

Sri Lanka Water Partnership Six Monthly Journal

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Output I - Promote water as key part of sustainable development.

Activity: Action on Colombo Urban Wetlands. An initial meeting of stakeholders with University of Moratuwa as focal point was held on 9th January followed by the with the first Schools programme on 1st April, following the mapping exercise undertaken by the university with the local environment office on Kolonnawa wetland, Programme is to be expanded to cover other public groups and a street drama to be developed with the school drama society to raise awareness on the need for conservation of this urban wetland which is being polluted by garbage and encroached upon at a rapid rate.

Outcome: The wetlands that serve as a sink and support many forms of plant and animal life is one of main wetlands close to the capital Colombo. Gradual awareness among all stake holders has reduced pollution to some degree. Use of the wetland for illicit activities such as brewing of illicit liquor has also reduced due to public alertness.

Activity: Initial stage of a 3 stage activity in Menik Ganga Basin(AWP) to support resource mapping, land use planning, land degradation prevention and development of an Action plan for basin area covered by Buttala Division was held on 23rd February. This area covers the upstream and catchments of many minor and a new major irrigation reservoir. A video is being developed to create greater awareness among the local stakeholders and public.

Outcome: Menik Ganga AWP which led this initiative has been focussing on downstream area earlier. It has been accepted by all stakeholders as a major representative of public interest and has both agency and local authority/political support for this upstream activity.

Activity : Workshop on Assessment of Illegal River Sand Mining(RSM) in Kelani River Ratnapura District . A follow up to the joint RSM activities undertaken in 2008 with the Water Integrity Network and a sequel to the Workshop held to create awareness on this issue with the Provincial/District Authorities and Police in 2009, a follow up was requested by the authorities to prepare an assessment of the situation for consideration and recommendation to the National District Secretaries annual meeting .The workshop in collaboration with NetWwater ,University of Colombo and the local administration was attended by 95 participants and firm recommendations were made for follow up. An assessment and Mapping exercise will be undertaken in July/August by the University of Colombo to derive data and assess actual withdrawal of sand against amounts authorised so that it could be discussed at the meeting above.

Outcome. SLWP has secured credibility among the local authorities as an organisation that can meaningfully mobilise support and backstop through expert assistance to resolve this major problem that affects the sustainability of river resources.

Activity: Maha Oya AWP organised a training programme on IWRM for 40 youth on 25th April and implemented a tree planting campaign on 8th and 9th May covering Rahalgala/Ambuluwawa part of the source area and catchments of the river. Focus is on bank conservation and erosion.

Outcome: Maha oya AWP due to its active work on conservation and pollution mitigation of Maha Oya river, had in recognition, had its Chair appointed to a Cabinet Appointed Task Force set up to make recommendations with regard to such matters in the Kelani and Maha Oya Rivers.

Output: Coping with critical water challenges through partnerships to secure mutual goals.

Activity: SLWP organized a Seminar on Climate Change Adaptation in collaboration with the Institute of Physics of the University of Colombo and Centre for Climate Change Studies of the Department of Meteorology for 66 staff and senior students of the University. This was a follow up to an Agency Workshop organized in association with the same organizations with the Disaster Management Centre and Coast Conservation Department on Climate Change Impacts in December 2009.

Outcome: University staff and students as part of the educated elite are able to act as messengers both with respect to handling risks and responses to disasters and has been a potential hitherto untapped, mostly focusing on agency staff and the public.

Activity : Provincial Workshop on Climate Change Adaptation. A Seminar/Workshop was organised by SLWP in collaboration with the Meteorological Department, University of Ruhuna, Natural Resources Management Centre, and Ministry of Scientific Affairs with local organisation by the NCP Governors Office (Malwatu Oya AWP) on 4th May in Anurahapura the provincial capital. The programme was to create awareness and response knowledge among technical staff associated with coping with disasters such as floods and droughts, emphasis in this instance being on drought risk reduction and management. 45 technical staff participated.

Activity: Provincial Workshop on Climate Change Adaptation. A similar workshop to the above for the Southern Province was organised by Net Wwater, Natural Resources Management Centre, Department of Meteorology, National Water Supply and Drainage Board and University of Ruhuna in the Southern capital of Matara for 40 participants on 28th June. The Vice Chancellor of the University and Hon Bindu Weerasinghe, Minister of Agriculture Southern Province participated throughout the sessions. The focus of the workshop was mainly on changes impacting on water for drinking/domestic and livelihood water for the province.

