

News from the

# CROSSING BOUNDARIES PROJECT

April-October 2010

## Dissemination workshop: 'Interdisciplinary Education in Water Resources Management in South Asia' | 17th, April, Dhaka

Dhaka: IWFm, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), organised a national level stakeholders' workshop on 'Interdisciplinary Education in Water Resources Management in South Asia' on the 17th of April in Hotel Sheraton here. Mr(Prof) Nirmal Gunawardena, Task Manager, Dr Dibya R Kansakar, Executive Director and Dr N C Narayanan, former CB Project Director were the SaciWATERs representative at the workshop.

Various universities in Bangladesh, research institutions, boundary partners related to water resources planning, development, and utilisations, NGOs and INGOs, foreign missions and faculties and students of IWRM and BUET attended the workshop. In all, there were about 100 participants. The Chief Guest of the workshop was the Bangladesh Minister of Education, Mr Nurul Islam Nahid.

After a warm welcome from Prof Shah Alam Khan, Director, IWFm, Dr M Salehin, Coordinator of CB project made a presentation on how the institute has been impacted by the project.

In the absence of Dr S Janakarajan, President, SaciWATERs, Professor Gunawardena presented on SaciWATERs. He encouraged organizations present to come forward to partner it in its upcoming projects and activities.

Dr Kansakar then presented a paper on "Building Regional Capacity in IWRM: 5 Years of Crossing Boundaries Project in South Asia". Two SAWA fellows- one alumni and one existing shared their educational experiences in the water sector.

On the 18th and 19th of April, the review of education component was held at BUET. A team lead by Dr Narayanan with Dr Kansakar and Mr Gunawardena reviewed the existing IWRM postgraduate programme.



## South Asia Research Workshop on Globalisation of Governance: implications of water management in South Asia | May 3-5 2010, Thimpu, Bhutan

Thimpu: As urbanisation increases across South Asia, the challenge of conserving and protecting natural resources falls on governments. The lack of a proper policy with respect to water distribution, conservation and pollution has led to a debate about the need for reform in governance.

It was with regard to these immense challenges that SaciWATERs organised a research workshop on 'Globalisation of governance: Implications of water management in South Asia' as part of the CB project here. This was organised in collaboration with Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN) in Thimpu, Bhutan. SaciWATERs was represented in the workshop by its President Dr Janakarajan, Dr Dibya Ratnakanakar, Project Director and Chanda Gurung Goodrich, Senior fellow-Research.

A total of 25 papers were chosen by the CB team, of which four were presented by lead authors, whom the team had identified before hand; four others were presented by SAWA fellows. The participants came from all over South Asia. There was also one participant each from Germany and the United Kingdom. Apart from these, international organizations like WWF, UNICEF too had representatives.

H E Dr Pema Gyamtsho, Minister for Agriculture, Government of Bhutan addressed the gathering as Chief Guest and key note speaker at the inauguration. "Thanks to rapid industrialisation and urbanisation, Bhutan, is facing challenges because of the rising demand for water from all sectors," he said. "Water, due to its very nature, cannot be governed by one national government all alone. The challenge needs to be addressed as a team, and keeping in mind other related issues," he added.

At the end of the paper presentation session, Professor M S Khan, Director, IWFm, BUET gave away a cash prize of US \$150 to the best SAWA fellow paper presenter, Dibesh Shrestha of NEC, Kathmandu. To conclude, Professor Janakarajan said, that the workshop had brought some critical issues to the fore.

Water, due to its very nature, cannot be governed by one national government all alone  
- Dr Pema Gyamtsho, Minister for Agriculture, Government of Bhutan

### Dissemination workshop: 'Interdisciplinary Education in Water Resources Management: Scope and Challenges' | 26th, April, Chennai

Chennai: As part of the outreach activities of the CB Project, Centre for Water Resources (CWR), Anna University organised a dissemination workshop here on 'Interdisciplinary Education in Water Resources Management: Scope' and Challenges" on the 26th of April.

