

# REGIONAL DISSEMINATION AND LEARNING WORKSHOP

## Gendering Water and Climate Science Research in South Asia

Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> February to 5<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Place: Kathmandu, Nepal

### Concept Note and Agenda

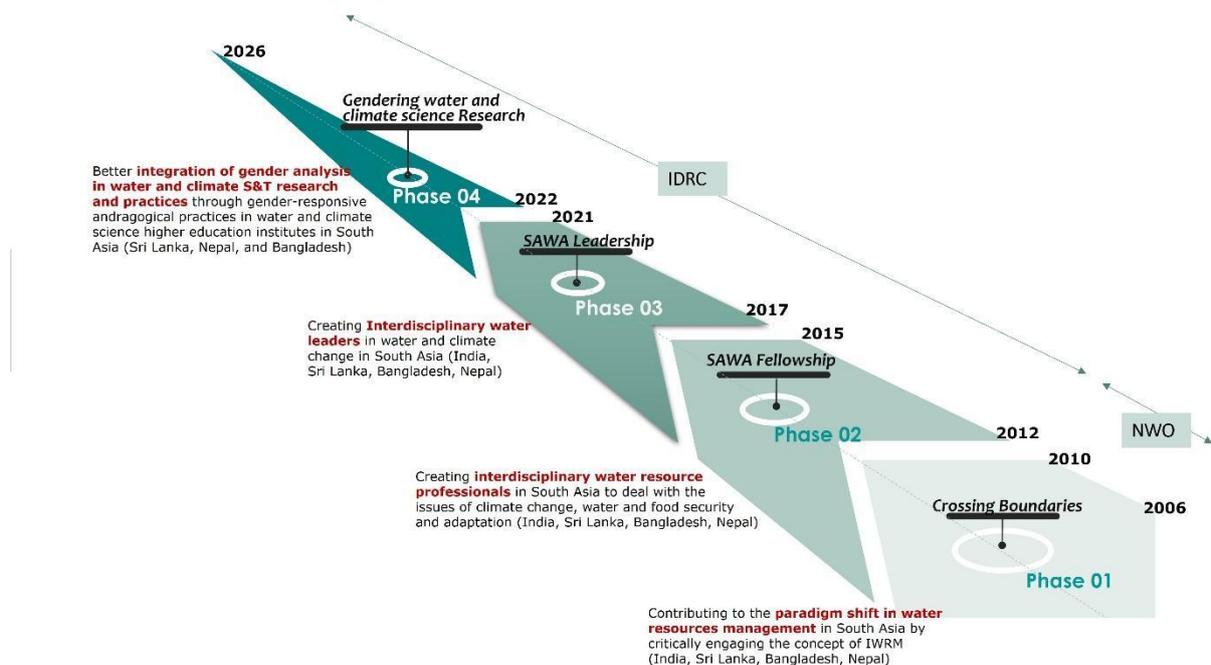
#### About the SAWA Program

The South Asia Water (SAWA) Programme is a pioneering fellowship initiative designed to develop capacity among young scholars across South Asia. Since its inception in 2005, the program has aimed to establish long-term partnerships in water science and technology while addressing the region's critical water and climate challenges. Developed by a South Asia-based consortium of four engineering institutes and a water policy research institute, SAWA focuses on interdisciplinary education, innovation-driven research, and gender-inclusive approaches to water resource management. Its primary goals include:

1. Train a critical mass of South Asian water professionals in interdisciplinary approaches to integrated and gender-sensitive water resources management, while fostering a more balanced gender representation within the field.
2. Conduct research focused on social learning and innovation in real-world settings, involving water resource users and other stakeholders as key participants in capacity-building efforts.
3. Build a knowledge base on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), gender, and water issues while fostering collaboration across South Asia through networking, publications, and events such as workshops and conferences.

#### Evolution of the Program

Over the past two decades, the SAWA programme has undergone several phases of evolution, each with a unique focus while remaining aligned with its core objectives:



### **Countries of Action:**

Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka

### **Partners:**

- Post Graduate Institute of Agriculture (PGIA), University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka (Co-ordinating Institution)
- Institute of Water and Flood Management (IWFM), Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Dhaka, Bangladesh
- Nepal Engineering College (nec), Kathmandu, Nepal

## **Current Focus: Gendering Water and Climate Science Research in South Asia**

### **Background**

South Asia, home to some of the world's most sensitive socio-ecological systems such as eco-sensitive island nations, the Himalayan region, and low-lying deltaic areas is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and water insecurity. This makes research on water and climate science (WCS) both necessary and highly relevant. While social and gendered research in WCS is critical, it remains largely underdeveloped. Social and gender theories, often rooted in the social sciences and humanities, struggle to bridge the disciplinary divide with the natural sciences. Additionally, there is limited understanding of how pedagogy, institutional structures, and market forces influence or inhibit interdisciplinary and gender-focused research and practices.

