



# Contribution and influence of CSOs on water governance in the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna basin

CSO survey report





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## PREFACE

The Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) is a transboundary river system spanning five countries: Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, and Nepal. Water resource management in the GBM region faces many challenges, stemming from its diverse socio-political and ecological context, as well as the absence of regional basin level approaches related to water resource management.

A large number of civil society organisations (CSOs) in the region are working on water management issues with local communities. These organisations could potentially play a greater role in sustainable transboundary water management. Unfortunately, most CSOs do not have access to technical knowledge, or the capacity to effectively engage and influence decision-making resources. As a result, the CSO community continues to have relatively little impact on regional water dialogues and decision-making processes.

To tackle these challenges, the BRIDGE GBM project, facilitated by IUCN, aims to build the capacity of a network of CSOs in the GBM basins to improve their ability to engage in transboundary water management issues.

In the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) basin, the BRIDGE project is funded by [The Asia Foundation](#) and the [Transboundary Rivers of South Asia](#) (TROSA) programme of Oxfam Novib. The BRIDGE GBM project has developed a regional network of more than 30 CSOs from the five GBM countries. Through a series of regional dialogues and consensus building activities, the GBM CSO Network developed a common vision, which is articulated in the [A civil society vision for connecting the people of the Ganges-Brahmaputra- Meghna \(GBM\) river basins](#) document. The vision, which was launched in October 2017 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, advocates for the equitable utilisation of shared river resources in the GBM basins.

BRIDGE GBM is currently facilitating activities to support the institutionalisation of the GBM CSO Network. This is being done through continued capacity-building, and the development and the adoption of governance mechanism and a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework for measuring the impact on the network on shared water governance issues.

This *Contribution and influence of CSOs on water governance in the GBM basin* report was developed so as to create a profile for the GBM CSO Network, and provide a baseline for CSO activities on water governance. The report, which was developed based on survey findings, also provides insight into the gaps and opportunities for improving the impact of CSOs on regional water governance dialogues and policy-making.

IUCN aims for this report to be a reference for those interested in understanding the range of water governance activities undertaken by CSOs in the five GBM countries, the stakeholders CSOs are interacting with, the CSO policy advocacy and engagement strategies, and areas in which CSOs might require support.

IUCN would like to thank all Members of the GBM CSO Network for participating in a survey that was conducted in April 2018. IUCN would also like to thank Mr Cornelis P.M. Swaans (Independent consultant, Viet Nam) for undertaking the preliminary analysis of the completed questionnaires, and for supporting the drafting of this report.

## METHODOLOGY

This report is intended to provide a reference point for periodically reassessing the activities, challenges and the impacts of the BRIDGE GBM CSO Network on the water governance space. The report is mainly based on a survey conducted in June–July 2018. The survey was aimed at capturing the information on the: a) background of the organisation (presence, HR expertise, sectoral engagement and funding sources); b) thematic area of work linked to water governance and Gender and Social Inclusion issues (GESI); c) priority area for the capacity-building of CSOs on transboundary water governance; and d) research and data dissemination and policy influencing strategies currently applied by the CSOs. The questionnaire was shared with more than 33 CSOs from the five GBM countries who have been regularly participating in the regional learning events and dialogues forums facilitated by IUCN. A total of 18 responses were received (none from Bhutan). The answers to individual questions were mainly analysed qualitatively by clustering responses according to thematic groups, while using narratives to further support the data.

Synergy was further created by comparing responses to questions that covered similar issues or topics during the short surveys undertaken in November 2016 and February 2018 to widen the sample size. The survey in November 2016 took place before the Regional BRIDGE GBM Water Governance Capacity Building Workshop, 22–25 November. The objective of the survey was to develop better understanding of the geographical presence, flagship programme and challenges of the CSOs. The outcome of this survey informs section 3 of this report.

The survey that took place in February 2018 was aimed at documenting activities and specific actions under the GBM CSO Vision that the CSOs need to prioritise in coming years for improving the visibility and impact of CSOs on transboundary water governance. The information received from this survey was used for the analysis of the CSO profiles discussed in chapter 3 and the emerging areas for the transboundary cooperation for the CSOs discussed in chapter 5 of this report.

Annex 1 provides an overview of CSOs that responded to the different surveys; a short description summarising the vision and mission of each CSO is presented in Annex 2.

The report also draws inputs from the discussions on how CSOs and government can work closely on transboundary water governance issues discussed at the multi-stakeholder dialogues co-funded by The Asia Foundation and the Oxfam Novib TROSA project, namely: a) Strengthening Institutional Framework for Cooperative Governance in Mahakali/Sharda, 24-25 June 2018, Kathmandu, Nepal; and b) Benefit Sharing to Enhance Multi-level Cooperation for Integrated Management of the Meghna Basin, 4-5 July 2018, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

## 1 PROFILE OF THE CSOS

### 1.1 Type and size of organisations

The nature and scope activities of the organisation that are part the GBM CSO Network vary considerably. Many CSOs are working through one office (such as Koshi Victim Society, Nepal and Greencity, China), some have many branch offices in different parts of the country (such as CUTS International and CNRS, Bangladesh) and others have more of a regional (or even global) presence, with country offices in the GBM countries (such as ActionAid and Oxfam). It should be highlighted that despite the fact that many CSOs are operating through a single location, it does not necessarily mean that they are active only at the local level, the example being the Asian Confluence in India, which has been active in facilitating trans-boundary multi-stakeholder's dialogues and events (e.g. the Nadi festival).

Most of the organisations represented in the GBM CSO Network are registered as not-for-profit NGOs in their respective countries. Some of them are operating as regional networks of CSOs or of voluntary experts, an example being the Indo Nepal Joint Action Forum (INJAF) which is a membership-based forum open to all civil society groups, citizens, groups, trade unions, and registered societies under relevant laws in Nepal and India. In addition, particularly in Bangladesh, the water governance experts working in their individual capacity and academics are part of the voluntary networks of individuals, such as the Riverine People; the Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (BAPA), which are national; and the Waterkeepers Alliance Bangladesh, which is part of a global network.

