

South Asia Water Initiative

Review of Phase 1

January 2012

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List of abbreviations

| | |
|--------------|---|
| ADD | Abu Dhabi Dialogue |
| ADD-KF | Abu Dhabi Dialogue Knowledge Forum |
| AusAID | Australian Agency For International Development |
| DFID | Department for International Development |
| GOB | Government of Bangladesh |
| GOI | Government of India |
| GRBA | Ganges River Basin Authority |
| ICIMOD | International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development |
| INGO | International Non-Governmental Organisation |
| IUCN | International Union for Conservation of Nature |
| MDTF | Multi-Donor Trust Fund |
| MFA | Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| MRC | Mekong River Commission |
| NBI | Nile Basin Initiative |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| NLTA | Non-lending Technical Assistance |
| OECD/ DAC | Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee |
| ORF | Observer Research Foundation |
| SAARC | South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation |
| SAWI | South Asia Water Initiative |
| SBA | Strategic Basin Assessment |
| SRGS | Small Research Grants Scheme |
| TAF | The Asia Foundation |
| TPP | Third Pole Project |
| TTL | Task Team Leader |
| WB | World Bank |

1 Executive Summary

- I. *SAWI Phase I is an important initiative addressing a critical development issue. It is undertaking this within a region that is home to a large proportion of the world's poor – and some of the poorest and most vulnerable communities to global climate change. The core and complementary activities that constitute Phase I of the South Asia Water Initiative (SAWI) are addressing this complex development problem through a combination of improved knowledge, increased dialogue and greater efforts at regional cooperation.*
- II. *Underlying the initiative is a premise that is: the nature of the development problems related to shared river basins emanating from the Himalayas and serving the needs of hundreds of millions of problems can only be addressed – in the long-term – through regional, transboundary action driven by a shared understanding of the benefits that can be derived from such joint action. In the current regional political and economic (trade) climate, this is a challenging premise to start with. The evaluation team believes this is the right premise but the findings from the review suggest that the second Phase needs to address three key areas of action that, hitherto, have been lacking or less well developed, in order to achieve greater long-term success.*
- III. **Finding 1** *Regional processes need to be connected to national policy development and implementation otherwise they are effectively 'disembodied', and exist by virtue of their very lack of association with real decision making environments. In such a scenario they can become a 'luxury item' rather than a serious part of development and change. The Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD) has succeeded in taking place over a four-year period and has brought together a diverse and important set of regional actors – but it has not been (and has avowedly not tried to be) rooted in national-level decision making. This disembodiment has, in part, been designed on the basis that it would enable survival of regional dialogue. However, after four years, the reviewers now believe that the linkage and embodiment is now important and necessary for a number of reasons:*
 - a. *the knowledge generated through the Knowledge Forum and the experience shared through the ADD group members now needs to be tested (and tempered) in the real-world cut and thrust of policy decision making at a national level, rather than be parked 'upstairs' with South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), which is another alternative.*
 - b. *the process of embodiment is about who is involved as much as what is done – i.e. the variegated stakeholder nature of decision making on critical resource management needs expansion to new communities of knowledge, practice and political action, including (but not limited to) civil society at different levels and coming from the collective challenge of better resource governance from different angles (pro-poor, rights-based, economic developmentally focused, etc).*
- IV. **Finding 2** *The political economy of regional policy making and deliberation on how to manage, develop, utilise and protect the shared waters of the major river basins of the Himalayas needs to take centre stage within SAWI. This does not mean every action has to have apolitical-economic reaction, but that the key interests involved in decision making on what to do with river basin management at a national level, need to be brought into regional dialogue – otherwise they are highly likely to be 'outside' the process and therefore, potentially obstructive at a future juncture.*

- V. *There are two (complementary) ways of addressing this.*
- a. *First, to strengthen the national dialogues that can offer new routes and opportunities for different constituencies of interest to be involved. This means creating real national dialogue processes that are engaged in and by the media, civil society and political interest groups to establish stronger, genuinely deliberative processes on how to enhance river basin management through regional cooperation (beyond just bilateral exercises).*
 - b. *Second, by focusing on specific basin landscapes (Sundarbans, Mt Kailash, Koshi, and other, similar, real-time development environments that require and speak to the need for regional engagement and planning). The two can be combined by focusing the national dialogues at least initially on these specific environments, and building outwards through examples to wider resource management contexts. The ADD, complementary funds (e.g. to NGOs and civil society) can provide a critical support function to this process.*
- VI. **Finding 3** *At a more general level, in spite of important communications materials being produced, there needs to be a far stronger enhancement in the way knowledge is developed and applied within deliberative processes at a policy level throughout the region.*
- a. *This starts with better design and development of meeting outputs from the ADD itself, perhaps focusing on an annual report and review from the process, reflecting outputs from a number of themes and sub-thematic groups.*
 - b. *It will also involve support to a more proactive and coherent civil society engagement in the process as generator of innovation at various levels and as a way of exploring management options that may be scaled up, out or across social and territorial boundaries in the future. There have been important examples of these so far under SAWI-1.*
 - c. *The review team finds that the activities to support public knowledge are important, but at a fairly nascent stage and difficult to evaluate fully. However, we fully support continued encouragement of policy dialogue through civil society and other hubs and networks, including the establishment of a South Asia 'Water Charter' group of NGOs. There is also clear scope for DFID and other donors to beef up the on-the-ground technical skills and support that can and should be provided to assist in this process.*
- VII. *Future phases of SAWI will have a very substantial weight of expectation. Having completed a Strategic Basin Analyses for the Ganges, there will be further such analysis for the Brahmaputra anticipated, and, possibly, for the Indus too. However, increasingly questions will be posed as to how these analyses and other 'soft' development activities have or will engage with the harder issues or investment funding for infrastructure development, real processes of national policy making (including increasing coherence and complementarity between states). These are major future challenges that can only adequately be addressed through greater embedding within national policy and engagement in regional and national political economies.*

Review of SAWI Phase 1

1 Introduction

1. In 2009 the Department for International Development (DFID) approved a programme memorandum for the South Asia Water Initiative (SAWI) to develop regional cooperation on water management in the Greater Himalaya region.
2. The grant funding was for expenditure of up to £2.6 million over three years in support of SAWI. Most of the funding was provided to a Multi Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) with AusAID and the Government of Norway which was managed by the World Bank. The remainder of the funds were managed directly by DFID and used to develop a number of new supporting activities.
3. This 'formative' evaluation is of DFID support to the First Phase of the SAWI programme (SAWI-1). It seeks to assess the programme's achievements and to test the theory of change including the validity of assumptions made. The purpose of the evaluation is to draw out emerging lessons and best practices and to identify knowledge gaps relevant to the design of a second Phase (SAWI-2).
4. The review was commissioned by DFID and AusAID and was undertaken by an independent team of consultants^[1] over a period of four months and included trips to Sweden (Stockholm World Water Week), Kathmandu (Civil Society Workshop), and New Delhi (Donor consultation). Interviews with key informants were held in situ, and remotely via email (by electronic questionnaire) and by phone/Skype. The evaluation timetable, list of interviewees and documents consulted is set out in the appendices.

2 Background

5. The immediate rationale for DFID funding is that the Greater Himalaya is a key source of rivers on which 1.5 billion people depend for both food production and hydropower generation. At the same time, and in spite of this huge reliance, cooperation between the seven countries that share the three major rivers flowing from the Himalayas into South Asia (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Nepal and Pakistan) is very limited – particularly at the level of multilateral action.
6. The Himalayas are expected to be affected severely by future climate change – and there is already evidence of significant glacial retreat in some areas. Capacity amongst these countries to cope with the effects of future climate change at a regional level is extremely limited, yet the impacts on the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Indus systems are expected to be substantial in coming decades. In other words the

^[1] The consultant team was led by Dermot Shields, with Valsa Shah (Economist) and Alan Nicol (Water Management Specialist). John Dore (AusAID) provided inputs into both the design of the review and to the final report. Chris Rose provided backstopping support.

transboundary impacts of climate change are likely to be substantial but the means to address them through better water management in shared river basins are almost non-existent.

7. DFID and other donors regard future capacity to manage these changes to be of major importance in reducing poverty across the region. Given the huge population density in many of the basins and the large proportion of the world's poor in these basins this could also have critical global impact. Cooperation between countries is deemed an essential component of meeting these future challenges.
8. Poor co-construction and sharing of knowledge between the seven countries has left little systematised – and commonly accepted – data with which to inform joint solutions to shared river management problems. In addition, in spite of the existing weak political cooperation in South Asia under the umbrella of South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), of which China is not a member, there is widespread acknowledgement in the region that SAARC is heavily influenced by its largest and most economically powerful member – India.
9. The concept underlying SAWI is to provide a means by which to support cooperation between these seven countries so that waters are more effectively managed jointly to support poverty reduction, low carbon growth and greater regional stability. The impacts anticipated of this joint action include reduction in floods and increased dry season flows, thereby reducing negative impacts and making more water available for irrigation to support food production and rural production systems.
10. In addition more effective co-management increases the capacity to invest in future hydropower development – a vital component of future energy supplies to the region given the burgeoning demand for energy from the combined basin populations of some 700 million people.
11. SAWI's stated 10-year goal is to "improve management of water within and between South Asian countries for the benefit of poor people today and to enable adaptation to climate change tomorrow". The purpose for the three-year funding phase is to "improve water resources management within and between South Asian countries".
12. SAWI's expected achievements under DFID support are three-fold:
 - a) To build more evidence to fill gaps in knowledge on the impacts of climate change, the economic benefits of cooperation and the costs of inaction;
 - b) To support high-level dialogue between countries under the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD) and to build support amongst wider constituencies of politicians and civil society for regional cooperation approaches and future joint investments; and
 - c) To build and strengthen institutions managing water in and between countries, including in meteorological monitoring and data sharing, in flood forecasting, in understanding the monsoon and modelling future climate change. In addition SAWI will improve approaches to planning and investing in water infrastructure in order to optimise uses and the sharing of benefits between countries.

3 Methodology

13. The purpose of the review was to undertake a formative evaluation of the SAWI-1 in order to inform the design and appraisal of a second phase. The analytical framework for the review was based on the TORs (Annex 1). These set out a carefully prepared checklist, based on standard criteria¹, and tailored to the SAWI programme with a particular focus on issues related to the design of Phase 2.
14. The major reference point for the overall shape of the programme was the Programme Memorandum and Logframe (Appendix 3), supplemented by SAWI annual reports and other donor and non-donor documentation.
15. The team's approach was to combine this review and analysis of documents (Appendix 3)^[2] with consultations amongst key donors and actors involved in SAWI-1. These consultations and interviews took place at different meetings over a three-month period. Summaries of key results and lessons were prepared using – where appropriate and to the extent possible – the review checklist for each sub-component.
16. The main findings (Section 4) of the review are set out below using the analytical framework set out in the Terms of Reference. These findings are based on the evidence gained during the review, which is presented in more detail in the subsequent sections on the ADD dialogue process (Section 5), the Strategic Basin Assessment for the Ganges (Section 6) the Knowledge Forum/Small Research Grants Scheme (Section 7) and the 'Complementary Funds' (Section 8). As well as reviewing these SAWI-related activities, the team reviewed a number of other River Basin programmes and extracted lessons (Section 9). Finally, the programme is assessed against its stated intentions as expressed in the revised logical framework (Section 10).

4 Summary of findings with respect to review criteria

A. Relevance

17. This criterion refers to the extent to which the interventions were suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor.

A.1 To what extent is water management an important issue for countries in the region?

18. Water management and more generally the arrangements for the governance of water resources remain a critical issue throughout the Himalayan region.
19. The livelihoods and well-being of over 750 million people, including many of the poorest people in the world living in a densely packed region of rapid population growth are dependent on the flow of adequate, controlled, timely and clean water. These flows are becoming increasingly volatile leading to more and more severe

¹ Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

^[2] See annotated bibliography in Attachment 1.

flooding and drought as a result of climate change, increased population (and urbanisation), and industrialisation driven by economic growth.

20. Since water, in the form of rivers, aquifers, snow, etc, flows across national and other administrative boundaries, downstream users are dependent on decisions taken upstream and in different political arenas. Given the historical background of the region, this exacerbates tension and instability between those sharing the resource and prevents the growth of regional cooperation required to ensure better water management and regional trade and joint investment.
21. In summary, it would be hard to understate the importance of water to this region's current and future development potential and, because of the size of the region in global terms, to future health and prosperity at a global level.

A.2 Should it be a higher or lower priority than it currently is?