The inauguration was presided over by Dr K Karunakaran, Director of CWR, who spoke of the need to consider the changing scenario and the needs of the society in any education.

A total of six papers were presented: Dr S Janakarajan, President, SaciWATERS and Professor, Madras Institute of Development Studies, presented on 'SaciWATERS: An Introduction'. Dr Dibya R Kansakar, Dr N C Narayanan, Associate Professor, IIT-Bombay, Dr B V Mudgal, Assistant Professor, CWR, Dr S Shanmugavel, Registrar, Anna University, Mr Dheenadhayalan, Former Advisor, Water Resources Organization, PWD Government of Tamil Nadu and Dr N K Ambujam, Professor, CWR also presented papers on different facets of IWRM, ranging from issues in education, research and its implementation in the government sector.

To conclude the technical session, two of our SAWA alumni, Ms Dhatchayani and Ms Veeralakshmi, narrated their experiences from the IWRM programme.

Later, a panel discussion was moderated by Dr Janakarajan. The panelists included Dr Narayanan, Mr Dheenadhayalan, Dr K Venugopal, Director, Centre for Water Resources, Sathyabama University, Dr M Kaarmegam, Former Director, CWR, Mr P A Viswanathan, Executive Director, Dhan Foundation, Dr E J James, Director, Water Institute, Karunya University and Dr Kansakar.

Dr Narayanan said that more such workshops should be conducted for information dissemination among academicians, governmental and non governmental representatives. Sharing his research experiences, Mr Viswanathan said that field research should be done for three to four years before being disseminated to policy makers and academicians. Dr E J James spoke of the need for decentralisation in project implementation and the need for systems to be evolved from the local community. "IWRM is a tool to understand issues in a comprehensive manner. It has the capacity to bring about socially acceptable results", opined Dr Kansakar.

The floor was then open for audience input, and the diverse crowd composed of academicians, governmental and non governmental personnel, raised some interest points.



### Workshop: Gender, IWRM and the Role of Women Water Professionals | 25-26th, May, Hyderabad, Pakistan

Hyderabad, Pakistan: Women water professionals, who have had access to higher education, are mostly part of the elite classes in South Asia. They also have special roles and responsibilities towards alleviating the water related problems in society.

Women water professionals in the WATSAN and irrigation sector perform important roles as educators and mobilisers for other women. All South Asian countries currently face water-related problems and women's burden in water management is particularly conspicuous.

It was in this context that a pioneering workshop on gender mainstreaming in the water sector, sponsored by an international consortium of partners was attended by 26 female participants, all working in the water sector as engineers, academics, activists and social mobilisers from sixteen different organisations (civil society organisations, government agencies and academia). SaciWATERS was the lead organiser of the workshop which was also supported by Shirkat Gah (Pakistan), Women for Water Partnership (Netherlands), NetWwater (Sri Lanka), Management and Development Centre

(MDC- Pakistan) and Sindh Irrigation and Drainage Authority (SIDA - Pakistan) thereby enabling women from as far away as Peshawar to participate. Shaheen Ashraf from Pakistan was the programme organiser and facilitation was carried out by Dr Yameen Memon and other staff from MDC. Kusum Athukorala from Sri Lanka was the lead trainer in this training programme. Shaheen Ashraf, Simi Kamal and Nazir Esseni did presentations on the status of women and water

management in Pakistan which encouraged active participation and interaction amongst the group. Ms Athukorala shared her diverse global experiences in the water sector.

She likened this group activity to that of the 1999 formulation of NetWWater in Sri Lanka which was set up to project women's voice in the water sector and create a platform for empowering women water professionals. She also presented the capacity building initiatives undertaken in Sri Lanka and elsewhere as an example for the way forward.

The participants enthusiastically acclaimed the programme as the first opportunity they have ever had to discuss water- and career-related issues. In a hilarious presentation called 'The Good, The Bad and The Ugly, the experiences in the water sector, using role play was depicted. Of particular interest was The Interview (The Ugly component) which depicted the constraints faced by these professionals at entry point.