The staff size varied substantially, ranging from 4 to 721. About half of the organisations surveyed indicated they have less than 50 staff (and in most cases less than 20), a quarter between 50 and 100, and another quarter more than 100. The Guangzhou Green City Environmental and Cultural Development Centre (China), Abhiyan (Nepal), and the Association for Protection of Environment and Culture (APEC) (Nepal) were among the smallest organisations, while the Centre for Natural Resource Studies (CNRS) (Bangladesh) and Development Alternatives (India) were among the largest. Some organisations, such as Brotee (Bangladesh) are relatively small to medium-size organisations with 45 staff members but working with large groups of youth volunteers which are not included in these numbers. Furthermore, staff working on water governance is often a small proportion of the total human resource of the organisation, with relatively more people working on water governance when organisations become smaller and specific in their programme focus.

Overall, there does not seem to be a strong gender bias in staff, with half of the CSOs surveyed reporting more men and another half more women – although there is a slight male bias in staff working on water governance projects.

### 1.2 Engagement with stakeholders

CSOs engage with a wide variety of stakeholders (see Figure 1). Among CSOs that participated in the survey of June 2018 and November 2016, engagement with communities, followed by NGOs and local and central governments, was considered most important. There is a significantly lower level of engagement with the private sector in current programmes of work of the CSOs. Among others, the public, media, youth and local-level water governance forums were mentioned as important.

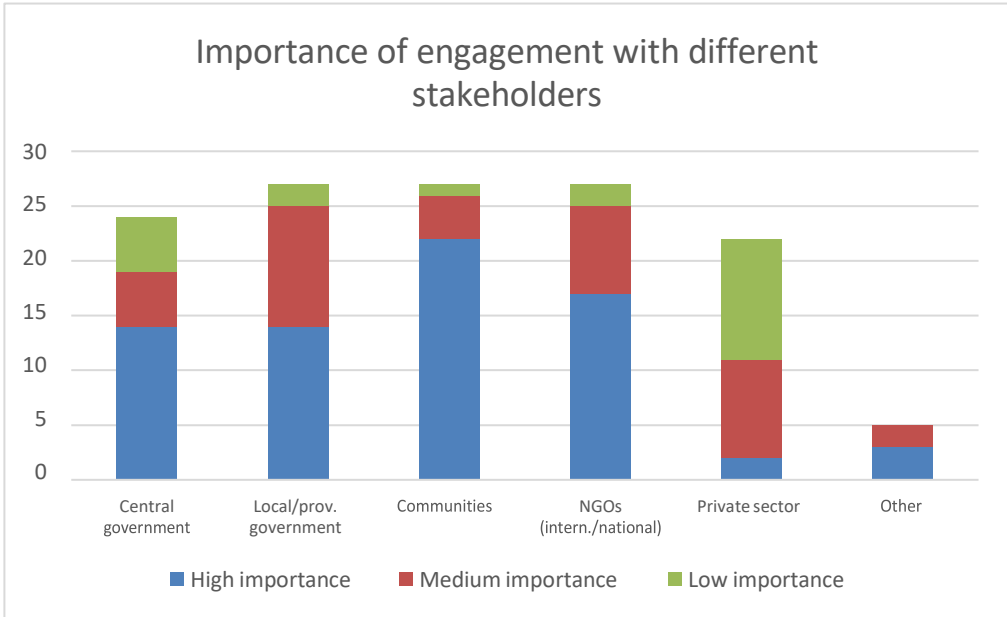


Figure 1: Importance of CSO engagement with different sectors from the point of view of shared water governance (response from 27 participants; survey June 2018 & Survey Nov. 2016)

The objective of CSO engagement with different stakeholders varies. In the case of communities, CSOs tend to focus on research on local level water governance challenges, and understanding the capacity-building needs for livelihood diversification.

In case of provincial and central government, there is a stronger focus on policy engagement and advocacy for the development of inclusive policy and laws, with the distinction that at the local/provincial level, interactions also include more practical elements such as monitoring project implementation and implementation of projects aimed at achieving global targets such as the SDG 2030 goals.



## 2 SCOPE OF CSO WORK

### 2.1 Priority themes

Among the organisations surveyed, most indicated conservation and ecosystems services, followed by climate change and disaster risk reduction (DRR), as the priority themes for CSO activities. Others, such as dams and hydropower development, and inland navigation, were indicated as important by only a quarter of the CSOs surveyed in June 2018.

Gender empowerment and social inclusion are important cross-cutting themes of work for most CSOs, which is very strongly reflected in their water governance activities which complement the CSO efforts and activities linked to poverty alleviation. Most CSOs acknowledge that women need to be involved more strongly in their activities and decision-making processes, but the way this is being addressed varies. Several CSOs promote the active involvement of women in capacity-building workshops, assisting them to effectively participate in local development activities under various projects; at the same time, these CSOs stimulate female representation within their own organisations, such as the requirement of at least 33% women representation in the governing body of the CSOs. There are, however, also CSOs that go a step further, and focus on women's empowerment by working closely with the community and organising them into groups, and the formation of the Women Empowerment Centre (WEC) for promoting women's leadership in the transboundary decision-making process, such as Sankalpa and Oxfam in Nepal under the TROSA project.

On the question of CSOs' approach towards social inclusion in water governance, some stated that they focused on community or grassroot needs without excluding any vulnerable groups; others specifically targeted the poor and disadvantaged (e.g. socially excluded, minorities, lower castes) on issues such as conflict management and best practices for governance of natural resources. The survey also indicated that the most vulnerable and marginalised groups of society live close to the bank of rivers and have an overwhelming dependence on the rivers for their livelihoods. Therefore, efforts were taken to incorporate the perspectives of these communities in the advocacy initiatives and the decision-making processes. Some organisations (e.g. CNRS, Bangladesh) facilitate the organisation of poor and marginalised groups, including water-dependent communities (fishers, farmers, boat operators) into community-based organisations (CBOs) a strategy to strengthen their voice and rights on water resources locally. Others have policies that required the identification and inclusion of a minimum percentage of socially and economically vulnerable societies (e.g. 20% in the case of Abhiyan Nepal). Furthermore, the engagement and participation of youth in the CSO-led initiative was identified as an important social inclusion strategy by many CSOs surveyed in June 2018.

