



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Securing Water for Lives and Livelihoods

USAID Sustainable Water Partnership
Annual Report 2017 - 2018

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CHAPTER 1: THE USAID SUSTAINABLE WATER PARTNERSHIP

Message from the project director

In December 2015, I moved to Ethiopia to start the USAID-funded Lowland WASH activity. This much needed activity focused on improving access to drinking water and sanitation in the rural areas of east and south Ethiopia, where extreme poverty has been exacerbated by droughts.

This activity devoted half of its large water construction budget to rehabilitating inoperative water systems. This means replacing existing pumps and generators that had failed, whether due to poor operations and maintenance or simply aging.

While waiting for their water systems to be “resurrected,” most impacted rural communities had reverted to drinking from unsafe water sources. These communities lacked not only awareness of clean water’s health benefits, but also the economic capacity to cover more than pumping costs in order to fund maintenance and depreciation costs to replace critical equipment.

From a funding perspective, it felt a bit like “pouring water in a leaking bucket.” Yes, we are saving lives, but who will return in another three to eight years to replace these pumps and generators again? From a development perspective, it felt like stopping halfway through; most of these rural communities rely on agriculture or livestock with water as the key input and access to water as the key constraint. Harnessing water for drinking does save lives, but without water supply for other agricultural uses and to support livelihoods, those lives are not sustainably saved.

In the same lowland areas, some shallow wells had dried up due to lowering of groundwater tables, dry spells, or more frequently, due to new deeper groundwater pumping for commercial farms. Simply drilling deeper boreholes or creating larger water systems felt again like a local and short-term solution to a larger and longer-term management issue.



How to
sustainably
save lives?

It is evidence that water is life. But beyond the immediate need for water to hydrate us, there are other essential and often competing water needs. Agriculture requires water to feed the world. Economic activities need it to produce goods and services. Our natural environment needs water to provide essential (but often forgotten) ecosystem services: providing food and raw materials; fostering the water, air, and nutrient cycles; mitigating extreme events such as floods and droughts; and supporting sociocultural, therapeutic and recreational activities.

Today, population growth and economic development are intensifying the pressure on water resources, both directly through our increasing needs and indirectly through wastewater and land use changes. Climate change is further exacerbating that pressure by increasing the availability of weather patterns while also impacting the recurrence and magnitude of extreme events.

While water management has long focused on engineering solutions to harness and supply more water, a more comprehensive approach is now necessary, especially in "closed" river basins where demands for water have already outpaced availability. Those demands must now be managed as well, through a combination of improved water use behaviors and practices from technical, managerial, institutional, socioeconomic and environmental perspectives.

The U.S. Government has acknowledged water insecurity as a contributing factor to instability and state failure, stating: "Water problems will hinder the ability of countries to produce food, generate energy, posing a risk to global food markets and hobbling economic growth." [Global Water Security Paper, US Office of Director of National Intelligence, 2012]. Last year, USAID issued its Water and Development Plan as part of the US Government's first ever Global Water Strategy. The Plan directly supports three of the Strategy's interconnected strategic objectives to address water risks:

- Increasing sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation services, and the adoption of key hygiene behaviors;
- Encouraging the sound management and protection of freshwater resources; and
- Strengthening water sector governance, financing, and institutions.

The Sustainable Water Partnership (SWP), a flagship global water security program funded by USAID, has been designed to directly address these issues, providing thought leadership and field-based solutions for host country governments and local stakeholders to improve their water security. The program also advises and guides USAID Offices and Missions in the planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of their water security activities.

Below is our first annual report which describes our achievements and the lessons we have learned so far through the implementation of SWP. Our experiences continue to inform our work to secure water for lives and livelihoods around the world.



Eric Viala, SWP Project Director

"Our vision is a water secure world, where people have sustainable supplies of water of sufficient quantity and quality to meet human, economic, and ecosystem needs while managing risks from floods and droughts."



Our impact

- Six methodological **toolkits** to guide water security programming (over 1500 engagements)
- Over 1,300 people trained on tools, approaches and methods for water security
- Three on-the-ground activities in Cambodia, Kenya/Tanzania, and Nepal
- Six co-implementation partnerships signed with non-USAID activities
- \$950,000 of new funding mobilized to the water and sanitation sectors
- Water security capacity building for 16 USAID implementers
- Contribution to two new water security indicators for USAID
- Over 700 subscribers to SWP monthly newsletter, half being USAID staff

Over the life of the project, SWP expects to improve water security for over 1,000,000 people and substantially increase access to water and sanitation for 50,000 people.

