

Striving for Poverty Reduction, IWRM and Good Governance

Region of Promise

- High economic growth potential (over 5% GDP)
- Time tested democratic governments and institutions
- High human and social capital
- Strong traditions of sustainable water resources management
- Awareness of IWRM and platforms and forums in place
- Need for national policies on water management appreciated by governments.
- High levels of professional capacity and innovative thinking in water management.



The Challenge - Scarcity amidst Plenty

Home to a quarter of the world's population, South Asia is endowed with vast water resources and potential for high economic development though spatial and temporal factors in distribution subject the region to water related disasters such as droughts, floods and storm surges increasingly compounded by climate change and global warming. With over 60% of the regional livelihoods based on agriculture, over 50% of cropped area irrigated and water being central to its culture and religions it is the critical resource. Countries in the region face periodic water shortages and indications are that some may suffer acute shortages in the near future. Endemic poverty affects one third of the regions population with access to potable water, malnutrition, health and sanitation major issues. The state is the dominant player in the water sector and issues of governance and political imperatives add to the above challenges.

The Context

GWP South Asia (GWP SAS) linked to Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka through its Country Water Partnerships (CWP) was entrusted with realising the goals identified in the South Asia Regional Water Vision 2025 and Framework for Action of 2000, developed in tandem with the respective Country Water Visions and overarching goals of the Global Water Partnership (GWP). The initial period saw awareness creation and promotion of IWRM and water policy changes, preparation of IWRM Plans with priority to attainment of Millennium Development Goals (MDG) as articulated in WSSD. 3 South Asia Water Forums in 2002 and 2003 and GWP Strategy of 2004 saw the establishment of priorities and development of the regions 2004- 2008 Strategy helped focus on regional priorities vis a vis GWP SAS.

The 2004-2008 Strategy identified the following priority objectives:

- Establish principles of sustainable water resource management.
- Support action at local, national, regional or river basin level that follows above.
- Identify gaps and stimulate partners to meet critical needs within resources.
- Strengthen mechanisms for sharing information and experiences.

The following activities were identified for 5 programme outputs:

- Facilitate water policy development and preparation of national IWRM plans
- Develop programmes and tools in response to regional/country needs
- Ensure linkages between GWP and other frameworks, sectors and issues
- Establish and consolidate GWP partnerships at relevant levels
- Effectively develop and manage the GWP network.

Important programmes that followed at regional and country level included groundwater, flood and basin management, trans boundary water, establishing Area / Zonal Water Partnerships and IWRM awareness and capacity building etc.

Subsequently based on the GWP Strategy 2009-13 and on own experience, many consultations and its Vision, GWP SAS developed its 2009-13 Strategy and 5 Year Work Plan. A main feature was the reduction of activities emphasising a broader focussed programme.



GWP SAS 15th Regional Council Meeting in New Delhi

The Vision,

Poverty in South Asia will be eradicated and living conditions of all the people will be uplifted to sustainable levels of comfort, health and wellbeing through coordinated and integrated development and management of water resources of the region.

Water Vision 2025 GWP – South Asia

Strategic Goal 1: Promote Water as a key part of sustainable Development

The focus is to help countries in application of IWRM approaches working towards water security for sustainable national development whilst emphasizing good governance, appropriate infrastructure and sustainable financing.

Strategic Goal 2: Address critical development challenges

The focus is to develop and advocate solutions to critical challenges, such as climate change adaptation, water productivity, poverty & health, meeting MDGs on water supply & sanitation, growing urbanisation, resource degradation and energy demands.

Goal 3: Reinforce knowledge sharing and communications

The focus is to develop capacity for knowledge-sharing and promote a dynamic communications culture and platform that supports better water resources management.

Goal 4: Build a more effective network

The focus is to enhance the network's resilience and effectiveness, with stronger partnerships, good governance, performance measurement for learning and financial sustainability

Implementation Strategy.

Collaborate actively with its partners and other interests with competence, for achievement of mutual goals and synergy of effort, converging towards an integrated policy with a critical mass of activity i.e. tipping point.