## 2.2 CSO approaches and strategies

The different approaches and influencing strategies applied by CSOs on water governance could be classified under three broad categories: a) capacity-building; b) research and data generation; and c) policy campaigns and advocacy. The text below provides summary of the main approaches used by CSOs under each category.

### 2.2.1 Capacity-building

Almost three quarters of organisations that participated in the survey are involved in capacity-building activities. Most organisations focus on communities (including women and youth), followed by local and provincial government and NGOs (mainly national). The main subject areas of capacity-building include disaster preparedness and early warning systems; food security and community livelihood improvement; training on existing rules, regulations and policies; international laws and bilateral treaties (e.g. the Mahakali Treaty between India and Nepal); river rights, and social impact assessments of the developmental projects.

Most of the organisations engaged in training and capacity-building indicated they have undertaken needs assessments of the target communities and stakeholders with the view of understanding priority areas and challenges – although they do not seem to be routinely used before CSOs design the community training programmes.

### 2.2.2 Research, data generation and dissemination

CSOs are mostly engaged in action research covering a full spectrum of issues linked to baseline and context analysis, and water management and governance; most research focused on the environmental and social impact analysis, followed by livelihood topics and DRR and Early Warning Systems (EWS).

About half of the CSOs surveyed indicated they were engaged in research relevant from the perspective of river basin management. Specific examples include impacts of sand mining on river basin functions and conservation of fisheries resources. Some CSOs like Aarnayak (India) are also engaged in impact assessment of proposed water infrastructure projects, such as dams, embankments and barrages, and also in more scientific issues such as environmental flow, studies on ecologically and socio-economically important transboundary landscapes like riverine islands and wetlands, and water quality and pollution monitoring.

Most organisations surveyed indicated that they apply participatory community-based research to make the process more inclusive. However, collaboration with the academic sector seems to be less common, but important, for strengthening CSO capacity and influence on transboundary water governance.

For the **dissemination of research findings**, CSOs use a variety of platforms; both traditional and modern (Figure 2). The workshops, meetings, and seminars are most popular, followed by print (radio and newspaper) and social media (Facebook and Twitter).

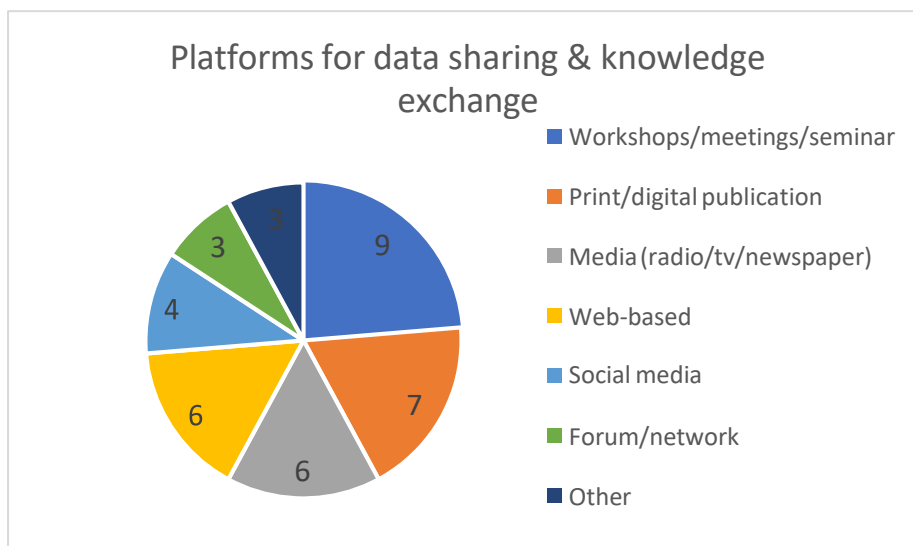


Figure 2: Types of communication and dissemination platforms CSOs use for sharing research outcomes (responses from 14 participants; survey June 2018).

Most of the CSOs surveyed indicated they use regional and global platforms such as the BRIDGE CSO Network, Global Water Partnership, and the Waterkeepers alliance for disseminating the results of their work.

Furthermore, about half of the CSOs surveyed were directly engaged in the development and/or management of knowledge-sharing platforms on water governance issues. For example, CSOs such as Environics Trust (Delhi, India) supported the development of a regional digital platform, “*water beyond borders*,” which aims to enhance access to information on water sharing agreements between Bangladesh, India, and Nepal through analysis of water agreements and treaties between these countries.

### 2.2.3 Public campaigns and advocacy

The main policy advocacy strategies and tools used by CSOs include direct lobbying with governments for the development of inclusive policies, declarations from the workshops, and policy briefs. In Bangladesh, CNRS is lobbying for the revision of the fisheries policies (Jalmahal Policy 2009) to allow fishing communities’ engagement in the management of Hilsa fish sanctuaries in the Meghna and Padma rivers. In Nepal, Oxfam, through a multi-stakeholder dialogue process, facilitated the signing of the Dhangadhi Declaration (2018, Mahakali River) as a way to ensure commitment from government officials and CSOs to protect communities’ access and rights to the water resources of the Mahakali river. A specific example of a national-level platform used for policy advocacy efforts include the Haor Advocacy Platform (HAP) in Bangladesh, which is comprised of local, national and international NGOs working in Haor areas of the Upper Meghna basin to address community issues and concerns.