22. The priority assigned to an issue reflects not just its importance (what *ought* to be done) but also the opportunity to bring about change (what *is* possible). The approach followed during SAWI-1 has been cautious as result of awareness that the historical and current constraints to better regional cooperation are substantial and the path to greater cooperation is likely to be difficult and convoluted. The review of ADD group members reveals both frustration at the arms-length approach taken by some governments and a recognition that trust cannot be manufactured and will develop over time through, potentially, multiple means. Clearly, there is demand by some to move forward and to develop joint activities, but the review team recognises the more strategic approach taken by the implementing agencies in not driving initiatives for which a constituency of interest that crosses substantial political, economic and social divides has not yet been established.

A.3 Are SAWI objectives and approaches framed to be relevant to this context (political, social, environmental and economic)?

23. The SAWI objectives are clearly highly relevant to the context of the region and to the climate change and development related trends therein.
24. However, the institutional arrangements such as the ADD and the Ganges River Basin Authority (GRBA) tend to lie outside (or between) authorities with a political mandate and therefore are not fully embedded in either the formal or informal political economy of the respective countries. This allows some progress to be observed but, in the absence of clearer impact pathways which move from the domain of 'opinion-forming', advocacy and influencing to actual policy formulation and delivery, the relevance of the approach remains uncertain to achieving the wider objectives of the programme. This is not to say that opinion-forming and greater understanding are not important contributions to better policy and to real impacts on the ground, rather, in the view of the review team, SAWI can develop the scope to engage at a policy and programme level around specific cross-boundary river basins and landscapes. Such an approach may mean apparently slower and more contested progress – and some harder falls – but the potential rewards in actual development progress are likely to be that much greater, particularly in touching the lives of the 700 million people living within these key river basins.

A.3 Is the intervention (theory of change) consistent with donors' aims and objectives?

25. The goals and objectives of the programme are very consistent with objectives and aims of donors. They promote regional cooperation, contribute to peace and security, address climate change issues and most fundamentally are focused on a key resource underpinning the livelihoods of many poor people.

A.4 Are the original goals and scope still appropriate?

26. Although the need for transboundary initiatives has been well established, Phase 1 of SAWI demonstrated the potential to support such initiatives and has shown the difficulties of collective action across such a wide and diverse region.
27. Based on the experience of Phase 1, the original goals for SAWI remain broadly appropriate. However, the review's team view is that the scope of future activities should be refocused for Phase 2 with an emphasis on:
- a) specific river basins and landscapes, where transboundary understanding can be more clearly translated into national action; and
 - b) inclusive policy-making processes within countries of a 'deliberative' rather than 'consultative' nature, drawing in wider constituencies of interest to reflect on evidence and negotiate a common understanding and basis for policy.

B. Effectiveness

28. This criterion relates to the extent an intervention attains its objectives.

B.1 How well is the theory of change working? Do any further process issues need to be considered?

29. As stated above, the team's view is that the process should be refocused as described in Question A.4 above

B.2 Have the programme's governance structures worked well, and facilitated the achievement of objectives?

30. The programme's governance structures operate at a number of different levels:

a) Donor partners These arrangements have worked reasonably well. The World Bank recognises the strategic nature of the exercise and has kept the partners informed of developments. Further, the contact between the donor partners and the degree of reporting is considerably greater than would normally be found in a Bank managed Trust fund. Yet, whilst these management arrangements have worked reasonably well, the process of design of a second phase of SAWI suggests that there remain differences in approach between the World Bank and the bilateral donors, some of which are built on different mandates and positioning with respect to key development issues.

b) Internal Bank governance Given the pressure within the bank to access Trust Funds for a range of activities, the Task Team leader and team have largely succeeded in ensuring that MDTF funds have been applied to critical SAWI-related activities.

c) ADD Group governance The membership and mandate of the ADD Group has remained tightly under World Bank control. This has involved consultation with the countries involved who propose individuals based on role or personal standing. The benefit of this approach is that it allows countries to remain part of the process without sending official representatives. However, it also generates resentment from those excluded or dropped from the process.

31. The team's view is that this approach should be continued, but that it should be subject to continual review and that more transparent ways of selecting group members should be explored with a clearer set of criteria applied.

B.3 Have the analytical frameworks and outputs (social, environmental, economic, climate change analysis) been of good quality?

32. The main analytical output to date has been the Strategic Basin Assessment (SBA) for the Ganges. The key feature of this assessment is that it treats the (Ganges) basin as whole and brings together transboundary data. The findings are well articulated as a series of challenges and myths around water management. Unsurprisingly, the effectiveness of an as yet unpublished report that has not yet been exposed to wide public scrutiny is hard to gauge at this stage, although clearly it will influence World Bank thinking, especially with regard to investment and management around the Ganges Basin in India.
33. For others, the model/assessment will need to be replicated and the findings validated which, in the process, will stimulate further debate and discourse and thereby contribute to SAWI's goals. Some criticisms were levelled at the scope and quality of the political economy, economic and social aspects of the assessment – somewhat inevitable given the seminal nature of the exercise. There was also some criticism regarding the value of the model as a management tool, perhaps reflecting the lack of institutional or agency specification. However, this was not the purpose of the exercise, which was focused on supporting strategic policy debate.

B.4 How successful has SAWI-1 been at influencing and framing debates, through: engagement strategies; the timing and approach to communications; use of political moments?

34. The extent to which the ADD has influenced and framed debates is unclear at this stage, although bringing together key people in a "loose" and nascent managed community of practice across the region has, at the very least, contributed to better understanding of the collective nature of key resource management issues.
35. There was a range of views around the quality of communication associated with the ADD Group. Expectations from Group members are quite high and it is unclear whether additional resources aimed at improving the quality of communication at this level would deliver commensurate results in terms of policy changes or improved policy delivery. Communication – i.e. better dissemination of results – should not be a substitute for deliberative fora and processes in which interest groups and policy makers engage directly with evidence.
36. The Ganges SBA was conducted by Bank staff using research institutions within the region. Essentially this means that ownership of the problem definition lies with the Bank and its partners. As a result, the team frequently heard talk of selling the ideas in the SBA, often to named champions or of improving dissemination of these ideas.

Such an exclusive and technical process may work under circumstances where the findings align with those of key policy makers (the ultimate target audience). However, this is not an inclusive and deliberative process which involves a range of stakeholders, recognises different interest and contestation and is robust enough to navigate the complexities of policy processes in the South Asia region. The risk is that somewhat hermetically sealed processes are then released into this harsher political landscape to be shot down or ignored by those on the outside, many of whom are likely to have powerful political voices.

B.5 How effective is the current log-frame as a tool to: measure results (quantitative and qualitative); test assumptions of the programme; and communicate ambition?

37. The current logframe is a 'satisfactory' management tool for a programme of this sort. However, the programme requires 'smart' management, able to respond to context, crisis and opportunity, rather than the more linear requirements of a focused investment programme in a stable and uncontested environment. Hence the governance arrangements are critical and the ability to be flexible remains paramount.

C. Efficiency

38. This criterion relates the outputs and outcomes – qualitative and quantitative – to the inputs. It is an economic term which signifies that the intervention uses the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired results

C.1 Does the project represent good value for money?

39. Given the size of the population in the region potentially affected by the issues the programme addresses and the implications of potential water resource conflicts, the programme is undoubtedly good value for money. However, it is important to note that the programme does not include any investment funds and is only contributing through better understanding of the issues and bringing together key stakeholders to influence policy and investment programme outcomes. Even with this caveat and without concrete evidence of exactly where and how the programme is changing investment and regulatory policies, the team's view is that the programme represents value for money.

C.2 Could outcomes have been achieved in a more cost effective manner?

40. The design of SAWI-1 was based on an assessment of the political and strategic realities and opportunities presented to the key players at that time. The proposals for a second Phase of SAWI focus on specific river basins and landscapes which will hopefully deliver more specific and concrete results. These opportunities have, to some extent, emerged out of Phase 1 of SAWI and therefore did not present themselves at the start of Phase 1.

C.3 Is the multi-donor trust fund an appropriate size of investment? What size should it be to respond efficiently to demand? What level of investment should be made through other instruments?

41. The disbursement of funds through the MDTF and other instruments was largely determined by the availability of human resources. The funds available and the allocation between the MDTF and other instruments during Phase 1 appear to be

roughly appropriate, given the resources available to manage the opportunities. The management of the programme requires an analytical and strategic approach and the maintenance of a network of contacts and relationships across seven countries and several donor agencies, all of which are human resource-intensive activities.

42. The scope for outsourcing the management of parts of the programme – such as civil society engagement – began to emerge towards the end of Phase 1 and should be pursued for many reasons. However, it is important to recognise the unique role of the bilateral donors in defining and shaping complex programmes such as this covering a contested resource and in ensuring adequate resources are allocated to this process.

D. Impact

43. This criterion relates to the positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.
44. The programme is too recent and the activities are still on-going for there to be demonstrable impacts in terms of the lives and livelihoods of poor people in the region

D.1 How far has SAWI-1 progressed down the results chain envisaged in the theory of change?

45. The results chain is ambitious and the issues the programme addresses are complex, uncertain and conflict-laden. As a result a straightforward answer to this question is not meaningful at this point. The objective of the programme is to change the way these issues are addressed and to provide additional evidence on which to base regulatory and investment decisions, although there is little evidence of fundamental changes to the way policy decisions are made at present (i.e. of more inclusive processes becoming the norm).
46. Despite the concerns about the 'disembeddedness' of the approach during Phase 1, there is some evidence on several fronts, particularly regarding, but not limited to, the Ganges, that additional and more holistic information may change policy and practice, not least because it enables a better overview of challenges so that resources can be target more strategically to problem-solving.

D.2 Where has SAWI-1 added-value to existing processes?

47. Apart from supporting the ADD process and knowledge forum and a strategic basin assessment, the programme has focused on influencing the design of related Bank investment programmes. The two major such programmes are the Ganges River Basin Programme (with Government of India) and the Non-lending Technical Assistance (NLTA) programmes to the Governments of Bangladesh and India concerned with the Sundarbans.

D.3 How have the donors/UK added value? How have DFID's complementary funds added value?

48. Given the strategic and political nature of the programme, the donors (in particular DFID) have had an important role not only in the genesis of the programme but in shaping its present and future form.
49. DFID complementary funding has focused on a number of initiatives. It is too early to assess the value-added of these activities. However, they form important elements of the overall strategic package. As well as providing strategic advice to SAWI, complementary funds have been used to:
 - (a) stimulate public opinion across the region on climate change issues, including through the Third Pole Project;
 - (b) initiating research and understanding of the issues around the Indus basin through the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) project; and
 - (c) bringing in new partners (and instruments) such as the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD).

E. Sustainability

50. This criterion is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of intervention are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn. Interventions need to be environmentally and institutionally as well as financially sustainable. Any assessment of sustainability should cover the concept of ownership. It was not envisaged that the SAWI-1 fora (e.g. Abu Dhabi Dialogue) would be sustainable within this time frame. Instead the evaluation could usefully consider:

E.1 Sustainability of interest in the issue

51. Interest in the issues addressed by SAWI will undoubtedly continue and increase long into the future. Less clear cut is whether interest in the SAWI approach and in donor involvement in that approach will be sustained.

E.2 Sustainability of impact of influence of the evidence and reframing of understanding

52. The SAWI programme cannot be expected to ever deliver a final outcome – the situation is too complex, fluid and uncertain. As a result, knowledge is only one factor influencing decisions at any point in time.

E.3 Sustainability of commitment to participation in the processes

53. At the moment, governments in the region are supportive of a Track 2 process but do not want a formal process through, say, the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). It is unlikely that any one government would or could take the lead in promoting such a process, and potentially only one country has the diplomatic leverage and capacity to lead such a process – namely India. They are nonetheless, broadly appreciative of a “low key” donor role in convening a process which brings together opinion formers and researchers. Some, maybe all, governments in the region would also prefer civil society engagement, often heavily supported by International Non-Governmental Organisation (INGO) networks, to be managed by or through donor agencies. This apparently passive commitment should be regarded positively given the potential for regional conflict over water management.

F. Coverage

54. This criterion relates to which groups are included or excluded from a programme, and the differential impact on those included and excluded. Related concepts include equity (including gender equity and disability) and social exclusion.

F.1 Has SAWI-1 engaged with the most relevant stakeholders, fora and processes?