The participants also planned a series of post workshop activities to support community level activities and enhance long-term career goals. Two international training fellowships were also announced for the outstanding participants of the event. The workshop made the partners more determined for continued support towards gender mainstreaming in the South Asian water sector.

#### The good, bad and ugly

In a hilarious presentation called "The good, the bad and the ugly" the experiences in the water sector, using role play was depicted. Of particular interest was the interview (the ugly component) which depicted the constraints faced by these professionals at entry point.

## PIM meeting | 27th-29th June | Kathmandu, Nepal

### Attendees:

Prof Nirmal Gunawardena, Task Manager  
Prof (Dr) Peter Mollinga, Sr Project Advisor  
Prof S Janakarajan, Co-convener and President of SaciWATERS  
Dr Lam Dorji, Executive Director of RSPN, Bhutan  
Prof (Dr) N C Narayanan, IIT-Bombay  
Other members of CB Partner Institutions

## News from the meet:

- 51 out of 149 masters' level SAWA fellows have graduated
- 3 PIs (Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, Centre for Water Resources and Post Graduate Institute of Agriculture) plan to award 28 additional SAWA Fellowships to masters' level students
- 126 South Asian water professionals have been trained in four training programmes in gender, water and equity

## Training of trainers: IWRM (Integrated Water Resources Management) | 16th-25th September 2010, Kandy

Kandy: A ten-day long training of trainers (ToTs) sponsored by CapNet and the CB project was organised jointly by the Post Graduate Institute of Agriculture (Sri Lanka) and SaciWATERS here from 16th to 25th September.

The training was meant for academicians of higher education institutes in South Asia, in all there were 22 participants. The objectives of the programme were to disseminate knowledge on IWRM, reviewing the existing curriculum and strengthening the IWRM network in the region. Highly acclaimed senior academicians, researchers and scholars from all over Asia were the facilitators for the programme. The model was immensely discussion and audience participation dependent.

The feedback from the audience was tremendous and they showed great confidence in curriculum development, delivery and ascertained a value add in IWRM education knowledge.

Resource persons: Prof Nirmal Gunawardena and Prof Deepthi Bandara from Sri Lanka, Prof Hemasiri Kotagama from Oman and Dr N C Narayanan, Ms Seema Kurkarni, Prof Brij Gopal, Prof E J James, Dr Anjal Prakash, Dr Priyani Amarasinghe, Prof N K Ambujam, all from India.



## Workshop: Synthesis report writing | 6th-7th April 2010, Dhaka

A two-day workshop was organised for the four Research Coordinators (RCs) of the four PIs to work on the synthesis report of their institute's research programme. The participants were Dr Prakash Nellyat (CWR), Mr Ashutosh Shukla (NEC), Dr Hamidul Huq (BUET), Dr H B Nayakekorala (PGIA), Dr Chanda Gurung Goodrich and Dr Anjal Prakash (both from SaciWATERS). The main objective of the workshop was to have a final outline of the synthesis report. The two day workshop entailed presentations from all the four institutions, feedback, suggestions, discussions and clarifications on the synthesis reports, research consolidations and see what support requires consolidating the research questions, discussion on main issues for presentation at the international conference and working with individual RCs.

## Dissemination workshop: 'Interdisciplinary Water Education, Research and Knowledge Dissemination' | 1st, July, Kathmandu

Kathmandu: A dissemination workshop was held here on July 1 2010, to look back on five years of the CB project, and share ideas of water resources management in the region and discuss transformations in sectoral knowledge. There was also a panel discussion that focused specifically on the Nepal context, taking into consideration employment of IWRM graduates in the country. The workshop was organised by Nepal Engineering College (NEC) and Dr Dibya R Kansakar and Ms Arpita De represented SaciWATERS. Dr N C Narayanan, former CB Project Director, from IIT-Bombay also participated. Dignitaries from the National Planning Commission and other Government Agencies along with personnel from NGO/Development Organisations, Research Organisations, other Professional Bodies as well as Educational Institutions were present in the workshop. During the course of this workshop, NEC signed an MoU with the Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology.



