

Integrity management in the Brantas River Basin, Indonesia



A synthesis report

River basin management is a highly complex process, and institutions need to embed ethics and integrity both internally and externally.

Water Integrity Global Outlook 2016

The River Basin IM Toolbox was developed and applied in the Brantas river basin in East Java, Indonesia, in collaboration with the state-owned River Basin Organisation (RBO) PJT-1 between 2015 and 2017. The aim of the project was to support the participatory mitigation of integrity risk in the Brantas basin. The application of the River Basin IM Toolbox in the Brantas basin has shown a significant potential to increase awareness on integrity issues in the basin, as well as to constructively support advances in two key aspects of such a complex multi-stakeholder context: integrity and collaboration.

Background

As water is essential for life and for economic development, it is crucial that it is effectively managed. The lack of efficiency, equity and sustainability in the allocation of water resources in river basins is often rooted in shortcomings regarding good governance and integrity. River basins are particularly vulnerable settings, due to the large numbers of involved stakeholders with sometimes-conflicting interests.¹

While there are some initiatives to address integrity-related issues in policy and legal frameworks, there is little practical guidance at hand for river basin stakeholders to include integrity considerations into their strategies, management and operations.

This is the entry point for the ‘River Basin Integrity Management (IM) Toolbox’, whose overall objective is to support the mitigation of integrity risks in a river basin. The River Basin IM Toolbox encourages river basin stakeholders (such as River Basin Organizations (RBO), Farmers’ Associations, industries, hydropower companies, NGOs and CSOs, fisheries, regulatory bodies, other government bodies etc.) to implement integrity tools to improve their own corporate governance and regulatory compliance. Moreover, the Toolbox helps to improve the level of integrity and build consensus in the interaction, communication and coordination among stakeholders.

Piloting the River Basin Integrity Management Toolbox in the Brantas river basin

The River Basin IM Toolbox draws from experiences in compliance and integrity management and connects them to the specific context of river basin stakeholders. The Integrity Management Toolbox was initially developed and piloted for Water Service Providers in Kenya. Building on these experiences, it was adapted for river

¹ WIN (2016). Water Integrity Global Outlook. Building Integrity in River Basin Management. URL: www.waterintegritynetwork.net/wigo/special-topics/building-integrity-in-river-basin-management

basins as the River Basin IM Toolbox. The River Basin IM Toolbox was developed and applied in the Brantas river basin in East Java, Indonesia, with the state-owned RBO PJT-1 between 2015 and 2017. This project has been very valuable in gauging the potential of the Toolbox and refining the methodology, especially in a complex multi-stakeholder setting.

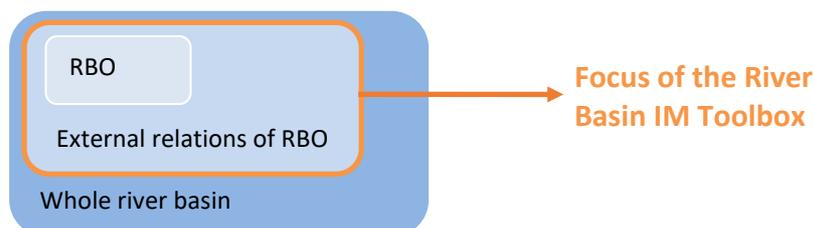
The project started with two scoping and training meetings in 2014 between WIN and PJT-1, where the Integrity Management Toolbox was presented to the RBO. PJT-1 was already very active in addressing integrity issues internally and they expressed their interest in adapting the tool to a wider scope to address the multi-stakeholder-related challenges they face across the whole river basin. These first meetings were key to familiarize PJT-1 with the approach and the possibilities of the Toolbox and to clarify the expectations of PJT.

Following up, the toolbox was adapted to the river basin context based on a participatory adaptation workshop (held with key stakeholders from the Brantas river basin, Indonesia, in 2015), as well as on an extensive desktop study on integrity in river basin management.

After that, the River Basin IM Toolbox was piloted for the Brantas river basin, following a participatory and practical approach to change management. River basin stakeholders were sensitized to the numerous performance opportunities and advantages that can arise from improving integrity, and they were subsequently supported to identify concrete integrity instruments and to implement them following a detailed road map.

This long process of engagement has allowed for important learnings and fine-tuning of the integrity management approach to the context of a river basin. Accordingly, the River Basin IM Toolbox has led to important achievements, such as changes of mentality and attitude towards integrity of the key stakeholders in the Brantas basin, and of the ways they interact. These successes are based on:

- **Sensitivity to the local institutional setup.** Some of the main organizations in a river basin may have overlapping activities, responsibilities and interests. The approach increases the common understanding of each stakeholder's role and perspectives regarding water management in the basin. This helps to avoid conflict, build trust and design workable instruments.
- **A clear and effective scope.** Tackling the whole river basin is a too ambitious starting point, and it complicates process leadership building. A more effective approach is to instead focus on the processes where the leading organisation (in the Brantas case, the RBO PJT-1) has direct influence. That is, not only its internal activities, but also the processes and activities that involve collaboration or coordination with other stakeholders in the basin.