55. The ADD process has, in the main, brought together a small number of bureaucrats and researchers. Civil society has not yet been effectively engaged. This is partly because the focus has been on regional dialogues which are only really accessible to larger INGOs.
56. As discussed earlier, the team's view is that existing national and transboundary fora and mechanisms have not yet been fully explored – and should be. The ADD process itself is regional but the main outcome, so far, has focused on the Indian stretch of the Ganges basin. Further, as noted by several respondents, there are many other areas and arenas to which SAWI could contribute.
57. The programme has not addressed issues of gender equity, social exclusion and disability. This is perhaps not surprising as the programme is largely meta-strategic in nature and does not have sole responsibility for the design and implementation of other programmes. However, few women have attended the ADD meetings or been involved in the Knowledge Forum. A gender lens has not been applied to the technical aspects of the programme, which is an important lacuna.
58. The programme covers such a large geographic area and at such a high level, there will never be scope for direct participation of communities or individuals in the programme processes. To date there has been little involvement of their representatives through civil society channels.

F.2 Which additional stakeholders should be considered for the second phase?

59. As the programme moves forward into Phase 2 the quality of this representation needs to be constantly reviewed to ensure that the voices and interests of specific communities are heard within different elements of the programme. Further, the deliberative processes which are supported in Phase 2 will need to ensure that political representatives at national, sub-national and community levels are able to articulate the often immediate concerns of poor people in debates which are frequently framed around long-term public goods.

G. Coherence and Coordination

60. This criterion refers to the need to assess other policies and programmes which affect the intervention being evaluated, for example security, humanitarian aid, trade and military policies and programmes, as well as the intervention or policy itself.

G.1 Has SAWI-1 taken sufficient note of policies and programmes that affect the intervention (including those of both recipient and donor countries)?

61. Clearly the programme and ADD Group members will be fully aware of national policies and programmes. The review team's view is that the programme should not only be aware of these policies but should actively promote engagement with the deliberative processes underlying both their design and implementation, even if that involves a slower pace of change overall under the programme.

G.2 Are these the right stakeholders? Is SAWI-1 engaging in the right way?

62. SAWI's current stakeholders should continue to be involved in the process. However, the programme should provide mechanisms for direct involvement by a wider group of social actors and representatives. Such engagement requires the identification of suitable deliberative processes and new approaches to inclusion and constructive engagement.

G.3 A quick assessment of harmonization with other aid agencies, and alignment with country priorities and systems

63. SAWI has been funded jointly by three donors, viz AusAID, DFID and Norway. This arrangement has worked well.
64. The programme exists outside country systems and therefore is not aligned to any one country system. However, the programme has engaged with national decision makers, although these have generally been confined to key officials. The programme has not yet engaged deeply with public debates and national discourses, and civil society has had limited opportunity to participate.

Conclusions

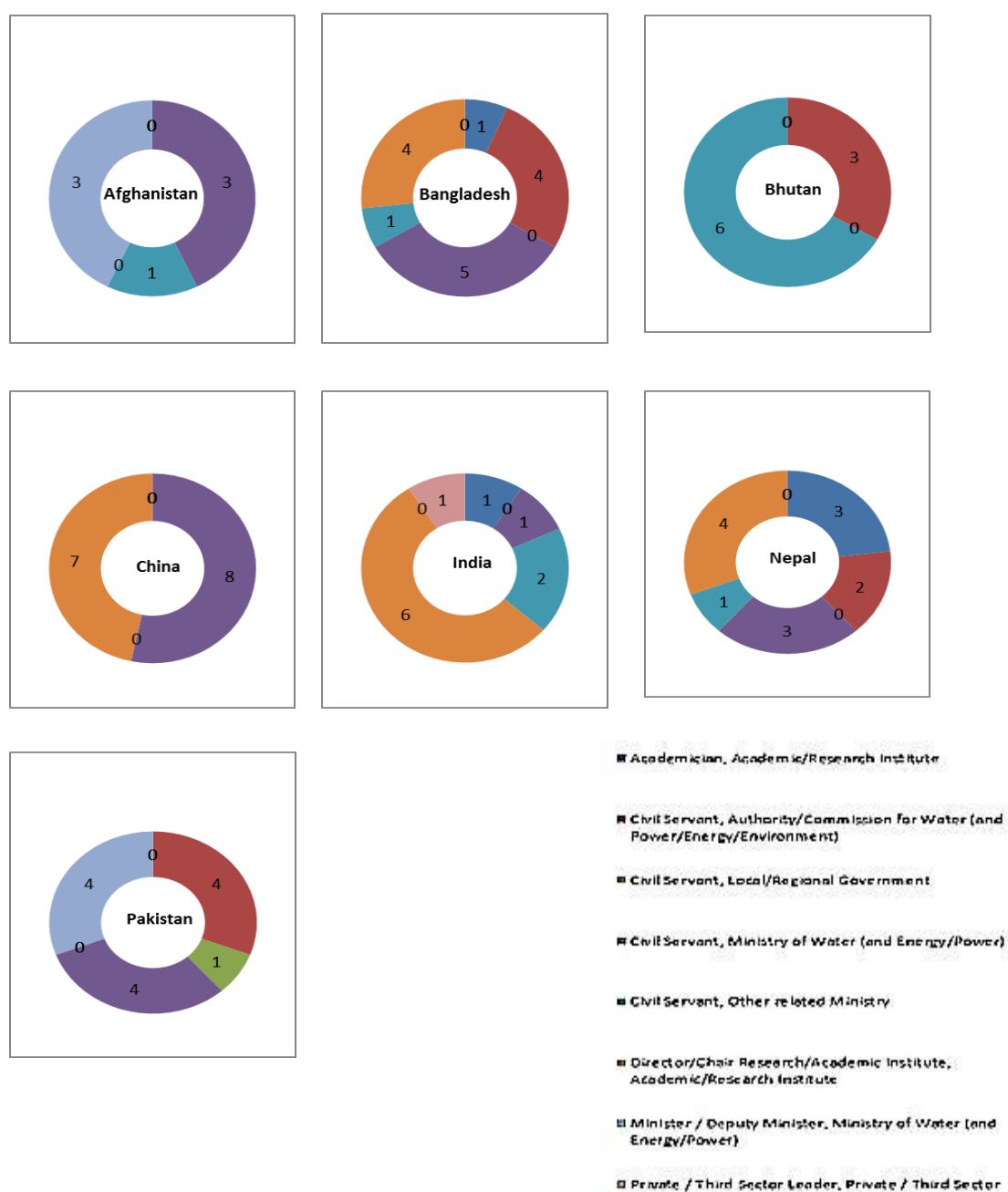
65. SAWI-1 is an important initiative addressing a critical development issue in a region that is home to a large proportion of the world's poor – and some of the poorest and most vulnerable communities to global climate change. The core and complementary activities that constitute SAWI-1 are addressing this complex development problem through a combination of improved knowledge, increased dialogue and greater efforts at regional cooperation.
66. The premise underlying the programme was that the nature of the development problems related to shared river basins emanating from the Himalayas can only be addressed – in the long-term – through regional, transboundary action driven by a shared understanding of the benefits that can be derived from such joint action. In the current regional political and economic (trade) climate, this is a challenging premise to start with.
67. The evaluation team believes this is the right premise but the findings from the review suggest that a second Phase needs to address a number of key issues that, hitherto, have been lacking or under developed in order to achieve greater long-term success. In particular, the focus of a subsequent phase should be on embedding the SAWI activities in inclusive national deliberative processes.

68. In the following sections, the evidence underlying the review findings is presented, starting with the survey of ADD group members.

5 The Abu Dhabi Dialogue: Perceptions of Group Members

69. The team analysed participation at the Abu Dhabi Dialogues (ADD) based on assessment of available reports and consultations with donors. Detailed interviews were then conducted either in person or electronically with 10 ADD participants from all participating countries and, where possible, with an emphasis on those who had attended more than one dialogue session. Data analysis is presented below.

Figure 1 Cross-sectional analysis of participation



5.1 Number of ADDs attended by country by participant profile

70. Assuming that a “good ADD” to date should consist of a mix of relevant government affiliated participants (i.e. Ministry of Water/Water Commission/Authority) and those from outside of government (particularly academic/research institutions), we are looking for a healthy amount of “red and purple” (government) supported by “orange and dark blue” (academia/research) segments of the graphs.
71. Based on these criteria, Nepal and Bangladesh have the best mix of participants (and it is worth noting that both have had a participant (either Secretary or Additional Secretary) from either the Ministry of Water Resources or Water and Energy Commission at every Dialogue).
72. Pakistan and China have also shown a good level of relevant participation albeit from a slightly less diverse range of sources. Pakistan is limited to only government affiliated participants while China has only had researchers or Ministry of Water Resource affiliated participants, although these have been from a range of Departments within the Ministry.
73. Other highlights:
- India (however, see 3rd point below), Bangladesh and Nepal have had the most diverse range of participants (five different participant types over the course of the process);
 - China has had the least diverse range of participants (two participant types) but the highest number (eight) of civil servants affiliated to the Ministry for Water Resources from any one country;
 - India has had only three civil servants attend over the course of the Dialogues and only one of those was affiliated to the Ministry for Water Resources;
 - Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bhutan have only ever had attendance by participants affiliated to the Government;
 - India and China have had the highest number of participants affiliated to academic or research institutions.

Table 1 Structure for interviewing ADD members

| Issues | Questions |
|--|---|
| 1. Participation /involvement | <i>No. of ADD attended; national level ADDs attended; how/why selected; role</i> |
| 2. Impressions of the process | <i>Validity and value of process; level of representation, inclusion and participation; profile of participants</i> |
| 3. Evidence of impact | <i>What has actually changed? - perceptions, awareness, knowledge, policy, processes, quality of debate, etc.</i> |
| 4. Relationship to national discourse/ policy | <i>How/to whom has ADD been reported back; impacts/ behaviour change</i> |
| 5. Views/ideas for the future of the ADD | <i>What could change; more track 1; broader programme, etc?</i> |

5.2 Summary of results from the ADD interviews

5.2.1 How/why did you become involved?

74. The engagement of participants was influenced by direct connections to key World Bank facilitators of the dialogue and individual knowledge of and engagement in international water events. The range of participant types was broad and their selection or invitation to attend was a result of a variety of pathways: membership of regional intergovernmental organisations, their own importance in national research processes or political engagement, including through engagement in parliamentary committees. Some had been nominated by their parliaments to attend; others brought prominent parliamentarians with them.
75. We concluded that this 'mixed bag' of attendance was both a strength in that it brought diversity of opinions and views, but also became a challenge because of unevenness in 'level' of individual attendance across countries. This point was referred to by several interviewees, particularly with regard to perceptions of low-level Indian government engagement. In one case there also appeared a mismatch between regional and national processes, with the individual invited to attend on behalf of his country at a regional level not being invited to the national-level dialogue.

5.2.2 What are your impressions of the process?

76. In terms of overall impressions, there were two broadly contrasting views: a somewhat negative impression of a slow, ponderous process that was insufficiently focused on problem-solving and too dominated by the Bank; and a more positive perception of a looser, more flexible and adaptive process that allowed both ownership and evolution. The decisive role of an individual from the Bank in using its convening power and ability to bring key countries together was recognised. After their departure there was a view that some momentum was lost and picked up again later.
77. It was also suggested that the process (more explicitly the Bank) had overly focused on one specific country – India – and that there was a lack of real regional 'ownership', leadership and facilitation of the ADD. Linked to this, in terms of country participation was a sense that greater 'national endorsement' was needed, i.e. with fewer retirees, and more active participants joining the dialogues.
78. There was some concern expressed too about the outsourcing of the Knowledge Forum and Small Grant Scheme to ICIMOD and the reduced role of the ADD Knowledge Committee.
79. On the plus side, the fact that the Dialogue had taken place at all was regarded as a positive step. The concept and potential for progress was positive even if progress achieved to date had not been as strong or rapid as initially anticipated. Some regarded the looseness and lack of formal structure in the process as one of its major strengths, allowing natural evolution and real ownership over time.
80. There was wide recognition of the importance of learning through association with other initiatives such as in the Mekong Region and other visits (e.g. to Washington). This linkage to other water management environments at similar scale was regarded as important.

5.2.3 What evidence of impact and relationship to national discourse/policy?

81. In terms of tangible impact, this was the least (well)answered question. Although some links to knowledge sharing and uptake in national policy and legislative processes were linked to individual participation (and knowledge pathways), overall a sense of tangible change as a result of the dialogue process was largely absent. This is not surprising given the relatively short timescale it has operated.
82. Some feedback had taken place from the participants to high-ranking officials, but there was a sense in some cases that proof of impact would require actual collaborative projects, based on experts working together across national divides. ADD might otherwise remain largely a talking shop, according to one participant. For some, the overall process was too loose to provide impact or engagement in national processes.
83. At the same time, however, high-level awareness of the ADD process overall was noted at a national level.

