

ACTIVITY BRIEF

Regional Day Programme From Risk to Resilience: South Asia Regional Framework for Sustainable Water Management

15 January 2015 | New Delhi, India

BACKGROUND

Disasters affect lives and infrastructure. Because of disasters, infrastructures built over the years often do not fully fulfill their intended services. Affected countries oftentimes have to restart their development by diverting funds and aid money to get them 'back on track' toward economic and social development. South Asia is highly vulnerable to climate change impacts. Climate change not only adversely affects water resources but also makes the region vulnerable to various hydrological shocks.

With this background, the Global Water Partnership South Asia (GWP SAS) the APAN thematic node for water and the India Water Partnership (IWP) in association with SAARC Disaster Management Centre (SDMC), WAPCOS Limited organised the Regional Day Programme of GWP SAS on "From Risk to Resilience: South Asia Regional Framework for Sustainable Water Management" on 15 January 2015 at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi during the India Water Week 2015.

OBJECTIVE

The objectives of this workshop were to: i) assess and identify the key challenges in water management and sustainable development in the context of climate change; ii) maximize social, environmental, and economic welfare resulting from water management; and iii) draw a regional framework for addressing the issues of water management in the context of climate change and disaster risk reduction.

More than 250 representatives from SAARC countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka) and Thailand participated in the programme. The participants represented national and provincial governments, climate experts, researchers, international organisations, and development agencies in the region.

OUTCOMES

The programme generated the outcomes including: i) an informed and shared understanding of the key issues and challenges in water resource management in the South Asian region from a Disaster Risk reduction (DRR) and Climate Change adaptation (CCA) perspective; ii) decided on the way forward for regional cooperation among the major stakeholders including governments, civil, society institutions, and researchers; and iii) developed a strategy to address the issues related to 'too much and too little' at the regional and sub-regional level.



Child playing with water in New Delhi, India

WORKSHOP PARTNERS



ABOUT APAN

APAN is a leading climate change adaptation network in the Asia-Pacific region. Our primary goal is to assist countries to build climate change resilient and sustainable human systems, ecosystems, and economies. Our initiatives turn knowledge into policy action and trainings into tangible benefits.

APAN PARTNERS



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The programme was divided into four sessions: i) Inaugural Session; ii) Technical Session-I; iii) Technical Session-II; and iv) Valedictory Session. The sessions were concluded with key recommendations from the participants below:

Key Recommendations – Technical Session I

- Approach of drought management to be shifted from fund release to a focused mitigation approach;
- Important to the pool available resources, techniques, and research findings;
- Awareness raising on CCA and sensitize the community on water conservation;
- Carefully managing surface and ground water to meet future demands and practice of communities;
- Strengthening of communication and coordination among SAARC member states during disasters;
- Capacity building on weather forecasting systems within the region; and
- Develop regional cooperation in space technology and early warning systems.

Key Recommendations – Technical Session II

- Recycling waste water;
- Conduct innovative research to control disasters by stimulation and numerical weather forecasting;
- Mitigate and divert natural disasters towards unpopulated areas by changing its course;
- Develop micro irrigation development system for water resource management;
- Develop better drought management systems through better monitoring and early warning system at national and regional levels;
- Capture and strengthen databases for accurate forecasting;
- Improving and capturing Spatial Resolution Data Sharing for accurate forecasting;
- Raise public awareness on water storing;
- Create water emergency provisions at community level;
- Integrating work for joining to community based flood early warning system at local level; and
- Developing better dissemination processes at community and local administration levels.

CONCLUSION

The Regional Day side event discussed issues of water management for sustainable development in the context of science, policy and practice at the regional level. Many national and international delegates and experts in the field of water management shared their views and experiences. This event provided a platform for ideas and opinions from various stakeholders to be shared. The Drought Monitoring tools and Flood Early Warning Systems were also presented and discussed in detail. It was concluded that there is a need for regional multi-hazard early warning information sharing between the SAARC countries.

For more information, visit: <http://www.gwp.org/en/gwp-south-asia/GWP-SAS-IN-ACTION/News-and-Activities/India-Water-Week-2015/>