

**An Approach to Capacity Development for IWRM:  
The application of IWRM in water-scarce areas and the use  
of virtual learning approaches for capacity development**

The course was given by Dr. Reza Ardakanian, Director of UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development (UNW-DPC), Dr. Velma I. Grover of the United Nations University - International Network on Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH), and Dr. Mukand S. Babel of Asian Institute of Technology (AIT).

The lecturers introduced the concept and fundamentals of integrated water resource management (IWRM). They singled out economic efficiency, ecological sustainability, and social equity as the three most important components of IWRM.

Dr. Ardakanian outlined the role of UN-Water and the scope of work of UNW-DPC, as a capacity development programme of UN-Water, hosted by UNU. UNW-DPC teamed up experienced water management specialists. Two case studies of IWRM in arid bordering regions of Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan were elaborated.

Dr. Grover spoke on application of virtual learning approaches to IWRM. Two core functions of UNU-INWEH were capacity development and bridging science and policy in the field of water management. Dr. Grover explained methodology of work and curriculum of Water Virtual Learning Centres (WVLC), including important lessons learned.

Dr. Babel offered some regional perspectives and spoke on water virtual learning experiences. He offered a vivid introspection into a real-life situation of a water manager coping with conflicting priorities and taking into account various, often competing socioeconomic and environmental developments.

During interactive discussion that followed, the role of Government and its attitude towards IWRM were discussed and participants offered their unique perspectives. Some constraints of online education in this field, such as rigid delivery schedule, inflexibility, and a lack of commitment by Governments, were identified. The lectures also demonstrated how web-based educational modules on IWRM worked.