5.2.4 Where should the ADD process go next?

84. There was strong steer on future directions for the ADD including an emphasis on the need for a greater focus and to move from being overly river-basin centric to being more thematic. There was a call for greater dialogue with and across wider constituencies in the region, and to use existing bilateral relations as a starting point to move to a more formalised, Track-1 process (this could include involvement of Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Prime Ministers' offices)².
85. Others suggested multiple layers and levels of engagement, including involving more input from civil society, increasing the number of dialogue meetings and improving opportunities to make progress between meetings.
86. On governance issues, there was emphasis on the ADD sessions being held in the region, perhaps hosted by a regional body organisation (and which could revolve between countries). It was also suggested that the 'secretariat' should move outside the World Bank (but World Bank involvement as a third party mediator should remain (a view of two members)). Overall, the governance structure should be more formalised with higher-level participation by some countries, and linkages to greater opportunities for shared learning including study tours, visits and events at Stockholm World Water Week, etc.

5.3 Overall summary of lessons from review of ADD Group members

87. There is high appreciation for the process, but a clear understanding of its limitations: in short "a good start to something more substantial and grounded".
88. There is some concern about perceived lack of purpose and direction – questioning some of the ADD's underlying rationale – and linked to this a sense that now is the right time to shift emphasis from informal to a more formal form of dialogue.

² These were suggestions proposed by interviewees. However, it should be noted that a shift to Track 1 might require a change in responsibility for convening the ADD from the Bank to, for example, SAARC. This in turn, might limit rather than open space for other non-state actors, such as civil society and business to engage.

89. Overall there is some concern about the quality and commitment of the ADD Knowledge Forum to genuine research and engagement with a range of different viewpoints. This is related to understanding how it will help in structuring and supporting future regional cooperation, both in terms of the specific focus of research outputs and their engagement in policy processes.

Table 2 Summary of results from ADD member interviews

| Key criteria | Result | Implication |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Relevance | <p>The relevance of this sub-component is high, particularly at the level of improving cooperation over water management, sharing knowledge and building trust.</p> <p>SAWI objectives and approaches could be more specific on the anticipated outcomes of the ADD and how it addresses national-level policy processes.</p> <p>There is some suggestion that the wider theory of change is not wholly supported by the ADD as currently constituted, in the absence of stronger connection – and support to – deliberation over water management at a national level (which is where most management decision making is situated at present).</p> | <p>The major implication for SAWI-2 is the need to address the relationship between ADD and national processes, including who is involved, what constitutes the dialogue (thematically and process-wise) and how this connects at national, subnational and local levels both to deliberation over policy and wider stakeholder groups, including civil society.</p> <p>It is likely that the original goals remain appropriate but that the scope should be altered to accommodate these findings.</p> |
| Effectiveness | <p>It is too early to assess in full the success of the theory of change related to this component, although the responses from ADD members suggests some impact at a national level, a willingness to continue the dialogue and a vision of how it can be improved in future. Key process issues that need highlighting are to improve the consistency of engagement, the quality and seniority of national participants and the focus of the dialogue on key themes, allowing the presentation and contestation of alternative perspectives on Himalayan challenges and futures.</p> <p>The quality of the outcome of the ADD has been difficult to assess – there is little formal output as such, beyond minutes and therefore outcomes are even more difficult to find and assess. This was a weakness identified, which challenges the ‘publicness’ of the ADD and its capacity to engage with and in (where necessary) deliberative processes at a national level.</p> <p>The current log-frame is quite useful, though the ambition levels are high and sources of verification are quite weak.</p> | <p>More formal feedback in the form of input into an annual event and a written report that could be made public would improve the effectiveness of the ADD. This would also help in establishing the purpose of the ADD for a wider regional audience – and bring it further to the attention of key constituencies, including the media and civil society. These are key elements in national-level policy deliberation.</p> |

Table 2 cont.

| Key Criteria | Result | Implication |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| Efficiency | <p>If there is major change leveraged for the 700 million people targeted in the proposal, then the project represents exceptionally good 'value for money'. However, at present, the theory of change is weak in terms of influencing policy at a national level and, therefore, this value-for-money criterion should be accepted only provisionally at this stage.</p> <p>More cost effective ways of achieving the same outcomes are hard to define, though a stronger output may have been achieved from the outset had a more critical set of inputs been applied. DFID could have played a stronger role in shaping the emergence and evolution of successive ADDs, particularly given the initially strong role played by UK institutions.</p> | <p>The volume of funding to the MDTF is an appropriate level of investment for the relatively 'light-touch' version of the ADD that has been developed to date. However, as this should now become more integrated in national policy-level deliberation, there should perhaps be an adjustment in funding to enable a more tangible link to national constituencies and target audiences, including through connecting up with regional 'landscape and basin' programmes.</p> |
| Impact | <p>The ADD process was established in 2006 and has been maintained over the three years of SAWI-1. However, the extent to which the ADD Group has been 'articulating vision and demand to their national governments' is unclear (and certainly under-documented). Minutes of country level consultations are particularly lacking and media coverage is low. In some cases policy positions have reportedly been linked to engagement by senior policy makers in the ADD, but this has been difficult to verify.</p> <p>The ADD has added some value in supporting individual 'opinion formers' to strengthen individual ties at a regional level (and through individual possibly evolve over time from a Track 2 to Track 1 process, involving official institutions). The donors have added some value through providing financial support (in the absence of support through or by another regional organisation – e.g. SAARC).</p> | <p>There is a clear need to strengthen regional-country links through the next phase of the ADD, though without moving formally to a Track 1 process (hence the emphasis on country rather than 'government').</p> <p>Further refining of 'selection criteria' of individual group members and better organisation of follow up in the interstices between meetings is important to improve in the next phase.</p> |
| Sustainability | <p>The commitment of ADD members to continue (with some exceptions and expressions of scepticism over wider purpose) is fairly consistent. There is, therefore, sustained interest in the issue.</p> <p>Sustainability of impact will only be assessable if there is a clear way of measuring impact pathways (particularly regional to national to local impact on deliberation processes).</p> | <p>The link between participation in the ADD and impact beyond personal engagement by key individuals from the region needs to be established. This is critical to strengthening the relationship to deliberative policy process in countries and future influence on complex national and local political economies.</p> |

Table 2 cont.

| Key criteria | Result | Implication |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Coverage | SAWI-1 ADD component has engaged with some of the relevant groups, though as noted above, there are questions over the balance of participants across countries (and within countries, too). Certainly, the limited extent of significant civil society engagement in ADD has been a gap that needs addressing under Phase 2 | A broadening and deepening of SAWI needs to take place. This will add substance and establish a more useful platform for influencing and engagement across the region. |
| Coherence and coordination | There has been important harmonization undertaken with other donors including Norway and AusAID. This includes regular meetings as a donor group with the World Bank. There is less evidence of alignment with government targets and objectives (across a range of policy environments – not just water). Were this evidence available it would be a powerful example of stronger connections to deliberative processes and national-local political economies. | There is important experience in harmonization that can be built on in the next phase – including bringing a wider set of donor agencies in as observers to the process (building on the sharing of experience e.g. between donors on transboundary issues at recent Stockholm World Water Weeks). Stronger linkage to policy processes and political economies is a key recommendation of the review for a second Phase. |

6 Ganges: Strategic Basin Assessment

90. As the most populous basin in the world, the Ganges Strategic Basin Assessment (SBA) has huge potential to inform planning and development that reaches the lives and livelihoods of a large number of the world's poorest communities.
91. The Ganges SBA study was in final draft form at the time of this review. At this stage a major outcome was an aggregation of challenges to 'conventional beliefs' which showed that upstream damming would not control floods alone, but that 'information-backed flood management' would be 'more effective'. The SBA argues that underground aquifers in the basin 'could provide the same scale of water storage as the proposed upstream dams but more immediately and likely at considerably lower financial, social and environmental cost'.
92. Net economic value of hydropower potential due from long-proposed upstream dams is estimated at some \$5 billion annually. Given existing climate variability – and long-term climate change uncertainty – the focus on basin-wide 'information and institutions', particularly on flood management and conjunctive use of groundwater and surface water, is necessary, and emphasise in the report.
93. The process of finalising the SBA included review by an expert advisory group and World Bank quality assurance. Additional high-level consultations were held with policy makers and opinion-makers in Bangladesh, India and Nepal. The interim findings were disseminated at regional consultations with governments and stakeholders in Bangladesh and Nepal during August 2010. The report has still to be made available to a wider audience.

Table 3. Assessment of Ganges SBA

| Key criteria | Result | Implication |
|----------------------|--|--|
| Relevance | <p>The relevance of this sub-component is high, particularly at the level of improving key data quality and sharing on one of the major river basins within South Asia.</p> <p>This activity has high relevance to the strategic needs and capacities of countries sharing the Ganges basin, given the high numbers of people – and poor people – inhabiting the basin and their susceptibility to shocks and hazards, and to long-term detrimental change in the availability (and quality) of water (both ground and surface flows) within the basin.</p> <p>The challenge in terms of wider theories of change under SAWI as a whole is how the knowledge and data under the assessment – and the process of assessment itself – can be used to strengthen regional cooperation, rather than just basin-level cooperation and to improve the quality of policy making outcomes. Has the SBA, in other words, sufficient merit in its own right to serve as a wider template for collaboration on data development, analysis and sharing between countries, given its genesis as tool within the Bank? In our opinion, yes, there has been a useful process undertaken, but that it needs further strengthening including greater inclusion of socio-economic and political economy analysis and greater ownership across a wider range of stakeholders.</p> | <p>Further refinement of the process – and lesson learning from linking the activities to the ADD and other policy-influencing forums – should be included in subsequent SBAs planned for the Brahmaputra and possibly the Indus.</p> <p>The goals of this assessment remain relevant but there are some challenges in linking the specific assessments to ‘dialogue on joint projects’ as envisaged in the original logframe.</p> |
| Effectiveness | <p>The Ganges SBA has enabled, and will do so more once properly released and discussed, some challenging of existing understandings and will likely, to an extent, reframe thinking on the relevance and strength of upstream dams as flood control mechanisms. There is a question mark, however, over the linkage of key findings with wider policy environments and political-economic realities (e.g. the reality of flood control, local knowledge and the political economy of embankments and flow measurement).</p> <p>The overall governance of the process has worked well, though there has been some concern about linking the ADD and the SBA process of consultation and ‘verification’. This has been weak to date.</p> | <p>Overall improvements in effectiveness of the SBAs lie principally in strengthening the socio-economic and political-economic analysis, and improving their ‘publicness’ with respect to regional dialogue and links to deliberation at a national level. In short, the experience of preparing an SBA for the Ganges will have provided useful lessons for subsequent SBAs</p> |

Table 3 cont.

| Key criteria | Result | Implication |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| Efficiency | SBA may represent good value for money given their originality in establishing stronger regional data and sharing this data between countries, but also in creating a process of data acquisition and analysis that can become (though not yet) a model for regional cooperation in understanding benefits and future investment options within basins and between countries. | By redesigning the process of engagement in research and use of social science research tools, future SBAs could provide a stronger knowledge base on policy processes and political economies which would be extremely useful in strengthening future institutional environments within the basin (identifying opportunities and constraints, in particular). |
| Impact | This intervention has produced a new understanding of the limits and quantities of available data as well as establishing a process that can be used in other basins in the region. The process of development could be enhanced to become more inclusive of participants in, and well beyond, the Abu Dhabi Dialogue. This would provide a useful synergy and peg on which to attach greater thematic focus to the ADD dialogue and the others proposed by these reviewers. | Impact can be enhanced through greater engagement of the analysis in public-level discourse. |
| Sustainability | The benefits of this intervention are likely to last, if the evidence presented in the report is sufficiently verifiable and accepted by the wider scientific and policy audience in the region. However, this in part depends on management of the process of deliberation around the output of the SBA and whether or not key constituencies of knowledge in the region feel that they have been sufficiently consulted and, ultimately whether they are convinced by the findings. | A stronger public dialogue on the SBA terms of reference, process and inclusion in identification and discussion of results and analysis should be a part of subsequent assessments. |
| Coverage | There is no immediate sense that particular groups have been excluded from the SBA, but by its nature the process is selective. At the stage of wider dissemination of results this needs to be explained carefully. | As above. |
| Coherence and coordination | The Ganges SBA did not specifically set out to engage with wider policy arenas and, therefore, it would be unfair to judge it against such a criterion. | However, if in future donors feel that wider linkage to other strategic areas is critical then this could form part of the analysis of implications of |

7 ADD Knowledge Forum and Small Research Grants Scheme

94. The Abu Dhabi Dialogue Knowledge Forum (ADD-KF) and associated Small Research Grants Scheme was launched in Kathmandu in March 2011. Some 40 organisations took part in the workshop and what were described as 15 'tentative proposals' came out of the meeting. ICIMOD led the process of proposal selection with 'a call' issued on their website.
95. In total the Small Research Grants Scheme has been allocated \$1million dollars. After ranking and assessment seven proposals were subsequently selected for funding. These proposals involve knowledge institutions from different countries sharing the major river systems of the Himalayas and represent a number of new institutional relationships reaching across these basins between different countries. They cover a range of thematic areas from climate change impacts on hydrological systems, to vulnerability assessments of flash flooding, benefit sharing mechanisms and water scarcity issues and food security.
96. Given that the research activities have only just been launched after a lengthy and at times difficult process, it is premature to judge the results of this component too rigorously at this stage. Some tentative ideas (only) are presented below.