The CSOs try to influence different groups in different ways; local and provincial governments are targeted for policy and implementation in terms of protection and conservation of rivers, early warning systems, community access to water, and resource protection versus community development. In case of central government, CSO advocacy efforts are mostly focused on changing policy to make it more inclusive, particularly in the areas of DRR, climate change adaption, co-management of wetlands, access to land for marginalised groups, and

enhancing women's and children's rights. In addition, CSOs play a role in the implementation of global commitments on climate change (Paris Agreement) and the UN SDG goals 2030.

Only a quarter of the CSOs indicated they use traditional knowledge and customary laws to influence policies. The documentation of community practices and traditional knowledge (example 'People of many rivers; tales from riverbank', 2015) and establishment of 'Water Museum' (Actionaid) to create awareness the plight of rivers and the traditional ways of managing rivers were cited as examples to support the mainstreaming of traditional knowledge in policy and practice. Influencing at the community level is slightly different; it is mainly related to practical issues, such as the sustainable use of water resources and rights to access and control of water resources.

Private sector influence mainly focuses on enterprise responsibilities, market linkages, supply chains and investment. As indicated, NGOs were less often mentioned as a target for influencing.

Success stories: Among the participants in the June 2018 survey, many indicated they have advised government on policy or contributed to a government-led dialogue linked to water governance. These include a wide range of issues including natural resource management, early warning systems, development of community disaster preparedness and response plans, and inclusive development of inland navigation. For example, in Bangladesh, in one case plans were developed to encourage the government to adopt basin-wide management approaches in the Halda River to deal with the loss of biodiversity and challenges faced with the local fishing community; in another case, policy briefs were developed with recommendations to improve inland navigation in Bangladesh.

### **2.3 CSO funding sources and strategies**

As indicated through the survey, the CSOs get their funding from a variety of sources (Figure 2). International organisations are the most important funding source; one example being Transboundary Rivers of South Asia (TROSA), which is a five-year (2017–2021) regional programme funded by the Government of Sweden and managed by Oxfam Novib. The most common examples and purpose of INGOs funding are, a) the documentation of best practices on various aspects of water governance such as adaptation, resilience, local and traditional knowledge, formal and informal policy; b) Piloting of community-based flood early warning facilities; c) transboundary exposure visits of riparian stakeholders (community, civil society, government agencies, media); d) workshops for strengthening of institutions and policies in water governance; and e) the effects of hydropower and climate change on environment and society.

National and foreign governments (through channels like SIDA, USAID, Worldfish etc.) are the second and third most important sources of funding, followed by foundations (such as The Asia Foundation and Heinrich Boell Foundation). The private sector is the least important funding source; one CSO (Development Alternative, India) indicated they have received funding from the private sector for community-based watershed management activities.

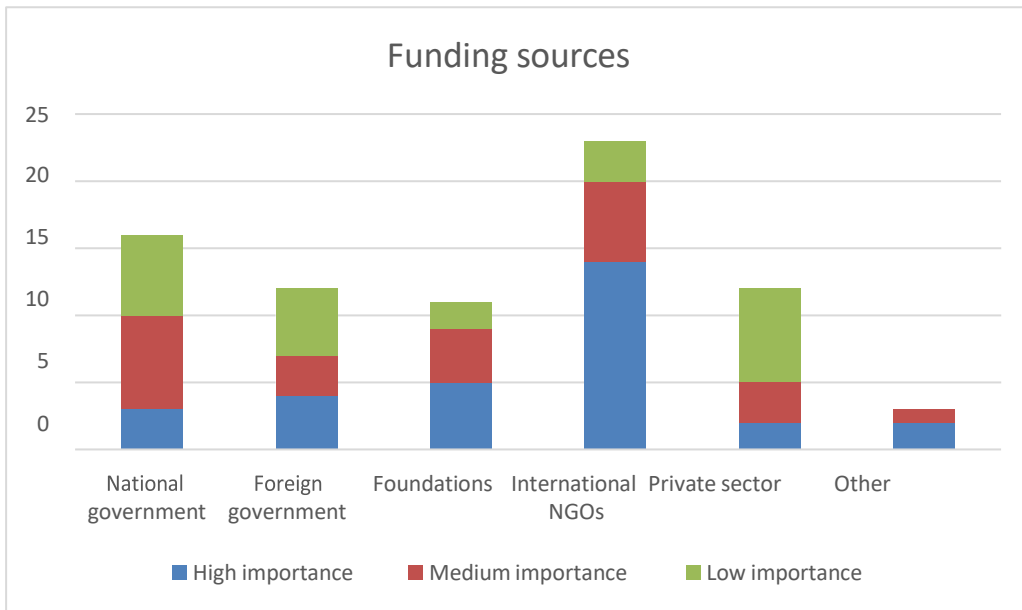


Figure 3: CSOs' main sources of funding on water governance and the relative importance of each source (responses from 27 participants; survey June 2018 & survey Nov. 2016)

### 3 CONCLUSION

Based on the outcomes of the survey, the text below summarises the emerging areas for transboundary cooperation and specific support required by CSOs to improve their effectiveness on the issue of transboundary water governance issue.