Vice- Principal of NEC, Dr CM Pokharel welcomed participants to the workshop. Then, Dr Hari Krishna Shrestha, Principal, NEC, presented the Country Dissemination Workshop Agenda wherein he focussed on the achievements of IWRM Programme at NEC (which included development of an innovative curriculum, successful partnership building and favourable outcomes of the students' enrolment in IWRM MSc courses).

Dr Jagdish Chandra Pokharel, Vice-Chairperson, National Planning congratulated NEC on growing institutionally as well as progressing on the knowledge building. He expatiated on multi-disciplinary approaches through his own experiences.

He gave ideas on where in the government sector IWRM students can be placed after course completion. The workshop concluded after a lively panel discussion chaired by Dr Upendra Gautham, the panel members were Dr. Subodh Sharma, Dept of Engineering Science and Environment, Kathmandu University, Mr Surya Nath Upadhyaya, JVS, Mr Ajaya Dixit, Nepal Water Conservation Foundation, Dr Prachanda Pradhan, FMIST and Dr Narayanan, Board Member, SaciWATERS.

## Training: SAWA fellows training | 24th, August - 2nd, September 2010, Dhaka and Khulna

Dhaka and Khulna: The annual SAWA fellows training was held here in Bangladesh this year from 24th August to 2nd September. The annual training is a congregation of post graduation and doctoral fellows from all the South Asian countries, and is a retreat of sorts to relearn, unlearn critical skills, both hard and soft.

Organised entirely by IWFm, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), with minimal outside resource personnel help, the focus of the training was to impart skills that would



be of use to water management practitioners in real life situations. 48 fellows attended the ten-day training programme, which was inaugurated by the Vice Chancellor of BUET.

Dr Atiq Rahman, Executive Director, BCAS was the Special Guest. SaciWATERS was represented by Dr Chanda Gurung Goodrich and Dr Anjal Prakash.

The broad objectives of were: (1) Understanding interdisciplinarity in water resources studies and research.

(2) Practicing methodologies/tools for participatory field research.

(3) Learning the importance of attitudinal aspect of researchers for effectiveness of participatory field research.

(4) Understanding the use of PRA tools in conducting interdisciplinary research in water

issues.

The program was planned and developed by the IWFm, BUET with inputs from CB Staff

As in the prior such trainings, a substantial part of the training was devoted to practice the tools and methods with the community members in real life situation.

Thus, the training was divided into three components:

(i) Classroom lectures and exercises, and

(ii) Field practicum

(iii) Classroom sessions on report writing and presentation

The first half of the day one at Khulna covered the broader background and information on the status of water resources in the three partner countries (India, Nepal and Sri Lanka), while the second half was

d e v o t e d t o information on the various aspects of the project in the area which was the field area that the participants would be working and practicing during the training.



using the various PRA tools they had learned and practiced to come up with findings.

At the end of each day intensive review and reflections were held with the aim of drawing out the practical learning. Day nine at Khulna was devoted to report writing. The faculties present helped and guided the groups in this. In the morning on the final day, the groups made their presentation.



The second day was spent visiting the area for a better understanding of the area and the project there.

The first half of the third day covered the understanding of interdisciplinarity, some technical tools as well as interview and questioning skills. The second half was devoted to developing research questions for the field work. For doing this work, students were divided into five groups. The faculties present facilitated and guided the groups in developing the questions.

The various participatory methodologies and PRA tools were taught and practiced on day four. For the field exercise the participants were taken to different areas/locations of the KJDRP Project area according to their research question where they did the field work

**International Conference: 'Interdisciplinarity in Water Education in South Asia: Challenges, Perspectives and Policy Implications' | October 3rd to 6th, Kathmandu, Nepal**

**THE THREE- FOLD AGENDA OF THE CONFERENCE INCLUDED ACADEMIC, POLICY AND ADVOCACY ISSUES**

Kathmandu: SaciWATERs, in association with Nepal Engineering College(NEC) organized the second International Conference on 'Interdisciplinarity in Water Education in South Asia: Challenges, Perspectives and Policy Implications' here. The three fold agenda of the conference included academic, policy, and advocacy issues. The conference also focused on the outcomes of the CB Project with stakeholders in South Asia and abroad, taking forward the various discourses on interdisciplinary approach to water education in the region by crossing traditional boundaries of academic disciplines and dealing with the challenges of water management.

