Dr. Neelam Patel (India) shared her experience on field data collection through survey questionnaires and suggested that in the case of India, the CO can first send the communication about the study being conducted and the data set being requesting

for the purpose of the study to the Secretary of the Central ministry. It can then write to the Secretary of the concerned or selected state department, where the field data can be obtained. Dr. Patel offered to help in getting the data using her office if the CO letter can be copy furnished to her. VPH Makin asked Dr. Patel if the WG can request her/her network to approach the state Secretaries, to which Dr. Patel agreed. She said she will work with their head office and use her office network to get the data. The group thanked Dr. Patel for her offer of help and assurance that her office can get the data. Dr. Gorantiwar commended the idea on how to get the data, which he said would address the issue of communication gaps usually encountered in similar study or projects in India. Dr. Patel agreed that communication is indeed a challenge as staff and officials of different offices come and go and that it is important to have contacts in different offices in a database of networks.

3. Dr. Mohsen Barahimi (Iran) related to the group that questionnaires sent to NC of Iran were first translated to Persian and then sent together with the English version to the six selected irrigation and drainage networks located in different areas in Iran. He said that the returns of the questionnaires were being followed up through the corresponding working groups in the national irrigation and drainage committee and the national irrigation and drainage committee of Iran.

4. Dr. Delos Reyes asked if the core group thinks that 30 May 2022 as the extended submission deadline agreed on during the previous core group meeting is a workable schedule considering the different channels or level of offices the questionnaires have to pass through before reaching the concerned specific offices. VPH Makin said he agreed on the 30<sup>th</sup> May deadline. He added that the notification letter to the NCs should not create the impression that it is the absolute deadline. He suggested to state in the letter 30 May as the deadline and in cases that respondents needs longer time to be able to complete and return the questionnaires they can notify the CO and request more time. He reckoned that the group can always do further analysis in time for the next year's meeting. He enjoined the group to accept the fact that it might need to work longer than the scheduled period. Dr. Barahimi also suggested to extend the deadline, to which VPH agreed and pointed out that the manner the letter will be written will in effect give more time for the NCs to accomplish and submit the questionnaires. In addition, VPH Makin suggested for CO to first send the draft of the letter to him and Dr. Delos Reyes for finalization before sending out the letters to NCs and other identified respondents, to which the CO agreed to do.

5. Dr. Delos Reyes sought other ways to increase the rate of returns of the questionnaires from the group. VPH surmised that another way to collect more data is to approach the water teams of ADB, WB, African Development and asked if they will be willing to pass the questionnaires onto their project offices. He said he would make informal approach to his contacts in the banks and asked if they are willing to do that.

6. Dr. Delos Reyes verified with the group if they have received or seen the proposed summary tables for analysis she shared in Google Drive on 13 April 2022. She proceeded to present the summary tables and briefly discuss the structure and the quantitative information they hope to consolidate. She expected there will mostly likely be some changes or adjustments in the format and manner of presentation of these tables depending on the extent of responses on the questionnaires. She asked if the group has any suggestions or comments on the summary tables. Dr. Gorantiwar commented that the structure of the summary tables is fine for purpose of initial compilation of responses and the group can later decide on how to modify or sharpened the tables based on the responses. VPH Makin related that the thing that struck him when he scanned through the responses was the very little information on the actual cost or amount of effort that goes into operation and maintenance, with only one or two provided estimates of human resources committed, and very few actually provided any indication of the cost. He said he is not sure if this will be a serious problem since the O&M costs would be vastly different among countries. He agreed with Dr. Gorantiwar that the summary tables will be a good start to see the extent of responses gathered. Further, he emphasized the need to explain in the discussion what exactly the small, medium and large irrigation system designations mean in the report. Dr. Patel noted that one of the tables is asking for data or information on irrigation, municipal and hydropower. She related that in the case of India, these sectors are managed by different departments, hence it would be difficult to get data from one department. VPH Makin explained that the idea is not to ask a particular department for the data on all these sectors or functions, but rather to ask that particular department or ministry in which particular functions or services they do provide. Basically, the aim is to capture the range of activities of the ministry or agency. Dr. Patel concluded that if that is the case then it should be made clear to the respondent, say for an irrigation agency that it only needs to provide answers to irrigation related questions. VPH Makin and Dr. Gorantiwar replied in the affirmative.

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**WG-M&R Minutes Item 3: Coding and Analysis of Responses**

7. Dr. Delos Reyes asked the group if an earlier agreement to use SPSS in coding and analysis of responses remains considering that there were only 18 questionnaires that were returned to date. Dr Patel opined that the group should wait for some more data or responses to come in then it can decide on which tools or software to use, such as SPSS and simple Excel once all the data or responses are at hand. She said that at this stage there is no need to stick with one analytical tool. Dr. Delos Reyes added that encoded data in Excel format can be used as input for either SPSS or Excel analysis. Dr. Patel and Dr. Gorantiwar agreed that data on Excel worksheet need to be prepared first for use as input in SPSS.