#### 3.1 Future thematic and strategic priorities of work

Based on the surveys and one-to-one interviews with the members of the GBM CSO Network, the following were identified as priority areas for CSO engagement to foster regional cooperation for sustainable governance of the GBM river basin:

- **Support the development of regional and national CSO cooperation mechanisms:** Build on pre-existing networks and mechanisms (such as the GBM CSO Network and INJAF) and initiate activities to build trust with governments.
- **Develop regional guidelines based on best practices:** Identify gaps in knowledge and initiate joint action research projects for the development of regional guidelines. Early warning systems and nature-based solutions (NBS) were identified as good entry points for the development of regional guidelines to deal with disasters such as floods and erosion and to support sustainable management of river basins.
- **Review of existing legal and policy frameworks:** Undertake analysis to identify how well the current policies and plans are equipped to deal with future water conflicts, and the level of integration of the best practices and international water law principles. This will support the improvement of national policies and also harmonisation of water governance policies at the regional level.
- **Programmatic engagement between CSOs and the academic sector:** CSO-academic sector collaboration is needed to strengthen the research capacity of CSOs, particularly on issues of scientific methodologies for data generation, collection, and analysis. Stronger programmatic engagement between the CSOs and the academic sector will also facilitate the application and use of data and information to resolve real-life challenges faced by communities, and will help address the issue of credibility of CSO-generated data, which is a major hindrance to its use in policy-making and planning, as highlighted by government stakeholders during the regional workshops facilitated by the BRIDGE GBM project.
- **Facilitate grassroots engagement in transboundary water governance:** As indicated by survey, communities are the most important stakeholders for CSO activities. Many of the CSOs surveyed are already facilitating cross-border interactions and trust-building activities involving communities, particularly in the Koshi, Mahakali, and Brahmaputra river basins. CSOs can build on this strength and enhance community capacity to effectively engage in transboundary water dialogues.
- **A regional GBM CSO communication and awareness strategy:** Transboundary water governance is a sensitive geopolitical issue, traditionally not an area for CSO activities. Therefore, the development of communication and awareness strategies for specific target groups will contribute to effective advocacy. The CSOs, particularly from Bangladesh, emphasised the need for national-level influencing strategies, as different countries have different cultural and political contexts and the first step is therefore to prepare national actors for effective regional dialogue and cooperation.

### 3.2 CSO capacity-development needs and priority areas for funding

The CSOs need to build a better understanding of local-level water governance issues and their linkages with the regional process and shared water governance challenges to be able to contribute fully to the priorities identified in the above section.

CSOs also face several challenges related to human resource capacity in water governance (see Table 1). They reported difficulty in finding competent people to work in rural areas, and when they do have competent staff, it is difficult for CSOs to retain them. These issues are further compromised by financial and institutional capacity of the organisations themselves.

When organisations were asked to assess their organisational capacity on negotiations and policy influencing related to water governance, they generally rate them as average. In the survey of June 2018, a majority (12 out of 18) assessed their skills as 3 to 4 for both areas, on a scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high). In case of policy influencing, a quarter even rated their capacity on policy influencing above average, and a one-third considered their skills below average (score 1-2) and need external support to build these capacities.

Table 1: Challenges to HR capacity linked to water governance (responses from 11 participants; survey 2018).

Capacity issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of knowledge of institutional, technical, and legal water governance issues</li> <li>- Entry points for building regional water cooperation</li> <li>- Benefit sharing approach in transboundary water governance</li> <li>- Strategic partnerships for regional collaboration</li> <li>- Use of innovative technologies in solving community issues</li> <li>- Ecosystem based adaptation (EbA)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- DRR and early warning systems</li> <li>- Integrated water resources management</li> </ul>
Financial issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fundraising and donor outreach capacity</li> <li>- Absence of projects with long-term funding</li> <li>- Inability to engage experts due to lack of funds</li> </ul>
Institutional/organisational issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff turnover and unwillingness of quality people to work in remote areas</li> </ul>
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Geographical constraints or limited outreach</li> <li>- High expectation from communities</li> </ul>

## NNEX 1: CSOS PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY

No.	Name of organisation	Survey June 2018	Survey Feb 2018	Survey Nov. 2016
	<b>Bangladesh</b>			
1	Brotee, Bangladesh*	X		X
2	Waterkeepers Bangladesh*	X		
3	ActionAid Bangladesh*	X		
4	Centre for Natural Resource Studies (CNRS), Bangladesh	X		
5	Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA)*		X	X
6	Oxfam Bangladesh*		X	
7	Gana Unnayan Kendra (GUK), Bangladesh		X	
8	Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (BAPA)		X	
-	Riverine People, Bangladesh*			
	<b>Bhutan</b>			
9	WWF Bhutan (Tashi Jamtsho)*			X
10	Bhutan Water Partnership*		X	
11	Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN), Bhutan*		X	
12	TARAYANA, Bhutan*		X	
	<b>China</b>			
13	China Biodiversity Conservation and Green Development Foundation*	X	X	
14	Guangzhou Green City Environmental and Cultural Development Center (Greencity), China	X	X	
15	Shan Shui Conservation Center, China*		X	X
16	Center for Biodiversity and Indigenous Knowledge (CBIK), China*			X
-	SEE Foundation, China*			
	<b>India</b>			
17	CUTS International, India*	X	X	
18	Environics Trust, India	X		
19	Development Alternatives, India*	X	X	
20	Grameen Development Services (GDS), India	X		
21	Indian Environment Law Organisation (IELO)*			X
22	Nav Jagriti, India*			X
23	Syed Abdul Aziz Farhan, India			X
24	SaciWATERs, India*		X	X
25	Aaranyak, India		X	
26	Peoples Action for Development (PAD), India		X	
27	Oxfam India*		X	
-	Asian Confluence, India*			
-	International Rivers, South Asia			
	<b>Nepal</b>			



28	Oxfam in Nepal	X	X	
29	Abhiyan Nepal*	X	X	X
30	Koshi Victim Society, Nepal*	X	X	X
31	National Environment and Equity Development Society (NEEDS) Nepal	X		
32	Rural Women's Development and Unity Center (RUWDUC), Nepal	X		
33	Sankalpa Darchula Nepal (Sankalpa)	X		
34	Association for Protection of Environment and Culture (APEC), Nepal*	X	X	X
35	Institute for Social and Environmental Transition (ISET), Nepal*			X
36	Union for Culture, Human and Environment Protection (UCHEP), Nepal*			X
37	ActionAid Nepal*		X	
<i>Total</i>		17	21	14

