

# Identifying stakeholders by project base through the institutional framework of the Japan Water Agency

In partnership with the OECD Studies on Water: Stakeholder Engagement for Inclusive Water Governance

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**Organisation:** Japan Water Agency

**Country:** Japan

**Level of government:** Central government

**Sector:** Environmental protection

**Type:**

**Launched in:** 2005

**Overall development time:** 10 year(s)

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# Description

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All projects of the Japan Water Agency (JWA) are conducted based on the Water Resources Development Promotion Law, which was established in 1962 and revised in 2005. JWA develops project plans, such as the construction of multipurpose dams and canals. JWA consults prefectural governors of the related region and water users based on the JWA Law. The prefectural governor needs the approval of the prefectural assembly, which is consisted of the assembly members who are chosen by the election before sending the approval letter to JWA. Getting the approval of the prefectural governor means the approval of the residents in the region, and the JWA Law secures the participation to decision making indirectly.

After agreement among all stakeholders including the prefectural governors concerned, JWA applies for approval to the national government who supervises the JWA. The supervisor of the JWA consults with related ministries, and then the national government approves the plan based on the above mentioned law.

Stakeholders concerned are identified in the project plan which is supported by the law. JWA identifies the stakeholders related with the projects and coordinates stakeholders opinions as part of the plan-making process. In addition, JWA operates its facilities based on the request of the stakeholders, and coordinates opinions among stakeholders by ensuring fairness and that it is contributing to the development and supporting socio-economy.

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## Why the innovation was developed

- In the 1960s, Japan was in a high-economic growth period, and demand for domestic water was increasing rapidly. Projects to meet these demand were needed to be developed and implemented immediately.
- However, there are many stakeholders in the basin, and farmers group have a lot of influence on water use for historical water usage. To solve this complex situation immediately at specific river basin, JWA developed a coordination system and a financial scheme.
- The development of stakeholder engagement by the establishment of the JWA system was indispensable to boost the project as one of the priorities of the national policy.
- JWA's purpose is to develop water resources and supply water in seven major river basin for sound development socio-economy and improvement of people's life.
- Cost of the construction and management of facilities are fully covered by the water users and people who benefit from JWA's facilities.
- To secure the financing, it was necessary for us to identify the stakeholders who share the cost by the law. Regarding the financing of the projects which were conducted by the government, the concept of a user fee is very common in Japan.
- The process of making each JWA project plan based on the JWA Law secures not only identifying the correct stakeholders, but also the financing for implementing the projects.
- To get the consensus among all stakeholders concerned, JWA needs to coordinate them by mobilizing any reasonable methodologies such as information sharing and developing reasonable projects. In this point, role of the JWA for coordination among stakeholders is very important.
- Environmental protection
- Water resources management (allocation, irrigation, rainwater)
- Water disasters (floods, droughts, etc.)
- Drinking water supply users

# Results

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## Efficiency

- Cost-saving: As shown on the following figure, JWA coordinates many stakeholders opinions by collecting any information in the basin and their opinions and sharing common information. If not JWA, it takes much time and cost to get consensus among all stakeholders concerned.
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## Effectiveness

- Sustainability and resilience: JWA's system has been developed by the relevant laws concerned, therefore, the sustainability is supported by the laws.
  - Capacity-development: by sharing information about the basin and procedure of JWA's projects, the understanding of JWA's role and plan have increased. JWA is promoting interaction between the residents in upstream and downstream areas by conducting the collaboration events with stakeholders.
  - These activities promote understanding to the necessity of cooperation in the basin and increasing of ownership among the public. JWA's activities are contributing to an increase the capacity of stakeholders concerned.
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## Service quality

### Responsiveness:

- Acceptability and ownership of stakeholders involved: stakeholders such as water users need to share some part of the cost of implementation of JWA's projects. Therefore, they have a strong interest to any activities of JWA, and ownership is also very strong.
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## Other improvements

- Broader economic development: Implementation of JWA's system has been contributing to the development of economic growth and improvement of people's life. By introducing JWA's system in the 1960s-70s, we were able to increase the capacity of water supply and successfully satisfy the demand of domestic water. This yielded much benefit to the economy.
- In early 1960s, due to the lack of water for domestic use and serious drought, Tokyo was called 'Tokyo Desert' at that time. JWA developed water resources by the construction of dams and canals to meet the demand of domestic water in Tokyo.

# Development

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## Design

Government of Japan (Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) who is the supervisor of JWA) has led JWA's system. Based on the JWA law, JWA is implementing its projects such as construction and management and operation of water resources facilities.

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## Testing

- No methods were used to test the innovation.
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## Implementation

### Tools used:

- The Water Resources Development Promotion Law, the JWA Law system and other related water law systems enabled stakeholder engagement in JWA's projects.
- Establishment and securing stakeholder engagement by the law and establishment of the implementation agency with authority are indispensable.

### Resources used:

- Taxes
  - Loans
  - Water usage charges
  - Government subsidies
  - Government investment loan program
  - JWA bonds (private sector funds)
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## Challenges and solutions

- Implementation and operation: in general, it takes time and financial resources (the labor cost of the staff) to get a consensus among all stakeholders concerned.
- Increasing the awareness, understanding, and the development capacity of the people at all levels will help to overcome challenges.

# Lessons Learned

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## Conditions for success

- Necessity of the establishment of a platform for stakeholder engagement, and an implementation agency with authority.
  - Common information sharing with all stakeholders concerned to increase the credibility of implementation agency among the stakeholders.
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## Other information

The Network of Asian River Basin Organizations (NARBO) is conducting IWRM training course annually for member organizations by using the case studies of each countries in Asia. Through the training course, the NARBO secretariat is making an effort to develop the capacity to find the 'Key for Success' of each case study, and to customize it to their own case. Therefore, not only disseminating case studies but also training courses using the publication of case studies are useful. In addition, to make progress, measurement indicators and regular assessments by using the indicators are necessary. NARBO is supported by JWA and ADB, and will implement the activities by using the developed indicators.

To meet the demand of domestic water in Tokyo in 1960s, plans to develop new water resources and bring water to Tokyo had been proposed by some sectors. However, each proposed plan has not been implemented, because each plan had not received a consensus among stakeholders concerned in the basin. To solve the deadlock situation, JWA proposed an alternative plan which was acceptable for each of the stakeholders concerned in the basin, and JWA's plan was adopted and implemented by JWA with support of stakeholders. For more information, visit: <http://www.water.go.jp/honsya/honsya/english/04.html>.