8. Dr. Delos Reyes asked the group for their opinion on the work sharing arrangement for the encoding of responses. VPH Makin suggested Dr. Delos Reyes to start encoding one or two questionnaires and decide on the initial data input layout. He then volunteered to encode one or two questionnaires when such input worksheet is ready for encoding. Dr. Delos Reyes agreed to prepare the initial Excel worksheet for data input and encode at least two questionnaires. Dr. Gorantiwar also offered to help in encoding of responses once the input worksheet is finalized.

9. The group agreed to discuss changes or adjustment on the structure of the proposed summary tables for analysis once the extent of data or responses obtained are known.

**WG-M&R Minutes Item 4: Recommendations and/or Comments on the Proposed Overall Structure of the Report**

10. Dr. Delos Reyes asked the group for any suggestions and comments on the proposed structure and contents of the O&M study report. Dr. Gorantiwar suggested that for the time being the group can use the proposed structure as a guideline, which the group can expand later. VPH Makin said that the initial structure is fine at this point. He suggested that it is also important for the members of the group to identify which part or section of the report he/she would be interested to contribute or take the lead in the write-up. Dr. Delos Reyes thanked VPH Makin for this important point and asked the members of the study team which topics or section they would like to take the lead in analysis and/or writing. VPH Makin expressed his interest on the classifications of irrigation systems and volunteered to take the lead in writing about the systems classifications and Section 3, which includes background of the study, previous studies of O&M issues by ICID, and the objectives of the study. Dr. Gorantiwar volunteered to contribute in Section 6 with some other interested members. Dr Delos Reyes, Dr. Patel volunteered to join Dr. Gorantiwar in Section 6. VPH Makin supposed that it might still be early to have a complete list of members assigned to each section of the report. He said most probably, it would be readily clear to each member which areas he/she would be interested in taking the lead in the analysis and writing once some more summary of the data has been pooled together. He believed Dr. Alok Sikka (IWMI) and Dr. Dong Bin (China) and Dr. Mohsen would get involved in the analysis and writing of their topics of interest. Dr. Delos Reyes agreed that there is no need to identify all members who will take charge of the analysis and writing of each section at this time.

**WG-M&R Minutes Item 5: Schedules of meeting to coordinate development of analysis and report**

11. Dr. Delos Reyes sought confirmation from the group on keeping the original schedule for the data encoding/processing and analysis which ends on 30 June 2022 or to extend it to accommodate the questionnaires that will be returned during the extended submission period. VPH Makin suggested to stick with the original plan so that the group can present some preliminary findings at the WG meetings in Adelaide in October 2022 and have a discussion on the next course of action or further analysis that needs to be done to fully complete the study and the report for presentation in Beijing in 2023. The group agreed to keep the original schedule and Dr. Delos Reyes briefly presented the agreed schedules for the different activities. Dr. Gorantiwar requested that a copy of the schedules be sent to him, to which Dr. Delos Reyes agreed to send it to all members of the group as well.

**WG-M&R Minutes Item 6: Other Business**

12. VPH Makin asked who plans to go to ICID events in Adelaide in October 2022. Dr. Delos Reyes said that she has plan of going to Adelaide for the WG meeting and ICID Congress, but she could not ascertain if indeed she will be able to participate in the Adelaide events. Executive Director Harish Kumar (ICID-CO) informed the group that he had a meeting with Mr. Bryan Ward (IACID) and the latter informed him that VISA processing for nationalities of Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan takes a little bit more time. He said with this information, Dr. Barahimi could take advance action on VISA application.

13. Dr. Barahimi shared with the group that he got good interplay in preparing the questionnaires and the different conditions of the six different networks have been examined. The analysis can be used for all kinds of management around the world. He cited as an example the case of irrigation and drainage network of Iran. He said that if he wanted to describe the agriculture, he can say it is generally of small holder farms, irrigation and drainage systems are owned by the government or government-related organizations, and that institutional organizations are not fully formed, many farmers have their own wells in their land and generally not required to participate. Thus, in the case of Iran, the questionnaire is addressed to the government and semi-government organizations. VPH Makin acknowledge that the questionnaire is trying to capture a very wide spectrum of different agencies and the situation in Iran is quite different from other places. VPH Makin expressed that the six responses from Iran would be very useful and knowing how detailed the Iranian NC is, he said he is looking forward to seeing their data.

14. Dr. Delos Reyes asked the group when it would need to have the next meeting, to which VPH Makin suggested in about six weeks as he expects most of the data collected have been encoded and have some text written already in the different sections by then. ED Harish Varma suggested to have the next meeting in the first week of July 2022. Dr. Delos Reyes said she is targeting to report back with the initial preparation of Excel worksheet for data encoding by 20 May 2022. The CO agreed to send Doodle poll for the 28-30 June 2022 meeting. VPH Makin summarized the major point agreed during the meeting, namely, for CO to send the draft of the letter on the extension of submission, Dr. Delos Reyes to take the lead in initial encoding of the responses, for the members of the group to identify the sections/topics they would like to take a lead or contribute in the analysis and report writing, and the plan to have the next meeting towards the end of June 2022. Dr. Barahimi suggested that the letter for the extended submission be sent by the CO to the NCs, to which VPH Makin affirmed that is the plan.

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