\*These organisations contributed to the CSO Network Vis

## ANNEX 2: BRIEF PROFILE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE CSOS

No.	Brief Introduction
	<b>Bangladesh</b>
1	ActionAid Bangladesh is part of the global federation working to achieve social justice, gender equality and poverty eradication. Throughout the world, ActionAid works to strengthen the capacity and agency of people living in poverty and exclusion, especially women, to assert their rights. ActionAid has a vision of a world without poverty and injustice in which every person enjoys their right to a life with dignity, to work with poor and excluded people to eradicate poverty and injustice.
2	Brotee is a centre for people's action research and youth movement to strengthen community engagement in protection of nature for human wellbeing. The organisation is active on applied research in areas of environment, water research and has established ISO certified scientific labs for generating data. Strong in social campaigns and advocacy, Brotee has grassroots, national, and international reach and is actively engaged in forming the National Youth River Alliance.
3	Centre for Natural Resource Studies (CNRS) became operational in 1994 and is one of the well-known environmental NGOs in Bangladesh. CNRS works with the Vision that people and nature shall live in harmony in a world free from exploitation and exclusion. Its mission is to empower marginalised communities with required skills and capabilities for inclusive and sustainable development.
5	Gana Unnayan Kendra (GUK), Bangladesh, envisions a poverty-free equitable society where justice, equality, human rights and dignity of all people are ensured. Inspired by the credo "Release not Relief", GUK works with and for poor, extreme poor, vulnerable, excluded and all other disadvantaged groups, especially women, children, ethnic groups and person with disability to bring about sustainable positive change in their lives.
6	Oxfam Bangladesh is the country affiliate of Oxfam, an international confederation of 20 organisations working together with partners in more than 90 countries, to end the injustices that cause poverty. Oxfam is determined to change that world by mobilising the power of people.
7	Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA) was established in 1992 by a group of lawyers with the broad objective of promoting environmental justice and contributing to the development of sound environmental jurisprudence.
9	Waterkeepers Bangladesh (WKB) has been working to protect the water and water bodies of Bangladesh including its forest resources through enforcement, fieldwork and community action. It is a regional entity of Waterkeeper Alliance. In addition to independent jurisdiction of WKB, at present Waterkeepers Bangladesh is coordinating operations in Bangladesh to protect its rivers through Buriganga Riverkeeper, Surma River Waterkeeper, Khowai River Waterkeeper and Pashur River Waterkeeper. Waterkeepers Bangladesh is administered by Blue Planet Initiative (BPI), a non-governmental and not for profit organisation.
10	Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (BAPA) is a non-government, non-funded, non-profit, self-financed, voluntary, civil society organisation, dedicated to the conservation and development of the environment. It has around 650 regular individual members, 400 associated members, 65 organisational members and 650 members. BAPA works on issues of the environment including rivers, water bodies, water, forests, soil, agriculture, food, air, energy, noise, coastal and marine issues, urbanisation,

	communication, transportation, sustainability and economics. It has 68 subject-based programme committees, sub committees and movements.
11	Riverine People, Bangladesh is an initiative dedicated to river and driven by youth. It is established, operated and engaged by a large group of fresh graduates and young professionals. Riverine People perceive that engaging youth in river protecting movements and campaigns can bring meaningful change for both rivers and youth. It is engaging graduation and post-graduation level student into a positive programme and benefiting the environment in the long run. Its aim is to create an informed and insightful youth community passionate for riverine causes.
	<b>Bhutan</b>
12	World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Bhutan is one of the oldest conservation NGOs in Bhutan. WWF Bhutan has been supporting the royal government and people of Bhutan in a number of conservation efforts to protect and conserve Bhutan's natural capital and immense biological diversity. WWF Bhutan works on various environmental conservation programmes including research and study, education and awareness, promotion of sustainable livelihoods, protection of terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems, and addressing human-wildlife conflict, illegal wildlife trade and climate change.
13	Bhutan Water Partnership (BhWP) was instituted realising the importance of water resources in the country and recognising the emerging issues related to water resources in the Kingdom. It was established on 27 August, 2001, as an inter-ministerial body to coordinate all programmes related to protection, development and management of water resources. It is one of the networks under the Global Water Partnership. It has been hosted in different Ministries and agencies over the years, and since 2007 BhWP has been hosted in the Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN) and it currently has a nine-member steering committee representing both government and non-governmental agencies.
14	Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN), Bhutan, is a non-governmental organisation/non-profit organisation with nationwide operation established in 1987. Since its formation RSPN has promoted environmental education and advocacy, conservation and sustainable livelihoods, research and emerging issues like climate change, water and solid waste.
15	TARAYANA, Bhutan, was founded by Her Majesty The Queen Mother Ashi Dorji Wangmo Wangchuck. Tarayana works on community mobilisation and volunteering; rural access to health care, remote surgical camps and basic sanitation; facilitating rural tertiary education, emphasising girls; and indigenous arts preservation and promotion with micro-credit facilities.
	<b>China</b>
16	China Biodiversity Conservation and Green Development Foundation (CBCGDF) is a leading nationwide non-profit public foundation and a social legal entity dedicated to biodiversity conservation and green development. It is an independent NGO on environment, biodiversity conservation, sustainability and Community Conservation Areas.
17	Guangzhou Green City Environmental and Cultural Development Center (GreenCity) was established in 2012 and became a member of IUCN in 2016. GreenCity works on water source conservation as well as better management of protected areas, and seeks to engage young people in environmental protection.
18	SHAN SHUI Conservation Center (China), founded in 2007, is an NGO supporting work to achieve sustainable balance between nature and humans, traditional and modern culture, and the bottom-up versus and top-down decisions. Its aim is to fulfill ecological ideals through science and culture, to empower nature guardians through actions.
	<b>India</b>