Table 4 Assessment of Knowledge Forum and Small Research Grants Scheme

| Key criteria | Result | Implication |
|----------------------|---|--|
| Relevance | The ADD-KF is hugely relevant to the expected achievement areas of SAWI 1, and in particular 'To build more evidence, to fill gaps in knowledge on the impacts of climate change, the economic benefits of cooperation and the costs of inaction'. | The ADD-KF should be strengthened and deepened, but greater linkage made between research processes and policy targets and outcomes. All SRGS proposals should clearly articulate the policy uncertainty that they are addressing and the method through which their results will be used in policy-making processes. |
| Effectiveness | In terms of achieving this result, there is evidence that high quality research can be produced – given the potential quality of the institutions involved in the seven projects – and the international support being given (and level of funding). However, there is some concern at the short time-span for the research activities, particularly given their transnational nature and complex thematic areas. | There should be a thorough review of the quality and depth of research outputs and of the lessons from different research collaboration at the end of the first year. This should feed into future selection and funding decision making. There should be attention to breadth versus depth – i.e. a strategic decision on where to focus efforts and funds. |
| Efficiency | It is not useful to apply an efficiency criterion to this activity. | N/A |



Table 4.Cont.

| Key criteria | Result | Implication |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| Impact | Good research that is linked to deliberative processes and policy channels can have an impact, but only if it is part of stakeholder engagement by and of policy making communities. Research that is not strategic, but parachuted in via journals and other means, will only likely have a very marginal impact that can take years to accomplish. | Uptake pathways need careful consideration as part of the selection process. In addition, there is a need to focus on a strategic vision of how and where this body of research will have an impact (\$1m a year is a lot of research funding). |
| Sustainability | | It might be useful to explore in SAWI 2 whether any regional funding bodies – e.g. private foundations – would like to co-fund the Small Research Grants Programme. |
| Coverage | Given the high participation in the initial launch workshop and the open call online, coverage seemed very adequate. There is, however, a question about the way the cake is cut, and whether smaller grants could be added for more localised work (as well as, perhaps, one funding line for a longer-term piece of collaborative research with a minimum of three countries involved). | The balance between funded research time, range of activities and requirements of the research output should be fully addressed. |
| Coherence and Coordination | There is an important need to assess the relevance to other knowledge processes in the region, including academic and scientific networks. At present this does not seem to have been undertaken. This could ensure research activity complementarity rather than overlap and potential duplication. | A rapid regional audit of other research funding on water resources and climate change (in particular) should be carried out in the region to ensure that there is complementarity and reduction in potential overlap. |

8 Complementary funds

97. The complementary funds were managed by DFID and focused on three areas:
- a. Indus work;
 - b. Public awareness (Third Pole Project); and
 - c. Developing civil society initiatives and maintaining strategic awareness

8.1 The Indus

98. DFID funded the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) to undertake a mapping of irrigation water-related practices and policies in the 'two Punjabs' (covering an important part of the Indus river system). This was a short-term activity that lasted for four months up until the end of March 2011.
99. The purpose of the project was to propose a framework for enhanced co-operation of water sharing between the Indian and Pakistani Punjabs. The outputs would be a mixture of policy frameworks for engaged water management and cooperation, conferences and project meetings in both countries and an engagement strategy for more detailed cooperation. The written output would be one monograph and two issue briefs.

Table 5. Assessment of Indus work

| Key criteria | Result | Implication |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Relevance | This is an excellent example of tangible, transboundary cooperative work that complements the wider aims and objectives of SAWI-1. | Further 'local' transboundary activities of this nature could and should be envisaged in the future. |
| Effectiveness | The project appears to have achieved its aims and objectives and was successfully presented at the Kathmandu Workshop in October 2011. | Rapport between Indian and Pakistani institutions is important to nurture and support. |
| Efficiency | On the basis that the intangible results – greater cooperation and experience of transboundary research – have been achieved with relatively little cost, this was an efficient project. | Further such activities can therefore be supported on this basis. |
| Impact | It is too early to assess impact. But successful media coverage of the activities and the widespread dissemination of outputs are likely to have a positive impact on relations at a bilateral level – and across the two Punjabs. | N/A |
| Sustainability | It is unlikely that such activities will be sustainable without further donor funding. | Private or INGO funding might continue support to this kind of activity in future. This could be explored. |
| Coverage | Inclusion of key stakeholders appears to have taken place in the meetings convened. | Greater public dissemination of the activity might have increased media coverage between the two countries. |
| Coherence and coordination | It is not known how well the activity was coordinated with other transboundary activities. | Greater dissemination of the reports and briefings – including via the web – could have taken place. |

8.2 Public Awareness (Third Pole Project)

100. DFID's Accountable Grant (114394-110) to the Third Pole Project (TPP) provides core funding for the development of a network of journalists, editors and scientists to build a better understanding of climate impacts and responses, and provide training and media support around the regional climate change conference.
101. Alongside the conference this resulted in a common narrative in South Asia of the impacts of climate change on the major rivers and aquifers with sustained media coverage in the region and internationally, in particular during the first week of the Copenhagen Negotiations in late 2010.

102. The TPP works with a number of partners including regional news networks, INGOs, ICIMOD and others. The future direction of TPP is to expand knowledge sharing, improve language accessibility, develop regional conferences and produce more tailored updates and thematic briefings. There is also a strong element of training to their work.

Table 6. Assessment of Public awareness programme

| Key criteria | Result | Implication |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Relevance | The goals and activities of TPP are highly relevant to the knowledge sharing activities under SAWI-1. | Support is well worth maintaining. |
| Effectiveness | Given the relatively low-cost, high reach of TPP activities, there is high potential for knowledge to reach key constituencies at relatively little expense. | Innovative use of social media could enhance effectiveness. |
| Efficiency | Not possible to evaluate. | N/A |
| Impact | The potential impact is high, but there could be problems of quality control and overall management of the vast array of activities and actors under the TPP (particularly given the wider range of partners and stakeholders involved). | It is important that DFID remains aware of the way TPP interacts with different constituencies and partners as some of its partners are avowedly anti-dam, for instance. This would jar, potentially, with other civil society voices if, for example, hydropower development was an outcome of further phases of SAWI. |
| Sustainability | It is possible that this could remain financially sustainable, though it would have to slim down its activities and become more effective at raising its own funds in future. | TPP should be encouraged to continue seeking funding from a variety of sources. |
| Coverage | This is very good indeed. | No comment |
| Coherence and coordination | This is difficult to assess in the 'blogosphere'. By extension, there is little coherence and coordination, but at the same time huge potential for linkage with other online networks and knowledge hubs. | No comment |

8.3 NGO Funding

103. DFID has committed to funding civil society engagement at a regional level on transboundary waters and, to this end, solicited a proposal from The Asia Foundation (TAF) during 2011. However, this proposal was deemed too expensive and insufficiently policy-oriented for funding.

104. To assist DFID³ in exploring options for NGO funding at a regional level, a two-day workshop was convened in Kathmandu in October attended by 12 NGOs from the region (selected by DFID on the basis of existing knowledge).

105. The workshop provided a useful venue for exploring concepts of regional collaboration and ways forward in terms of agreeing principles, methods and anticipated results. One key outcome was the call for a form of NGO Charter on regional water governance that could form a focal point for regional engagement.

Table 7. Assessment of NGO preparation

| Key criteria | Result | Implication |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| Relevance | Highly relevant (when funded). This is a key aspect in achieving a more rooted regional dialogue and one informed from below as well as by technical-bureaucratic elites. | Funding should be provided, perhaps on the basis of a first phase scoping-come-inception period to enable the most effective mechanism (and set of institutions) to be identified. |
| Effectiveness | This is too early to determine, but judging by the quality of potential regional NGO engagement this could be very high. | This will be enhanced if the process described above is successful. |
| Efficiency | Small funds can pay important dividends with NGOs working more efficiently, quickly – and locally – than government partners are able to. | Focusing on smaller NGOs with deserved high reputation, rather than larger regional INGOs, might be more cost effective and should be explored. |
| Impact | Potentially high, particularly with respect to strengthening transboundary relations and joint actions at a local level (e.g. Two Punjabs). | Building on the existing policy engagement actions of NGOs in the region is important. Many already have deep experience of this. |
| Sustainability | This is uncertain - many civil society organisations are committed to these issues, but are often highly dependent on funding support. There are few membership organisations collecting fees. | Selecting on the basis of future sustainability might be one important criterion to consider. |
| Coverage | This could be improved through moving beyond the 'usual suspects', and including a wider range of regional NGOs. | A rapid audit of key national NGOs in each country should be undertaken. This will help in identifying those that should also be part of NGO engagement processes. |
| Coherence and | Not possible to assess. | No comment. |

³ Other donors, such as AusAID and Norway, are also interested in supporting civil society engagement

9 Lessons from other River Basin Contexts (for Phase 2)

106. As part of the formative evaluation process of SAWI Phase 1 lessons were examined from other river basin contexts. This entailed analysis of literature from both the Nile and the Mekong Basins, both presenting examples of multi-country efforts at enhancing regional cooperation on shared transboundary resources.
107. In the case of the Nile, the major period of focus was from 1999 onwards, after the establishment of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI). This initiative has received substantial DFID funding and has also been presented as a model for cooperation on which SAWI-1 has – to some extent – built. The NBI has also received substantial subsequent DFID funding, including supporting the engagement of civil society in the inter-governmental processes.
108. In the case of the Mekong River the period of focus was subsequent to the 1995 establishment of the Mekong River Commission (MRC). Although DFID has not been engaged in the Mekong, there are also important lessons to draw, in particular on the challenge of balancing national and regional level processes.
109. Although not presenting these lessons against the OECD/DAC criteria used in earlier sections of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and coverage, these are borne in mind, in particular regarding their support in interpreting useful lessons for SAWI as donors contemplate funding for Phase 2.
110. Three main lessons emerge from an analysis based on documentation referring to these two basin contexts and the experience of the project team. All three lessons are to some extent related to the significant donor involvement in these initiatives, the challenge of establishing and sustaining country ownership, and the wider difficulties involved in bringing states together that share a natural resource system on the basis of linkage between that system, future investments and changes to respective national social and economic systems. Frequently notions of ‘benefit sharing’ are mentioned in both case and indeed, both basin organisations have embarked on substantial benefit sharing analysis. In neither case, however, has a benefit sharing framework been applied and institutionalised at a substantial basin-wide level.

9.1 Regional processes can easily be disembodied

111. Experience from both the Nile Basin Initiative and the Mekong River Commission is instructive. In the former case, a long period of belligerence between the nine (then 10, and now 11) states sharing the Nile came to an end at the beginning of the 1990s, enabling donor input into processes of both informal and formal (Track 1 and 2) dialogue between states. These efforts included a series of annual conferences in respective riparian countries – the Nile 2002 series – which started in Egypt in 1992 (though really kicked off in Aswan in 1993). These meetings were largely ‘scientific’ in nature, but allowed dialogue and debate on important legal and economic issues in a more informal setting. During the 1990s a Nile Basin Initiative began to emerge which was formally enshrined in agreement in 1999, setting in train a series of

unprecedented cooperative actions between formerly adversarial states (Egypt and Ethiopia in particular). From 1999 onwards, the NBI establish two strategic action programmes in the Eastern Nile and in the Nile Equatorial Lakes Region. However, in spite of progress in joint assessment, in political and societal confidence building – including a substantial donor-assisted civil society ‘discourse’ – by the late 2000s a de facto split had emerged amongst basin countries which jeopardized the ‘whole basin’ concept of regional cooperation. The split was essentially about the existing treaties on the Nile under which Egypt and Sudan had historically divided the waters between themselves. In spite of a heavy emphasis on a benefit-sharing ethos, a capacity to overcome this historic political and legal fact had foundered on the realities of national political unwillingness to reshape domestic notions of water security.