Outcome: Two such provincial workshops aimed at arriving at discussing appropriate national strategies and approaches to be held later as part of a National Dialogue in 2010.

Output III - Reinforce knowledge sharing and communications.

Activity: Blog and Podcast Training. The second training programme for young environmentalists of lower Maha Oya AWP was held on 27th and 28th February. 20 youth including 9 females were trained in blog/podcast development and how to use social networks for real time monitoring and information sharing on environmental activities, especially on negative environmental behaviour. This programme is a joint activity of SLWP, NetWwater and CapNet Lanka.



Blog Training – Building Social Networks for real time monitoring and information sharing on environmental activities.

Outcome: 4 blogs are operational and this has shown to be an effective tool in highlighting malpractices and instances of riverbank destruction and encroachment. Authorities' response time has reduced considerably

Activity: Sisu Jala Hamuwa or Schools Water programmes covering Health, Sanitation and IWRM is a regular programme of SLWP. Programmes undertaken in 2010 are specifically linked to SARCOSAN timed for early next year. A special programme focussing on Central Province and linked to programme of the National Water Supply and Drainage Board is being implemented. A Rainwater harvesting tank was provided to Nugawela Girls School to store water for toilet cleaning and use. Two toilets were constructed at Aladuwaka Mixed School in Central Province as this school reopened on public demand had no useable toilets. Pilimalawe Lions Club and NetWwater were collaborators in this programme and supported the construction. Provision of a rainwater tank is also under consideration.



Rainwater Harvesting Tank for Nugawela M/V by SLWP to promote better sanitation and augment water for school agricultural plot.

Activity: A Water Day Programme attended by the Governor of the Central Province was held on 5th April at Nugawela Central College in active collaboration with the National Water Supply and Drainage Board and Institute for Participatory Interaction and Development both SLWP partners. 149 senior students and 9 teachers attended the programme at which the governor and Chair SLWP attended.

A Water Day Programme organised by the Nilwala AWP with the University of Ruhuna and Net Wwater was held in the Southern Province city of Matara on Water day 22nd March. 155 mid/senior school children and 30 teachers from selected schools participated. The theme this year was Climate Change, Health& Sanitation. These activities were linked to the proposed SARCOSAN activities scheduled for early 2011. Winners of the essay and painting competitions received prizes from the Chief Guest Prof Mangala De Zoysa, Dean Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna.

Outcome: These annual events now incorporated into the schools calendar help keep interest and continuity of effort, mobilising youth who are excellent messengers.

Activity

Other AWP Activity.

Maha Oya AWP organised a training Programme and replanting campaign in degraded land in the source area of Maha oya Basin. Training for 40 youth of an IWRM cell created at Rahalgala /Ambuluwawa was held in Mawanella. Chair SLWP and Chair Nation Builders Association (NBA) a major collaborator and partner were present. A scrub land clearing and planting programme was undertaken on 8th and 9th May at selected sites.

A seminar was organised by the Upper Mahaweli AWP and NBA to take action to reduce pollution and Garbage dumping in the river at Gampola. Participants were the local agency staff and officers of the local authority the Gampola Urban Council .The principals of local schools and officers of the National water Board participated. Two presentations were made, one by Dr KWP Jayakody of the CPC and the other on quality of Mahaveli river water and ground water by Mr JP Padmasiri, Adviser, Institute of Fundamental Studies Kandy.

A special meeting of the governor of the North Western Province was called at the behest of the Malwatu Oya AWP to discuss pollution issues especially in the city limits of the provincial capital Anuradhapura. All major agencies and the Municipal Council and several NGO participated. It was agreed that regular meetings would be convened to discuss issues and monitor decisions. A tree planting campaign would be organised on both banks, with the NGO Help Green supplying the planting material. The issue of water plants such as Salviniya clogging the waterways was also to be addressed with the assistance of Mahaveli Authority and the National Institute of Aquatic Resources.

Output IV - Build a more effective network.

Activity: A Steering Committee Meeting of SLWP was held on 27th May 2010. 6 programme Committee Meetings have been held during January-June to decide on, implement and monitor activities of SLWP.

Special note on publications and outcome.

The Sinhala Version of the SLWP Corporate Brochure was printed in March 2010. The English version was sprinted in late 2009.