19	Aaranyak (India), established in 1989, is a non-government environmental organisation based in Guwahati, Assam, and working in the Northeast Indian Region. It engages in nature conservation, natural resources management, climate change, disaster management and livelihood enhancement for marginalised communities through research, education and advocacy.
20	CUTS International (Consumer Unity & Trust Society) (India), established in 1983, is a non-governmental organisation, engaged in promoting consumer sovereignty in the framework of social justice and economic equality and environmental balance, within and across borders. Based in Jaipur, CUTS International works in thematic areas of trade, regulation and governance through policy and action research, advocacy, networking and capacity-building. More information about the organisation and its centres can be accessed here: <a href="http://www.cuts-international.org">http://www.cuts-international.org</a> .
21	Environics Trust (India) is an enabling and solution-oriented organisation is engaged in participative research, community-based activities, enterprise servicing and communication – with a belief that the best solutions are found at the local level. This ecosystem allows organisations to address wide ranging issues which are not sector controlled and do not offer standard solutions. Community rights, irrational energy development, climate change and planning with communities are critical aspects addressing community issues in the river basins of NW Himalayas, particularly Sutlej and Sharda. Environics jointly runs a platform <a href="http://waterbeyondborders.net">waterbeyondborders.net</a> to share issues on river waters in different geographies.
22	The Development Alternatives Group, works in their primary areas that underlie sustainable development processes, including design, piloting and large scale dissemination of sustainable technologies. The Group designs and implementats environment management systems; develops people-oriented institutions and policies. It also contributes knowledge inputs to several global networks promoting sustainable development.
23	Grameen Development Services' (GDS) Mission is to create and strengthen sustainable livelihood systems through community-based participatory approaches with techno-managerial inputs to achieve social and economic empowerment for poor and disadvantaged groups living in areas of structural poverty within India.
24	Indian Environment Law Organization (IELO) is a registered law firm based in New Delhi and specialises in Environment and Development Laws. Drawing from its wide and unique experience of directly working with communities on issues of environmental justice in South Asia, IELO collaborates with government, non-government, international financial institutions and individuals on a solicited basis.
25	Nav Jagriti (India), founded in 1993, works in the 17 districts of Bihar, directly impacting the lives of over a million people in the areas of disaster risk reduction, response and rehabilitation, agriculture, livelihood and entrepreneurship, human and child rights, health care, education, water and sanitation, gender, and violence. Nav Jagriti aspires to ensure a dignified life and better living conditions for the poor, disadvantaged and vulnerable sections of the society.
26	SaciWATERs currently works within six broad themes: water policy and governance; peri-urban water security; climate change and water; water and gender; water, sanitation and hygiene; and water quality. Within the six themes, SaciWATERs designs, supports and implements integrated water resource management research projects to bridge the gap between science, policy, and practice. These themes have emphasis on five focus areas – research, education, capacity-building, advocacy, partnership and knowledge mobilisation.
28	Peoples Action for Development (PAD) works with the vision of an equal and just society where people strive to live a healthy life in a clean environment. PAD seeks to achieve an equal and just society through empowerment of the marginalised Adivasis and tribal people by organising them into SHGs, building their capacity and

	enabling them to utilise available resources and creating awareness about the environment.
29	Oxfam India: Oxfam is an international confederation of 20 organisations working together with partners and local communities in more than 90 countries. Around the globe, Oxfam works to find practical, innovative ways for people to lift themselves out of poverty and thrive. Oxfam works with partner organisations and vulnerable groups and communities to end the injustices that cause poverty. Oxfam India's vision is to help create an equal, just, and sustainable society by empowering the underprivileged. Oxfam India believes in the 'Right to Life with Dignity for All'.
	Nepal
31	Abhiyan Nepal is implementing development programmes to improve the socio-economic status of poor, oppressed, and vulnerable groups through agro-vet and skills-based entrepreneurship, conducting action-oriented research on environmental issues and natural resource management to utilise the learnings in its development programmes and campaigns.
30	Oxfam Nepal: Oxfam has been working in Nepal since the early 1980s undertaking various development initiatives addressing poverty and injustice faced by the population, especially women and other socially and economically excluded groups. Over the years, under its Sustainable Development Programme, Oxfam has worked in partnership with local CSOs and the government authorities and services to promote rural livelihoods, and vulnerable communities' resilience to climatic shocks and disasters. Since the series of devastating earthquakes and aftershocks hit Nepal in 2015, Oxfam, under its Humanitarian Programme, worked in in Gorkha, Dhading, Nuwakot, Sindhupalchowk, and Kathmandu Valley to deliver emergency relief and help the earthquake-affected families recover to normalcy.
30	Koshi Victim's Society (KVS) (Nepal) has been working on Disaster Risk Reduction and Humanitarian Response since it was established in 2003. KVS implements the Transboundary Resilience Project in Koshi River Basin and has established Flood community based Early Warning Systems in Nepal and India. KVS was involved in several flood and fire humanitarian responses including Koshi Flood Response 2008.
31	National Environment and Equity Development Society (NEEDS) is based in Kanchanpur district, Nepal. Since inception the organisation has been implementing community based integrated rural developments projects. The organisation has district chapters and local level committees to support project implementation.
32	Rural Women's Development and Unity Center (RUWDUC) has a mission to bring sustainable improvement in the social, educational, nutritional, mitigation, adaptation and recovery from disasters, and economic status of marginalised communities. Women, dalit and poor communities benefit from the operation of participatory programmes, by the utilisation of resources available at a local level, and by empowerment of the local community.
33	Sankalpa Darchula (Sankalpa), established in 1988, implements programmes focused on advocacy, human rights and community development. It works in various areas such as economic justice, including food security and livelihoods; water resource management; cooperative formation and strengthening; advocacy (Right to food, women rights, gender equity); and water and sanitation.
34	The Association for Protection of Environment and Culture (APEC) has been set up with the objectives to spread awareness about the concept of development as envisaged in the 2nd Earth Summit UNCEP 1982 Nairobi Kenya and the 7th plan document of the HMG-NPC. In Nepal dependence on renewable resources is considerable and APEC intends to introduce a multidisciplinary approach to protect wildlife, forests, wetlands, social development and the environment.
35	Institute for Social and Environmental Transition's (ISET) primary goal is to conduct academic studies, research and interactions on subjects related to environmental and social development and to increase the capacity of Nepalese youth in study, research

	and other academic activities through education, training, academic exchange and cooperation, and public debate at the local, regional and national level.
36	ActionAid Nepal is part of the global justice federation working to achieve social justice, gender equality and poverty eradication. ActionAid Nepal is a non-governmental national social justice organisation established in 1982 and working locally in different provinces of Nepal. It is also a part of both national and global justice movements and other civil society networks, alliances and coalitions. The vision is of a just and equitable society in Nepal and beyond, where every person enjoys the right to a life of dignity and freedom from poverty and inequality.