Building on previous efforts, the current action research project aims to strengthen the integration of gender analysis into water and climate science and technology (S&T) research and practices by promoting gender-responsive pedagogical approaches in higher education institutions across three South Asian countries: Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bangladesh.

### **Project Objectives**

- a. Understand barriers and catalysts for effective practice of interdisciplinarity and gender analysis in WCS research
- b. Improve frameworks of methods, approaches, and pedagogical tools to effectively translate social and gender theory and analyses across disciplinary boundaries between social and natural sciences, and embody these frameworks in a common teaching curriculum and capacity building
- c. Strengthen a network and platform of multiple stakeholders for knowledge exchange, advocacy, and mentorship of young water and climate scientists

### **Objective of the Dissemination workshop**

The upcoming dissemination event aims to share the knowledge and insights generated from the project, providing a platform for stakeholders to learn from the experiences and achievements over the past two decades. The specific objectives are as follows:

- Disseminate key findings of the Gendering Water and Climate Science Research in South Asia project and strengthen understanding of the Theory of Change guiding the initiative.

- Present and analyse country gender-STEM profiles with a focus on the water sector in Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bangladesh, highlighting barriers, gaps, and opportunities.
- Share institutional experiences and best practices in gender and social integration in Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) education and research across South Asian institutions.
- Strengthen understanding of gender integration in water and climate science curricula, pedagogical innovations, and constraints, leading to strategies for mainstreaming gender in academic programs.
- Disseminate findings from the SAWA tracer study and deepen learning on opportunities for GESI-centred knowledge and capacity building in South Asian universities.
- Showcase how gender has been integrated in national-level research outputs and create a platform for SAWA Fellows to present research findings and lessons.
- Facilitate cross-country dialogue to develop sustainable strategies and collaborative pathways for future gender-responsive water and climate science research and education in South Asia.

## Workshop Output

- Consolidated documentation of country gender-STEM and water sector profiles, including comparative learning across Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka.
- A synthesized record of institutional experiences and good practices on gender integration in IWRM and climate science teaching and research.
- Recommendations for gender-responsive curriculum reform and pedagogical approaches in water and climate-related programs.
- Workshop reflections on the tracer study outcomes, strengthening alumni engagement and evidence on career pathways of SAWA fellows.
- Identified challenges, opportunities, and institutional strategies for advancing GESI-centered academic and research practices in South Asia.
- Strengthened regional network and collaborative intentions among universities, researchers, and practitioners for advancing gender-transformative water governance.

## Workshop Design and Structure (Day-wise)

### Day 1 – Setting the Context, Country Profiles, and Institutional Experiences 3 February 2026

- **Inaugural Session:** Registration, ceremonial opening, welcome and inaugural address, followed by an introduction to the project's Theory of Change.
- **Session 1:** Presentation of Gender STEM Country Profiles with a focus on the water sector for Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bangladesh, followed by breakout discussions and concluding synthesis.
- **Session 2:** Institutional experience sharing from a long-term, multi-country program on Gender and Social Integration in IWRM Research and Education, featuring country perspectives.
- **Country Roundtables:** Discussions on sustainable strategies, followed by a joint summing-up session.

### Day 2 – Curriculum, Capacity Building, and Learning from SAWA 4 February 2026

- **Session 3A:** Presentation and reflection on Findings and Lessons from the SAWA Tracer Study, highlighting employability and career trajectories.
- **Session 3B:** Discussion on Challenges and Opportunities of GESI-centered knowledge and capacity building within South Asian academic institutions.
- **Session 4A & 4B:** Focus on gendering water and climate science curricula and gender integration in IWRM education, addressing approaches, constraints, and pathways forward.
- **Cultural Evening & Dinner** to foster informal networking and regional bonding.

### **Day 3 – Research Integration and Fellows’ Contributions**

#### **5 February 2026**

- **Session 5: SAWA Fellows Presentations:** Dedicated thematic presentations by fellows from Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka to showcase research insights and gender integration in practice.
- **Closing Session:** Reflections, synthesis of learning, and vote of thanks.