Prof Deepak Bhattarai, Chairperson, NEC, delivered the welcome address followed by the formal inauguration of the conference by the guest of honour, Rt Honourable President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, Dr Ram Baran Yadav. Prof Peter Mollinga, Convener of SaciWATERs gave an opening speech which was followed by a speech by Prof Nirmal Gunawardane, Task Manager of CB Project .



Experts, academicians, grassroots workers, activists, policy makers and representatives from various NGOs attended the conference

A key attraction in the evening was the release of a book titled 'Women Managing Water: Inspiring Stories from South Asia', by the Honourable Minister of Education, Er Sarbendra Nath Shukla and Ms Beli Lama, a grassroots Nepali leader, who features in the book. This was followed by a short speech by the Hon'ble Minister, who reiterated the need for interdisciplinarity in water education.

The conference was attended by experts, academicians, grassroots workers, activists, policy makers and representatives from various national and International NGOs.

The second day of the conference was focused on the theme of content and context of water education in South Asia. It critically examined how the discourse had moved ahead through four sessions. The first session was on Gender discourses within IWRM approaches: Achievements and Challenges, chaired by Dr Margreet Zwartveen, and moderated by Prof Amita Shah. 'Water and Climate Change' and 'South Asia's knowledge systems' were the next two sessions. The day finally ended with a panel discussion on Media Engagement in Environmental Action with media representatives from Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan. They highlighted the role of media in bringing about public and state attention to critical issues.

Day three focused on showcasing the outcomes of CB project initiatives with a critical reflection on what has been achieved and what needs to be strengthened to keep the momentum. It also discussed cross regional (international) experiences beyond the CB project so as to draw parallels for similar experiments in South Asia with a focus on education, impact oriented research and advocacy. The first session was on consolidation of the research programmes in four CB project universities namely - Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, Centre for Water Resources, Post Graduate Institute of Agriculture and NCE. The major findings of the four research programmes were presented.

The 'Status of Women Water Professionals in South Asia' session discussed the report of the study initiated in South Asia on the Status of Women Water Professionals and the major issues dealt with in the report so as to take the work further through networking and advocacy, followed by a panel discussion.

The third session on 'Cross-regional comparisons in innovations around water resources studies', discussed the focus on the innovations in University education around water resources studies with comparisons from similar networks in Africa and Andes region and also the move from interdisciplinary to trans-disciplinary approach to issues in education and research.

Day four started with a Panel Discussion on 'Social Movements for Democratizing Water Resources: Relevance for Academic Research' chaired by Dr Ravi Narayanan, Advisor Arghyam. The speakers shared their experiences on the changes they see in the sector as a result of the transformation in the education system.



A book was released by Nepal's Minister of Education, Er Sarbendra Nath Shukla and Ms Beli Lama, a Nepali grassroots leader



Cross regional cases were discussed to draw parallels for similar experiments in South Asia focusing on education, research, advocacy

Presentation by lead rapporteurs, Dr Priya Sangameswaran, Dr Vishal Narain, Mr KJ Joy, summarized the conference in terms of gaps in water research in South Asia-emerging issues and challenges, changes in the education system towards making water education inter or trans-disciplinary and the relevance of academic research for social transformation. The conference closed with an open house discussion.

Sessions	
■ Content and context of water education in South Asia	■ Outcomes of CB project initiatives
■ Gender discourses within IWRM approaches	■ Consolidation of the research programmes in PIs
■ Water and Climate Change	■ Status of Women Water Professionals in South Asia
■ South Asia's knowledge systems	■ Cross-regional comparisons in innovations in water studies
■ Media Engagement in Environmental Action	■ Social Movements for Democratizing Water Resources