112. In the Mekong River Basin’s case, the establishment of the MRC in 1995 followed a lengthy process of regional dialogue and earlier institutional cooperation. The regional body – the Commission – remains, however, largely focused on achieving consensus on future development directions, rather than an effective decision making body that brings together states around regional investment projects. These remain largely national in nature – as in the case of the Nile – and deep suspicions remains about the mission and purpose of the MRC, particularly amongst national committees in downstream riparian countries.
113. The lesson learnt from these two basin contexts are that regional processes are fairly easy to establish, not least because it is possible to disembody them from the messy realities of national political discourse and political economy. They are, therefore, a popular focus for donors because their successful establishment can become a marker for achievement across a range of indicators – regional integration, conflict reduction, improved development decision making. Although the MRC is a formal Track 1 process, national Ministries often feel disadvantaged as result of MRC’s easier access to funds. Their chief challenge, however, is to turn success at engaging countries regionally into changes in the nature of national policy and decision making which is where actual investment decision making takes place.

9.2 Political economies (and politics) matter

114. In any large river basin encompassing hundreds of millions of people across multiple states there is an inevitably complex social and economic environment. This includes the complex of economic development (growth, trade, labour movement, etc), social relations between geographically, sectorally and ethnically defined groups and in the different layers of formal and informal political power through which communities, local authorities and national governments effect change or respond to different pressures.
115. These environments constitute the wider political economies in which policy is shaped and implemented, where bargaining and negotiation take place – in a wider sense the ‘deliberation’ we speak of later in this evaluation – across public and private spheres on development actions, on inclusion or exclusion by different groups in processes, and how opinion formers frame debates and policy narratives.
116. Different interests can easily interpret regional, disembodied processes in ways that suit their political and political-economic purposes at a national level, particularly if

these initiatives do not present a strong public face and set of development goals and objectives related to specific actions.

117. Strengthening public engagement in these processes through a range of approaches, can include the media, establishing better understanding of national and regional development relations (including what drives trade between countries (or what barriers exist), how other economic and social transactions are shaping national and regional economies (e.g. labour movement between countries, either formal or informal) and how the wider regional process impacts on these issues. And, second, by strengthening links to policy (i.e. to the decisions being shaped by these political economies – and specifically with respect to agricultural investments and investments in large-scale infrastructure).

9.3 Understanding the ‘stakes’ of different institutions and individuals is critical

118. Institutions will seek engagement in regional processes if the actors involved are sufficiently convinced that there are either private or public outcomes that can result specifically in benefit either institutionally, individually or both. Examples from the Nile include the electric power generating authorities in upstream Nile states that have become powerful proponents of regional cooperation through the logic of power pooling through interconnections established between countries (Ethiopia-Sudan; Kenya-Ethiopia; Uganda-Kenya, under the NBI). The same applies to institutions involved in agriculture where river training and flood management are proposed under different regional processes, and to ministries of environment in relation to watershed protection.
119. Priority for engagement may be given to prestige investment projects rather than wider processes of communications and dialogue often under the rubric of ‘governance’. The promise of future investments may entice institutions to engage in ‘softer’ processes, but there is a danger that engagement is half-hearted and largely in expectation of other future benefits. Engaging key institutions often involves understanding their bottom line or ‘core business’, and mapping their ‘stakes’, rather than assuming interest. This kind of secondary stakeholder mapping was undertaken by the NBI and resulted in an online database that can be accessed across the initiative in which institutional interests and influence are mapped and scored.
120. A similar strategic approach could be replicated under SAWI through deliberative engagement and consultation processes across the region.

9.4 Lessons from civil society engagement

121. **Civil Society:** Key lessons have emerged from the Nile Basin Initiative, in particular, but also the M-POWER initiative in the Mekong Region. These are specific to how and why to accommodate civil society in deliberative processes about transboundary waters engagement and decision-making:

- a) The NBI did not set out to 'engage' with civil society and regional civil society did not set out to engage with the NBI. Instead, donors (the World Bank in particular) were concerned at the visible absence of civil society from processes of regional cooperation. The decision by donors that civil society should be more explicitly brought in led to financing institution-building in the Nile context under the Nile Basin Discourse. Set up as a regional network with a hub in Entebbe and national discourse 'forum' spokes, the NBD was hosted by the International Union for Conservation of Nature(IUCN) in order to give it a region-wide character. The result was that the Discourse quickly became 'projectised' by IUCN and its closest member and non-member partner and the eventual transition to a free-standing regional network with its own status and identity was a lengthy and at times painful one.
- b) The quality of national forums varied widely, in both staffing and output. These prevented a truly regional view on specific NBI activities emerging – and allowed criticism of the whole endeavour. There were, in short, a range of reputational risks involved which required top-down management, a result of which was ever-present tension between the regional 'hub' (and its donor reporting requirements) and national spokes (and their capacities and freedoms to work on issues of interest and relevance at a national level).
- c) There was also a difficult balance to be struck between strengthening the capacity of weaker civil society actors and selecting the most capable members (and member institutions) to help drive forward a work plan. This was exacerbated by early preference being given to environmental issues (and institutions) under IUCN's hosting of the programme. As a result, it there was a constant struggle to build more poverty-focused activities (and understanding) into the Discourse. Careful selection (and incentivising) of a broad range of civil society actors in regional processes is an important lesson to emerge.

122. Civil society is an intrinsic part of deliberation over future development of South Asia's transboundary river basins. The notion of civil society is deeply rooted in regional aid and development debates, and in many respects the capacity of civil society to advance ideas and increase policy space for debates on advancing cooperation surpasses that of government more generally.

123. The challenge for SAWI and for SAWI partners is how to harness and develop a relationship with civil society that: a) supports but does not direct thinking; and b) enables civil society to establish a broad range of engagement (across knowledge, policy debate, action and reaction), avoiding either gate-keeping by specific organisations and/or over-emphasis on specific areas of development within a basin or landscape (e.g. conservation at the expense of poverty reduction; rights at the expense of service provision).

124. There are two suggested routes to engagement of civil society, described as purposive and competitive. They are distinct, but not necessarily mutually exclusive. One may precede the other. Taking the purposive route – in effect established under the aegis of the Kathmandu meeting in September – a grouping of civil society organisations is selected and encouraged to submit proposals for support with criteria that incentivise work across international boundaries; this route involves

- identifying opportunities for future benefit sharing through improved transboundary water management.
125. The second, competitive route, establishes a system of tendering for support to civil society using a challenge fund. This would encourage (and fund) the highest quality proposals but would also be a lengthier process of management and selection and may result in a less cohesive approach. Whilst this could be devolved to a third party organisation from the region or working in the region, there would be other inherent risks involved including the dangers of 'clientelism' and sectoral bias. These could be overcome with appropriate oversight procedures.
126. Under the purposive route, and based on the output of the workshop held in Kathmandu, a lead NGO could be chosen from each country represented. These NGOs would receive funding to establish a small network of other NGOs in their countries working on transboundary issues. The overall focus would be on assisting civil society organisations to establish a 'charter group' across the region under which a form of 'track two' deliberation on key transboundary management issues could be established. There would be encouragement to begin this process through existing landscape/basin initiatives (Sundarbans, Kailash, Ganges, etc).
127. In the first year – and hosted by the lead NGOs in their respective countries – a series of dialogue meetings would take place, with a focus on deliberation around issues of influence (including filling knowledge gaps and establishing ways of influencing government at different levels). Funding for subsequent dialogue meetings would be dependent on the extent of engagement in transboundary processes and evidence of interest in increased engagement with government.
128. Towards the end of Year 1, these core NGOs would be expected to have drafted a regional 'Water Charter' on transboundary water resources governance. This document would form an important input into wider regional dialogue under the SAWI. Financing will be on the basis of a basic support fund to each lead CSO with further 'top-up' funding according to the size and complexity of their respective national environments.
129. Under the competitive route, a call would be announced for a lead NGO working regionally (preferably one based in a country of the region, rather than an international NGO) under which to take forward the process described above. This organisation would embark on the larger task of managing a regional budget, subcontracting national lead NGOs and overseeing the quality and depth of activities under a 'charter group'.
130. Under either option, an additional input could be provided by contracting an international partner organisation to support and help guide the process. This would require input over the year to work in the region with NGOs, particularly at a regional level, helping to facilitate meetings, support written outputs and ensure that the process continued to engage with wider regional dialogues and debates on transboundary issues.

10 Assessment against programme intentions (logframe)

131. In this final section of the review, the programme is assessed against its stated intentions, as set out in the revised programme logframe of February 2010.

10.1 Progress against goal level indicators

132. Indicators at the goal level were set over a 10 year period to 2018 and, therefore, were not expected to be realised by the end of the current phase. As will be seen below (Table 8), these targets remain valid.

Table 8. Assessment of Goal-level indicators

| | Indicators | Assessment |
|---------------------------------------|--|----------------------|
| Goal (10 years: Dec 2018) | To improve management of water within and between South Asian countries for the benefit of poor people today and to enable adaptation to climate change tomorrow | |
| | 1. Countries in South Asia cooperating at a regional level to invest in improving water management (Impact to be measured in terms of: number of people who are less vulnerable to floods and drought; increase in agricultural productivity; investment from MDBs and private sector being leveraged with progressive benefit sharing and environmental management models; and MW of hydropower in construction) | Premature to measure |
| | 2. Countries managing their own water resources more effectively and able to engage in regional cooperation | Premature to measure |

10.2 Progress against purpose level indicators

133. Considerable progress has been made at the purpose level, although the specified targets - as defined by the indicators - have only been partially reached (Table 9). However, these indicators do not reflect the overall progress and understanding

which was gained during Phase 1 of the programme and which provides a platform for Phase 2.

Table 9. Assessment of Purpose-level indicators

| | Indicators | Assessment |
|----------------|--|--|
| Purpose | To improve water resource management within and between South Asian countries | |
| | 1. Plans underway to improve water resource management within 3 countries involving some level of cooperation cross borders. | <p>This has not yet been achieved.</p> <p>However, there has been a degree of cooperation (and parallel action) between India and Bangladesh (two countries) over the Sundarbans.</p> |
| | 2. Partnerships built between governments and technical professionals fill priority knowledge gaps, deliver more capacity and build political will | <p>This has been achieved to some extent.</p> <p>Government representatives and technical professionals have met as part of the ADD - although this might better be described as a network rather than partnership - which will have contributed to building political will.</p> <p>Knowledge gaps, such as that addressed by the Ganges SBA, have been filled with the passive involvement of Governments and the active involvement of technical professionals commissioned by the Bank.</p> |

10.3 Progress against output level indicators

134. The programme consisted of three outputs for which achievable indicators are easier to define (Table 10). Broadly speaking, substantial progress has been made against all three outputs. Where results have not been fully realisable reflects the reality of the environment and the need for action by other stakeholders.

135. The main implementation delay relates to the establishment of the Knowledge Forum and Small Research Grants Scheme which has only become operational in 2011. Despite the delay, this programme has benefited from a rigorous review processes preceding the selection of research proposals which, in time, will result in higher quality research outputs.