### ANNEX 3: WATER GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES AND MECHANISMS

ID	Name	Level	Description
1	Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon	National	Largest citizen's voluntary civil society alliance in the country for protection of rivers and the environment. The network is working in 42 districts through local committees which meet quarterly and define the programme of BAPA. The partner CSOs or individuals are members of National Executive Committee; lend support and participate in campaigns; and makes available resources on demand.
2	Disaster Preparedness Network (DPNet-Nepal)	National	Disaster Preparedness Network-Nepal (DPNet-Nepal) was established in 1996 with an objective to support better coordination, collaboration, learning and sharing of the experiences to improve the emergency response in the country. Since its establishment, the network is working in the field of Disaster Management focusing on knowledge management, capacity-building, policy advocacy, and coordination and networking with government agencies and relevant stakeholders.
3	District and Upazilla (sub-district) River Saving Committees, Bangladesh	Local	Co-management arrangement at the sub-district level (common in fisheries sector) to support sustainable management of natural resources and ensure community participation. These committees help monitor and identify loopholes in implementation of plans and projects at the local level, meet at least once in three months.
4	Ganga River Conservation Committee (India)	National	Empowering community initiatives on water governance.
5	Haor Advocacy Platform (HAP), Bangladesh	National	Haor Advocacy Platform (HAP), is comprised of local, national and international NGOs working in haor (riverine wetlands) to address community issues and concerns. HAP activities are limited to the haor areas located in the upper Meghna river basin for influencing policy and stakeholder capacity-building to better manage local resources.
6	Indo Nepal Joint Action Forum (INJAF)	Regional	INJAF is a network of CSOs from India and Nepal working in the Mahakali river basin on the issues of flood, landslide, drought, and community livelihoods. Supported by the TROSA project the forum organises dialogues between CSOs, communities and Government in the Mahakali

			river basin to create space for dialogue for the future.
7	India-Nepal Trans-Boundary Citizen Forum	Regional	Working on the issues of DRR and water governance, the India-Nepal Trans-Boundary Citizen Forum meets every three months, developing transboundary community-based flood early warning mechanisms and issue-based discussions.
8	National River Conservation Commission, Bangladesh	National	The National River Conservation Commission is an independent statutory body endorsed by the Parliament to protect rivers of Bangladesh. The Commission acts as link with civil society and works on the protection of rivers.
9	PSAARC Water Forum	Regional	People's SAARC (PSAARC) is an initiative of several people's movements, trade unions, academics, progressive individuals and NGOs who, recognising the limitations and mandate of the SAARC process, initiated a Peoples SAARC process in 2007 in New Delhi. The platform is working to influence national governments as well as the SAARC mechanism to address the concerns of ordinary South Asians such as livelihood, migration, environmental degradation and common challenges such as flooding, drought, militarization, the shrinking space for democracy, and human rights violations.
10	Pearl River Joint Action Network, China	National	The Pearl River Joint Action Network provides a platform for the public to better access to and participate in Pearl river conservation, and meets on average every three months. Members serve as a think-tank for the network and support activities.
11	South Asia Water Governance Programme (SAWGP)	Regional	Supported by the Government of UK, SAWGP works on better management of the three primary Himalayan rivers (the Ganges, Indus and Brahmaputra) shared by seven countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Nepal and Pakistan). The Programme brings these countries together to tackle trans-boundary challenges, such as flooding, water for irrigation, maximising hydropower potential and the impacts of climate change, which are common to all countries sharing these rivers.
12	Transboundary Flood Resilience Project	Regional	Supported by Lutheran World Relief, the Transboundary Flood Resilience Project is working in India and Nepal in Gandak/Narayani and Koshi river basins and has facilitated the established Transboundary community-based (Flood) Early Warning System (EWS).
13	Transboundary Rivers of South Asia (TROSA) Project	Regional	Transboundary Rivers of South Asia (TROSA) is a five-year (2017–2021) regional project funded by the Government of Sweden and managed by Oxfam Novib. The programme aims to contribute



			<p>to poverty and marginalisation reduction among vulnerable river basin communities through increased access to and control over riverine water resources on which their livelihoods depend.</p> <p>It is working with communities in the transboundary river basins of Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) in Nepal, India and Bangladesh and the Salween in Myanmar.</p>
14	The Third Pole	Regional	<p>The Third Pole is a multilingual platform dedicated to promoting information and discussion about the Himalayan watershed and the rivers that originate there. The project was launched as an initiative of chinadialogue.net, in partnership with the Earth Journalism Network. It is a registered non-profit organisation based in New Delhi and London, with editors based in Kathmandu, Beijing, Dhaka and Karachi.</p>
15	Waterkeeper Alliance	Global	<p>Waterkeeper Alliance is an environmental network founded in 1999 based in Manhattan, uniting all Waterkeeper organisations, coordinating and covering issues affecting Waterkeepers that work to protect rivers, lakes, bays, sounds, and other water bodies around the world. It is one of the fastest growing grassroots environmental movements in the world,. Each Waterkeeper organisation is devoted to the preservation of specific watersheds. There are more than 300 Waterkeeper Organizations and affiliates on six continents in 35 countries defending communities against anyone who threatens their right to clean water, from polluters to unresponsive government agencies.</p>

Source: survey June 2018 (responses from 18 participants)