Work with inter-governmental groups, donors, state agencies and politicians using its established credibility creating a niche for itself based on recognition of its expertise, competence & brand name.

To balance interests and representation it will continue to mobilize stakeholders and vulnerable groups through capacity building, information sharing/ dissemination, networking and improving communication strategies to include all stakeholder groups including youth through blogs and social networks.

Regional countries to capture financial outlets of country programmes by adding value in addition to developing country programmes to build partnership with ADB based on Delhi MOU.

Thematic and Programme Focus

GWP-SAS will focus on thematic issues based on regional priorities, GWP Strategy and mindful of the Dublin/Rio/WSSD and recent Copenhagen statements, whilst considering the water challenges in South Asia and the MDG's for poverty alleviation. There is clear indication that in the emerging global and regional scenario, climate change adaptation and disaster coping is interwoven and crucial to the success of initiatives in the water sector, impacting on all countries in South Asia region as an identified global hot spot. Matters related to the core issue of water governance, implementation of IWRM related policies and laws, trans boundary issues, water management and agricultural productivity issues, flood and drought management, groundwater depletion, river basin and lower level organisations, rapid urbanization, gender and poverty issues linked to livelihoods are seen to be inexorably linked to the aspect of climate change adaptation & therefore need to be addressed in that overarching context even though segregated into specific thematic groups for goal orientation and implementation.

Concomitantly issues of environment, natural resources and local programmes for water policy, legal and institutional change, safe sanitation, hydropower, wastewater, groundwater, river basins, etc with cross cutting themes of capacity building and gender mainstreaming will be integrated programmatically. South Asia will aggressively pursue the Area Water Partnership and Zonal Water Partnership concepts which it tailored and are core ground level activities, together with innovative initiatives such as water parliaments and water messengers as appropriate in countries.

Goal 1: Focus and Activities

Good Governance, Transparency, Stakeholder decision making and sustainable resource use through promotion of concept of IWRM, Participatory decision making and subsidiarity, Institutional and organisational focus on hydrological basis, Integrated overarching institutional and legal framework for water resources and Water as a human right.

Countries will work on Water policies, Legal and Institutional reform, IWRM in National Development Plans, Water Utilities to incorporate IWRM principles in projects and Water sectors to address good governance to reduce water corruption.

Goal 2: Focus and Activities

Coping with critical water challenges through partnerships to secure mutual goals with activities related to Water security and livelihoods from climate change, Greater urbanization, Food production and Resource sharing related conflicts.

Countries will work on adaptation to climate change impacts, use of cultural and technological best practices, Cooperating on developing better forecasting and disaster warning systems and Trans boundary water issues in the sub continent.

Promotion of efficient water use through productivity improvements, water saving technologies and livelihood improvements through better health and sanitation in relation to MDG's are included.

Actively promote the concept of River Basin Management (RBM) and River Basin Organisations (RBO) and Monitoring source area conservation, Maintenance of reservations, Flood prone zones and Water quality aspects.

Goal 3; Focus and Activities

Developing capacity to promote a dynamic communications culture through water professionals internalising IWRM principles in work and water users including youth in their lives.. GWP SAS will implement a communication strategy to improve interaction with stakeholders including donors. Evolve an integrated communications strategy to improve dissemination of IWRM knowledge using traditional methods as well as new developments such as social networking and Blogs.

Goal 4: Focus and Activities

All Country Water Partnerships will strengthen the networks of AWP, ZWP and local water parliaments to ensure support for implementation of IWRM at grass roots level. Focus on securing external funding through goodwill and brand established as credible player in water sector in region and in countries. Outcome Mapping as a methodology of programme planning, monitoring and reporting will be incorporated in all regional and country work plans. GWP SAS and CWP will strengthen its internal decision making processes and consult with Partners and Strategic Allies on all major national and regional water issues



GWP SAS Outcome Mapping Training Session in Colombo.

Promoting Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) in South Asia.

Striving for good governance, equity, access, adequacy, quality, productivity and sustainability in the water sector.

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