Table 10. Assessment of Output indicators

| Output | Indicators | Assessment |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Output 1 | Dialogue and research builds a partnership for regional cooperation on water among the countries of the Greater Himalaya (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Nepal, Pakistan) | |
| Output 1.1 | Researchers across the region work together to deliver relevant and robust knowledge (e.g. costs of current water resource management and on current and potential water and weather data systems) | The Knowledge Forum (KF) and Small Research Grants Scheme (SRGS) have been slow in starting. A number of studies have recently been commissioned by the SRGS. These studies require researchers to come together across boundaries, but it is premature to regard this as building a partnership for regional cooperation. |
| Output 1.2 | Leading national figures from seven countries regularly engage in substantive debate of evidence produced by SAWI, stimulating increased national dialogue and trans-national dialogue | This has been achieved to some extent. As was noted earlier in the review, there are concerns regarding the current ADD membership represents 'leading national figures' and whether the debate is centred on SAWI evidence. Clearly the SBA and other commissioned studies will contribute to stimulating national dialogues. |
| Output 2 | Country governments understand risks and benefits of managing specific transboundary rivers, leading to dialogue on joint projects | |
| Output 2.1 | Robust studies identify risks and benefits of managing specific transboundary rivers (including economic, social and environmental risks and benefits) | This indicator has been achieved for the Ganges through the SBA. The study, especially as it challenges some deeply entrenched and longstanding "myths", will need to be disseminated and maybe replicated in order to ensure widespread acceptance as a robust study. |
| Output 2.2 | The knowledge being produced by SAWI is recognised and accepted by governments and civil society in the region | This has not yet happened. The Ganges SBA had not yet been released (Dec 2011). |
| Output 2.3 | National governments exploring potential joint projects (and developing models for progressive benefit sharing and environmental management) | This has been achieved around the Sundarbans between Indian and Bangladesh. |

| | | |
|-----------------|--|---|
| | | |
| Output 3 | Improved capacity and will of government bodies and wider stakeholders within countries to manage their water resources more effectively | |
| Output 3.1 | Technical assistance delivered by SAWI enables good practice in water resource management to influence position of national stakeholders, shifting the nature of the discourse on water. | This is been partially achieved. For example, the establishment of a National Ganges River Authority will change the nature of the discourse around water. Likewise, in some countries concerns about water and water management has been on-going for some time. However, there is little engagement between these discourses. |
| Output 3.2 | SAWI responds to demand from governments for skills and knowledge in water resource management (including transboundary, social, legal, environmental, economic) | The SBA could be deemed to be such a response, as is the contribution to the preparation of Bank investment programmes. |
| Output 3.3 | Countries developing projects with progressive approaches to stakeholder participation, benefit sharing and transboundary, dimensions | No evidence of this so far (maybe this emerging in the Sundarbans?) |

10.4 Assumptions and the theory of change

136. An implicit ‘theory of change’ can be partially constructed based on the development assumptions, linking the goal and purpose levels of the logical framework (Table 11). The main assumption relates to the generation of political will “through building trust and relationships, and developing the technical evidence base”. The review, in previous sections, challenges this assumption arguing that the experience from the programme and other similar schemes requires policy decisions to be more widely embedded in non-technical, political and social processes.

Table 11. Assessment of validity of assumptions

| Level | Assumption | Assessment |
|--|---|---|
| Development hypothesis (Linking Purpose to Goal) | Political will can be generated through building trust and relationships, and developing the technical evidence base over a sustained period of time. | These assumptions underlie the (implicit) theory of change for the programme. |
| | Political change, vested interests and so far intractable challenges can be resolved with new approaches. | These assumptions and the associated theory of change are challenged by the review, which questions whether technical solutions, however correct and appropriate, can be generated on the basis of technical knowledge, without being embedded and indeed emerging from national discourse and policy making processes. |
| | Major unexpected events do not trigger deterioration in national and international politics. | This assumption has broadly held true over the period of the programme and remains a risk for future phases |
| | MDTF investment is sufficient to begin addressing the goal meaningfully. | This assumption was broadly true. Activities roughly reflect the level of resources available. Additional staff resources in the Bank would have allowed national dialogues to be developed faster. |
| Implementation assumptions (Linking Outputs to Purpose) | Legacy of political tension and weak national and regional institutions can be overcome. | This assumption has not yet been challenged. The programme has (skillfully) avoided these legacies and has therefore built platforms for future engagement |
| | Sustained SAWI capacity to facilitate political and sensitive process, including outreach to wider civil society. | These assumptions have not been found to be valid. The “outreach” or dissemination approach has been changed in Phase 2 where programme activities are embedded in national processes. |
| | Bilateral donor diplomatic engagement by embassies is effective and sustained. | |

Annex 1. Key Evaluation criteria (extract from TORs)

The key questions to be addressed by the evaluation were as follows:

- a. Relevance (Extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor)
 - i. To what extent is water management an important issue for countries in the region? Should it be a higher or lower priority than it currently is?
 - ii. Are SAWI objectives and approaches framed to be relevant to this context (political, social, environmental and economic)?
 - iii. Is the intervention (theory of change) consistent with donors' aims and objectives?
 - iv. Are the original goals and scope still appropriate?
- b. Effectiveness (A measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives).
 - i. How well is the theory of change working? Do any further process issues need to be considered?
 - ii. Have the programme's governance structures worked well, and facilitated the achievement of objectives?
 - iii. Have the analytical frameworks and outputs (social, environmental, economic, climate change analysis) been of good quality?
 - iv. How successful has SAWI-1 been at influencing and framing debates, through: engagement strategies; the timing and approach to communications; use of political moments?
 - v. How effective is the current log-frame as a tool to: measure results (quantitative and qualitative); test assumptions of the programme; communicate ambition?
- c. Efficiency (Measures the outputs and outcomes -- qualitative and quantitative -- in relation to the inputs. It is an economic term which signifies that the aid uses the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired results)
 - i. Does the project represent good value for money^[4]?
 - ii. Could outcomes have been achieved in a more cost effective manner?
 - iii. Is the multi-donor trust fund an appropriate size of investment? What size should it be to respond efficiently to demand? What level of investment should be made through other instruments?
- d. Impact (The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended)

^[4] Defining value for money in a project of this kind is inherently difficult. It may be useful to look at a range of different measures, during upon National Audit Office guidance and DFID's "How to" note on Cost-Benefit Analysis.

- i. How far has SAWI-1 progressed down the results chain envisaged in the theory of change?
 - ii. Where has SAWI-1 added-value to existing processes?
 - iii. How have the donors/UK added value? How have donors complementary funding added value?
- e. Sustainability (Concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn. Interventions need to be environmentally and institutionally as well as financially sustainable. Any assessment of sustainability should cover the concept of ownership)
 - i. It was not envisaged that the SAWI-1 fora (e.g. Abu Dhabi Dialogue) would be sustainable within this time frame. Instead the evaluation could usefully consider:
 - ii. Sustainability of interest in the issue.
 - iii. Sustainability of impact of influence of the evidence and reframing of understanding.
 - iv. Sustainability of commitment to participation in the processes.
- f. Coverage (Which groups are included in/excluded from a programme, and the differential impact on those included and excluded. Related concepts include equity (including gender equity and disability) and social exclusion)
 - i. Has SAWI-1 engaged with the most relevant stakeholders, fora and processes?
 - ii. Which additional stakeholders should be considered for the second phase?
- g. Coherence and Coordination (Refers to the need to assess other policies and programmes which affect the intervention being evaluated, for example security, humanitarian, trade and military policies and programmes, as well as the intervention or policy itself)
 - i. Has SAWI-1 taken sufficient note of policies and programmes that affect the intervention (including those of both recipient and donor countries)?
 - ii. Are these the right stakeholders? Is SAWI-1 engaging in the right way.
 - iii. A quick assessment of harmonization with other aid agencies, and alignment with country priorities and systems

Annex 2. Programme logframe (revised to new format Feb, 2010)

| PROJECT NAME | The South Asia Water Initiative (SAWI): Jan 2009 – Dec 2011. | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|---|--|
| GOAL (10 years: Dec 2018) | Indicator | Baseline | Milestone Y3 | Target Y10 | Assumptions |
| To improve management of water within and between South Asian countries for the benefit of poor people today and to enable adaptation to climate change tomorrow | Countries in South Asia cooperating at a regional level to invest in improving water management (Impact to be measured in terms of: number of people who are less vulnerable to floods and drought; increase in agricultural productivity; investment from MDBs and private sector being leveraged with progressive benefit sharing and environmental management models; and MW of hydropower in construction) | Major water insecurity with natural scarcity and variability; weak management; increasing demand; climate change. Limited cooperation on water across borders: insufficient data sharing or joint investments to manage water variability. Floods and droughts having significant impact | 3 significant investment projects in development, with at least one involving cooperation between 2 or more countries. | Substantial investment at scale in regional water management (ie infrastructure, information, institutions) being underway in the three major river basins, reducing the impacts of climate change and reducing the vulnerability of the 700 million people living in these basins. | Political will can be generated through building trust and relationships, and developing the technical evidence base over a sustained period of time. Major unexpected events do not trigger deterioration in national and international politics. Political change, vested interests and so far intractable challenges can be resolved with new approaches. MDTF investment is sufficient to begin addressing the goal meaningfully. |
| | | Source(s) of Verification Project documentation including appraisals and baselines, SAWI studies and reports, media coverage, parliamentary, government and civil society statements | | | |
| | Indicator | Baseline | Milestone Y3 | Target Y10 | |
| | Countries managing their own water resources more effectively and able to engage in regional cooperation | Highly asymmetrical power relations. Existing knowledge and skills in the region are poorly used and are very limited. Media | Governments stronger and more confident in debates on water resources and in negotiations with other | A regional high level body institutionalised that leads on regional water resource | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| | (Impact to be measured in terms of: how far knowledge gap has been filled and how effectively stakeholders using knowledge; nature of negotiations between countries; degree to which regional body for water resource management formalised and nature of mandate; capacity in national water resource institutions) | reporting on water demonstrate highly polarised positions. | governments and private sector on investments, and working constructively with civil society | | management; supported by confident national institutions and leading to effective cooperation in the three major river basins. | |
| | | Source(s) of Verification | | Collected by | | |
| | | Media coverage, parliamentary, governmental and civil society statements; requests for support and analysis represent key areas of knowledge and skill development | | World Bank task team leaders with MDTF Development Partners. | | |

... continued

| PURPOSE (3 years: Dec 2011) | Indicator | Baseline | Milestone Y1 | Milestone Y2 | Target Y3 | Assumptions |
|---|---|--|--|--|---|---|
| To improve water resource management within and between South Asian countries | Plans underway to improve water resource management within 3 countries involving some level of cooperation cross borders. | Projects prepared with limited attention to stakeholder participation, benefit sharing or transboundary dimensions. Existing cooperation limited to bilateral treaties that focus on water quantity not benefits with highly asymmetrical power relations. | Technical assistance and studies deepening commitment in government and civil society to a regional approach, with emerging understanding of priority investments. | Options for investments agreed and progressive approaches to benefit sharing and environmental management agreed. | 3 investments for improved management of South Asia’s transboundary rivers underway that have been leveraged by SAWI funds. And in at least one, involving cooperation between 2 or more countries. | Legacy of political tension and weak national and regional institutions can be overcome. |
| | | Source(s) of Verification | | | Collected by | |
| | | Project documentation, including Project Concept Notes. Media coverage, government and civil society statements. | | | World Bank task leaders, with MDTF Development Partners | |
| | Indicator | Baseline | Milestone Y1 | Milestone Y2 | Target Y3 | Sustained SAWI capacity to facilitate political and sensitive process, including outreach to wider civil society. Bilateral donor diplomatic engagement by embassies is effective and sustained. |
| | Partnerships built between governments and technical professionals fill priority knowledge gaps, deliver more capacity and build political will | Critical watersheds characterised by very limited cooperation to build knowledge base; limited capacity in region poorly used; highly polarised political positions and asymmetrical power relations. | Countries identifying key skill, knowledge and capacity gaps e.g. for integrated river basin planning | Priority skill, knowledge and capacity gaps filled, and influencing nature of debate and of planning and management by government. | Governments stronger and more confident in debates on water resources; in negotiations with other governments and private sector on investments and working constructively with civil society | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|---|--|--|
| | | | | | | |
| | | Source(s) of Verification | | Collected by | | |
| | | Reports on training activities, workshops and study tours and requests for support and analysis, representing key areas of knowledge and skill development. Abu Dhabi Knowledge Forum Annual Reports, meeting minutes and funded research products. Media coverage, government and civil society statements | | World Bank task leaders, with MDTF Development Partners | | |