- **Identification of an entry point of action.** The River Basin IM Toolbox is designed to be anchored in an existing strategy, process or key subject of concern in the basin. This increases ownership and commitment. Focusing on a specific topic and engaging the relevant stakeholders helps to determine concrete common goal(s) and jointly design an action plan. In the case of the Brantas river basin, the selected anchor point is the “Surabaya Water Quality and Pollution Management Master Plan” (see below).
- **Enhanced awareness** of integrity risks and improved understanding of how such risks may manifest themselves as phenomena such as water pollution or water scarcity. The activities organized under the River Basin IM Toolbox in the Brantas River were successful in bringing the subject of integrity onto the agenda and to the perception of the people involved.
- **Better communication** between different stakeholders. The approach is able to create a space for discussion that strengthens trust and coordination among stakeholders. In this space, participants feel encouraged to exchange opinions on the obstacles to enhance integrity in the river basin and become more open to each other. Trust and integrity allow to tackle issues of concern from a different, more constructive, angle.

Thematic Focus on Water Quality and Pollution

The engagement with the River Basin IM Toolbox in the Brantas basin opened a new avenue for the stakeholders to approach the subject of water quality and pollution in the basin, more concretely in the Surabaya region, and to legitimise activities in this key field of action. In Surabaya, the second largest city of Indonesia, water is highly polluted due to untreated industrial waste discharge. Hence, planning to tackle this challenge including a strong integrity focus presents a remarkable opportunity.

Water quality and pollution appears as an ‘ideal’ issue to be tackled with the support of the River Basin IM Toolbox because:

- **Integrity issues are strongly interrelated with water quality issues.** Water pollution puts at stake the reputation of industries and government institutions, as many water pollution cases remain unsolved and the population experiences lack of information. Corruption and lack of integrity are therefore at the centre of the public debate around water pollution.
- **Collaboration is key in the fight against water pollution.** Water quality is a transversal subject. It touches on many issues, such as water rights, waste management or health promotion. As a result, fighting water pollution and ensuring compliance requires strong coordination and collaboration among stakeholders. The strategy needs to be oriented in order to build on each other’s work and data, instead of duplicating efforts.
- **The time is right.** Participating stakeholders agreed on the importance to bring integrity management in the upcoming ‘Surabaya Water Quality and Pollution Management Master Plan’. Long discussions were held in January 2017 on how the River Basin IM Toolbox could help bringing together

different stakeholders, coordinating efforts and tackling integrity risks; therefore reinforcing the outcome of the Master Plan.

Integrating the River Basin IM Toolbox as a component of the 'Surabaya Water Quality and Pollution Management Master Plan' would be a unique opportunity with huge potential. Many of the current integrity instruments could be used to, for instance, streamline water quality monitoring methodologies, facilitate data sharing, or enhance complaint mechanisms.

River Basin IM Toolbox - supporting change management in multi-stakeholder processes

The experience of applying the River Basin IM Toolbox in the Brantas river basin in Indonesia has shown a significant potential to constructively support advances in two key aspects of such a complex multi-stakeholder context: **integrity and collaboration.**

The challenges regarding efficiency, equity and sustainability of water resources management in a river basin are often rooted in weaknesses in good governance and integrity. The variety of stakeholders, which often comes in hand with overlapping roles and responsibilities as well as conflicting interests, makes it particularly important to build a solid basis of trust and dialogue.

A change management approach – a long-term commitment

Building this basis of trust requires time. Indeed, the River Basin IM Toolbox follows a change management approach applied to a multi-stakeholder process. This involves:

1. Rethinking and restructuring internal behaviours and processes within organizations and within the entire multi-stakeholder system
2. Rethinking and restructuring the relationships between organizations
3. Building capacity and leadership

This level of anchoring and restructuring requires long-term commitment and resources.

Awareness-raising and establishment of dialogue – quick gains

However, the toolbox is also directed towards achieving intermediate outcomes, showing the progress along the way. In the case of the Brantas river basin, the toolbox has been particularly successful at awareness raising and at establishing a good exchange platform for the stakeholders on integrity issues and wider.

Supporting policy development

Policy development can strongly benefit from building up on these achievements using the River Basin IM Toolbox. The approach can support the design of laws and regulations, promoting and facilitating that it takes place in a participatory and transparent manner. Taking into account the views and interests of the different stakeholders in the basin, incorporating technical as well as local expertise, and maintaining the process open to public scrutiny are some of the aspects that the River Basin IM Toolbox can facilitate and promote. Adopting this strategy would

result in fairer policy-making, wider acceptance and, therefore, increased accountability and effectiveness.

Conclusion – A unique opportunity

It is important to make the most of the current situation. At the national level, corruption has emerged as a key priority for the Government. At the river basin level, the River Basin IM Toolbox has already motivated the different stakeholders to initiate a dialogue to collectively tackle shared water challenges, particularly those related to water quality and pollution, from an integrity perspective. Moreover, the ‘Surabaya Water Quality and Pollution Management Master Plan’ offers a concrete entry point for future agreements.

The River Basin IM Toolbox appears as a unique opportunity for building on this momentum. It brings an independent and pragmatic guidance on how river basin stakeholders can best collaborate in a transparent, inclusive and accountable way.

Leveraging the potential of the River Basin IM Toolbox in the current enabling environment will require full ownership by the lead organization. The motivation is on the table, as PJT-1 is ready to commit further resources and time, but they have also expressed their need for external support. Further backstopping and coaching are essential for the initiative to succeed. Therefore, there is a need for external funds to endure the professional continuation of the project, until full ownership by the lead organization legitimizes project exit.