... continued

| OUTPUT 1 | | Indicator | Baseline | Milestone Y1 | Milestone Y2 | Target Y3 | Risks |
|---|--|---|--|--|--|--|-------|
| <div><div>IMPACT WEIGHTING</div><div>30%</div></div> <p>Dialogue and research builds a partnership for regional cooperation on water among the countries of the Greater Himalaya (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Nepal, Pakistan)</p> | Researchers across the region work together to deliver relevant and robust knowledge (e.g. costs of current water resource management and on current and potential water and weather data systems) | Very limited knowledge sharing across national borders, including insufficient data collection and sharing, joint research, and exchange of practical experience. | New knowledge partnerships between institutions across region established; funds disbursed for: collaborative research, data sharing, and experience exchange. | Knowledge partnerships generating relevant and credible results; joint research, data sharing and operational exchange underway. | Credible Knowledge Partnerships institutionalised that: are closing priority knowledge gaps with relevant and robust analysis; developing a coordinated architecture for weather and river data collection and management. | Historical barriers to international cooperation between knowledge institutions prove difficult to overcome, limiting uptake of funds for inter-country collaboration. | |
| | | Source(s) of Verification | | | Collected by | | |
| | | Abu Dhabi Knowledge Forum Annual Reports, meeting minutes and funded research products. | | | World Bank task leaders, with MDTF Development Partners | | |
| | Indicator | Baseline | Milestone Y1 | Milestone Y2 | Target Y3 | Risks | |
| | Leading national figures from seven countries regularly engage in substantive debate of evidence produced by SAWI, stimulating increased national dialogue and trans-national dialogue | Most important watershed globally, characterized by very limited of understanding of hydrological futures due to political tension and lack of cooperation. Existing cooperation limited to bilateral treaties focused on sharing water and not | Abu Dhabi Dialogue Group maintained, agrees mechanisms for Knowledge Partnerships and guiding priority setting for research and analysis. | Abu Dhabi Dialogue Group is maintained; guiding delivery, dissemination and debate of analytical work; and seeking greater political engagement. | Abu Dhabi Dialogue Group articulating vision and demand to their national governments for cooperative partnership of states to manage water resources. | Regional politics historically unstable and remains so. Progress on water and climate may be undermined by being closely linked to broader regional political economy. | |

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| | | benefits. | | | | Political risks may jeopardize institutionalising cooperation, currently promoted by effective but still informal dialogue. |
| | | Source(s) of Verification | | Collected by | | |
| | | Minutes and participants list of Abu Dhabi Dialogue Group’sinformal meetings and 4 th , 5 th and 6 th Dialogues;minutes of country-level consultations; media coverage, parliamentary statements, government policy positions. | | World Bank task leaders, with MDTF Development Partners | | |
| TOTAL INPUTS | DFID (FTEs) | DFID (£ (\$)) | AusAID (\$) | | MDTF (\$) | |
| | 0.2 | £ 0.63 (\$ 0.94) m | \$ 0.56 million | | \$ 1.5 million | |

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| OUTPUT 2 | | Indicator | Baseline | Milestone Y1 | Milestone Y2 | Target Y3 | Risks |
|-------------------------|-----|--|---|--|---|---|---|
| IMPACT WEIGHTING | 30% | Robust studies identify risks and benefits of managing specific transboundary rivers (including economic, social and environmental risks and benefits) | Insufficient data collection and sharing, joint research or exchange of experience. No cross border analysis and modelling of scenarios in water management and climate change. | Structured methodology and approach agreed and discussed with key stakeholders. Models and datasets constructed. | Models initial results analysed. Preliminary analysis delivered to and debated with key stakeholders. | Models completed, with wider debate of the issues emerging from the analysis, leading to improved understanding of the risks and opportunities. | Political tensions result in insufficient participation of governments. Difficulty in reaching consensus among key stakeholders on methodology, assumptions and selected scenarios. |
| | | | Source(s) of Verification | | Collected by | | World Bank task leaders, with MDTF Development Partners. |
| | | | Analytical outputs developed under Basin Assessments and peer reviewed; minutes from meetings with key stakeholders; analysis accepted/published in peer reviewed journals. | | | | |
| | | Indicator | Baseline | Milestone Y1 | Milestone Y2 | Target Y3 | Risks |
| | | The knowledge being produced by SAWI is recognised and accepted by governments and civil society in the region | Stakeholders developing positions based on poor evidence and political positions and so highly polarised, contested debate. | (N/A) | Governments and civil society constructively debating preliminary analysis and identifying areas for further research | Governments and civil society using analysis in national and regional dialogue, leading to shared understanding of the risks and opportunities. | Key stakeholders using concern over assumptions, methods and limited data to undermine any recommendations that challenge their positions. Political tensions result in insufficient participation of governments. |
| | | | Source(s) of Verification | | Collected by | | World Bank task leaders, with MDTF |
| | | | Media coverage; reports from strategic | | | | |

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| | | communications strategy; governments and civil society statements, particularly key NGOs covering indigenous people's rights, water and climate change. | | Development Partners. | | |
| | Indicator | Baseline | Milestone Y1 | Milestone Y2 | Target Y3 | Risks |
| | National governments exploring potential joint projects (and developing models for progressive benefit sharing and environmental management) | Only bilateral agreements over water sharing with limited outputs, often unpopular. Limited data sharing on Indus and Ganges and largely restricted to between governments, little access for researchers. Contribution of bilateral agreements to water management marginal. | Governments agree need for more collaboration – support exploring a regional project | Concept note drafted and developed through consultation with interested countries in region. | Two or more countries agree to participate as first entrants to regional project and design started. | Political tensions result in insufficient participation of governments. Investments stalled due to highly sensitive transboundary implications |
| | | Source(s) of Verification | | Collected by | | |
| | | SAWI progress reports. Abu Dhabi Dialogue meeting minutes. DFID advisers discussions with country stakeholders and donor observation of Abu Dhabi Dialogue meetings. | | World Bank task leaders, with MDTF Development Partners. | | |
| TOTAL INPUTS | DFID (FTEs) | DFID (£) | AusAID (\$) | | MDTF (\$) | |
| | 0.2 | £ 0.63 (\$ 0.94) m | \$ 0.56 million | | \$ 1.5 million | |

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| OUTPUT 3 | | Indicator | Baseline | Milestone Y1 | Milestone Y2 | Target Y3 | Risks |
|---|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| IMPACT WEIGHTING | 40% | Technical assistance delivered by SAWI enables good practice in water resource management to influence position of national stakeholders, shifting the nature of the discourse on water. | National stakeholders hold polarised positions on approaches and on specific projects (e.g. building of Baglihar dam by India upstream of Pakistan). NGOs lobbying against specific river developments. | Good practice in water resource management being articulated by stakeholders in at least 2 countries | Good practice in water resource management being articulated by a wider range of stakeholders in at least 3 countries | National discourse around water demonstrating support for progressive water resource management in at least 2 countries | Stakeholders’ polarised positions in water entrenched [due to political affiliation]. |
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| Improved capacity and will of government bodies and wider stakeholders within countries to manage their water resources more effectively. | | | Source(s) of Verification | | Collected by | | |
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| | | Indicator | Baseline | Milestone Y1 | Milestone Y2 | Target Y3 | Risks |
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| | | SAWI responds to demand from governments for skills and knowledge in water resource management (including transboundary, social, legal, environmental, economic) | Weak national institutional frameworks for water management in country or between. Existing (if limited) technical skills in | Specific support to national agencies and experts delivered in at least 2 countries, through training, workshops and study tours. | Support extended to at least an additional 2 countries. | Strengthened institutions in 4 countries are intelligent customers of water management and development | Political barriers and inadequate incentives for institutional reform. Leakage of capacity from targeted institutions. |
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| | | water resource management ineffectively used by national institutions. | | | tools, drawing on knowledge and tools to develop better water resource management plans. | |
| | | Source(s) of Verification | | Collected by | | |
| | | Reports on training activities, workshops and study tours and requests for support and analysis, representing key areas of knowledge and skill development (eg governments using river basin models in own planning and project development). | | World Bank task leaders, with MDTF Development Partners | | |
| | Indicator | Baseline | Milestone Y1 | Milestone Y2 | Target Y3 | Risks |
| | Countries developing projects with progressive approaches to stakeholder participation, benefit sharing and transboundary, dimensions | Projects prepared with limited attention to institutional, stakeholder participation, benefit sharing and transboundary, dimensions. | TA and project preparation underway in at least 2 countries through an inclusive process, proactively engaging vulnerable communities. | Support extended to at least an additional 2 countries involving an inclusive process, proactively engaging vulnerable communities. | 2 investments for improved management of South Asia’s transboundary rivers underway, leveraged by SAWI funds. | Sovereign investments are stalled due to sensitive transboundary implications. |
| | | Source(s) of Verification | | Collected by | | |
| | | Project documentation, including Project Concept Notes. | | World Bank task leaders, with MDTF Development Partners | | |
| INPUTS | DFID (FTEs) | DFID (£) | AusAid (\$) | | MDTF (\$) | |

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|--|-----|--------------------|-----------------|--|--------------|--|
| | 0.3 | £ 0.84 (\$ 1.26) m | \$ 0.74 million | | \$ 2 million | |
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Annex 3. Documents received and reviewed

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| SAWI Trust Fund Committee Meeting, Kathmandu, Nepal November 24, 2008 - Minutes | World Bank | 2008 | Final |
| SAWI Multi Donor Trust Fund Committee 3rd Annual Meeting Dhulikhel, Nepal Sept 28-29, 2010 Minutes | World Bank | 2010 | Final |
| SAWI Multi Donor Trust Fund Committee Mid-Year Review Meeting March 14, 2011 | World Bank | 2011 | Final |
| South Asia Water Initiative (SAWI) Update of Activities as of April 2009 | World Bank | 2009 | Final |
| Matrix of actions to further improve SAWI performance in relation to partners' expectations | DFID? | Unknown | With comments |
| SAWI 2009 – Deliverables to June 2010 | World Bank | 2009 | With Comments |
| Quality at Implementation Report for South Asia Water Initiative | AusAID | February 2010 | Final |
| Quality at Implementation Report for South Asia Water Initiative | AusAID | February 2011 | Final |
| Revised Logical Framework: The South Asia Water Initiative (SAWI): Jan 2009 – Dec 2011. | DFID | February 2010 | Final |
| First Conference on South Asia Water Cooperation: Participants List | International Institute for Strategic Studies | September 2006 | Final |
| The 2nd Abu Dhabi Dialogue Rivers of the Greater Himalayas: July 1-3, 2007, Shangri-La Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand: Participants List | World Bank | July 2007 | Final |
| The 3rd Abu Dhabi Dialogue Rivers of the Greater Himalayas: Moving Towards a Cooperative Knowledge-based Partnership 23-25 June 2008 Singapore: List of Participants | World Bank | June 2008 | Final |
| The 4th Abu Dhabi Dialogue Rivers of the Greater Himalayas: Practical Steps to Achieving a Knowledge-Based Partnership of States October 22-23, 2009, Abu Dhabi: Summary of the Dialogue | World Bank | December 2009 | Final |
| The 5th Abu Dhabi Dialogue December 15-16, 2010, Bangkok: Summary of the Dialogue | World Bank | December 2010 | Final |
| Updated Concept Note: Regional Cooperation Dialogue on the Rivers of Greater Himalayas (The "Abu Dhabi Dialogue") | World Bank | January 2010 | Final |
| Presentation: SAWI Financial Management | World Bank | September 2010 | Final |
| Presentation: SAWI Financial Management | World Bank | March 2011 | Final |
| Notes on the December 17th SAWI meeting | Sadoff, C, | December | Email |

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| | World Bank | 2010 | |
| Abu Dhabi Dialogue Knowledge Forum Small Grants Program Launch Workshop March 2-3, 2011, Kathmandu: Report of Workshop | Unknown (World Bank?) | March 2011 | Draft |
| Ganges Strategic Basin Assessment: A Regional Perspective on Risks and Opportunities | World Bank | June 2011 | Draft |
| ADD-KF Small Grants Program Sub-Grant Agreement Format | ICIMOD | 2011 | Final Draft |
| Draft Communication Note on the Launch of the Ganges SBA Report | World Bank | Unknown | Draft |
| Ganges SBA Stakeholder Analysis | World Bank | June 2011 | Incomplete |
| Water Resources and Climate Change NLTA – Draft Final Report | World Bank | February 2011 | Draft |
| Bangladesh Climate Change Adaptation, Biodiversity Conservation and Socio-Economic Sustainable Development for the Sundarbans Area of Bangladesh: Concept Note | World Bank | Unknown | Final |
| Bangladesh Climate Change Adaptation, Biodiversity Conservation & Sustainable Socio-Economic Development of the Sundarbans Area: Non-Lending Technical Assistance - Aide Memoire | World Bank | 2010 | Final |
| USAID's Programs in the Sundarbans Landscape | USAID | Unknown | Final |
| Regional Program for the Sundarbans of Bangladesh and India | Unknown | Unknown | Draft |
| Programme Overview - Kailash Sacred Landscape Conservation Initiative A Regional Programme of Collaboration between China, India, and Nepal | ICIMOD | July 2011 | As submitted to DFID |
| Programme Proposal - Kailash Sacred Landscape Conservation Initiative - Regional Collaboration and Participatory Ecosystem Management for Conservation and Sustainable Development in the Kailash Sacred Landscape of China, India, and Nepal | ICIMOD | Unknown | Draft |