 **Michael McClain** @Prof_McClain · Sep 8
An expression by **@JMKamanga** (TZ Minister responsible for the Environment and the Union) of both concern and willingness to work together with #Kenya in the sustainable development of water resources of #MaraRiver. The platform provided by @EAC_LVBC, @nbiweb and @SwpWater can help!

 **January Makamba** @JMKamanga
Nyumbu huvuka hapa. Mto Mara, unaoanzia Kenya, ni mhimili wa Hifadhi ya Serengeti. Kulikuwa na taarifa za mipango ya Kenya kujenga mabwawa. Tilituma timu ya wataalam kufuatilia. Tuna Protocol ya Mto Mara, pia...

 **Mark Green** Retweeted
USAID @USAID · Aug 29
As a child, Gordon observed how disruptive floods were to his peaceful village. He wanted to solve the problem. So he became a #water engineer. His story: winrock.org/the-river-below... #WWWeek @USAIDKenya @WinrockIntl

 **The river belongs to the people.**



CHAPTER 2: THE NEED FOR IMPROVED GLOBAL WATER SECURITY

Why It Is Important – The Challenge of Sustainable Access to Water

Our Planet is experiencing unprecedented pressure and degradation due to population growth, rising living standards, urbanization and increased demand for food and energy – all of which are affecting the availability, quality, safe use and resilience of water resources. Climate change exacerbates these demands by intensifying and accelerating the hydrological cycle, altering the frequency and intensity of precipitation, and increasing the severity of extreme events. *These growing risks necessitate integrated solutions to water challenges that cut across sectors and scales.*

Over the past two years, SWP has been building capacity and implementing solutions to improve water security by engaging USAID staff, host country governments and local stakeholders to integrate water security considerations and approaches into improved program design, assessment, planning and implementation. These activities will mitigate water risks and enhance development gains across sectors, including Water and Sanitation for Health (WASH), agriculture and food security, climate change, health, and democracy and governance.

What is Water Security?

SWP defines water security as “the adaptive capacity to safeguard the sustainable availability of, access to, and safe use of an adequate, reliable and resilient quantity and quality of water for health, livelihoods, ecosystems and productive economies.”

Water security addresses a variety of needs:

- Satisfying drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene requirements;
- Supporting productive economies in agriculture, industry, and energy;
- Ensuring healthy rivers and ecosystems;
- Preventing or mitigating water-related disasters; and
- Building resilient communities that can adapt to change.



Improving water security is essentially about satisfying these needs while coping with risks (both long-term trends or stressors and sudden events or shocks) through activities that support and enhance water availability, access and safe use.

- **Availability** refers to sufficient quantities of water from surface and/or ground resources now and in the future, within the context of climate variability and change.
- **Access** includes consideration of natural and man-made means to mobilize, store, convey, supply, regulate and conserve water. It also involves issues ranging from water allocation, quality, rights and pricing to infrastructure management and service delivery.
- **Safe use** has three interrelated elements: adequacy (for the quality needs of all users, including ecosystems); reliability (predictability/consistency over time); and resilience (ability of human and natural systems to withstand, recover from, and/or adapt to water risks, foreseeable stressors and unpredictable shocks).

WATER RISK ASSESSMENT



The SWP Water Security Improvement (WSI) Process

The WSI process builds on eight essential practices:

- We focus on **priority water risks** in a defined geographic and technical and temporal space.
- We **engage and mobilize water users** as the actors that affect water resources.
- We employ a "**systems thinking**" approach to address causes, not just symptoms.
- We acknowledge **uncertainties** about information, science, climate change and variability, and human behaviors to ensure comprehensive solutions.
- We **negotiate integrated actions** that distribute tangible benefits to water users, notably women and marginalized groups.
- We design **science- and fact-based solutions** through a combination of infrastructure development, watershed management, behavior change and institutional improvements.
- We build **adaptive management** capacities of institutions and communities to improve resilience to stresses and shocks.
- We ensure **sustainability** through economic efficiency, environmental soundness and social equity.

Improving water security involves a series of steps that helps build the capacity of stakeholders to better assess, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate activities that mitigate priority water-related risks in a specific geographic area, such as a basin, sub-basin or catchment. During the first year of the program, as part of our six-part toolkit series on water security, SWP defined key steps in a **Water Security Improvement (WSI) process**:



Confirm and initiate to ensure stakeholder demand and feasibility for water security activities, as well as governmental buy-in and financial support for the process



Define Scope and Scale of the WSI space by identifying the actors and the focus (geographic area, key water risks, and time scale)



Assess the situation by conducting technical, management/socioeconomic and risk assessments to understand current and future water security conditions



Plan by defining, analyzing, comparing and selecting relevant water activities and **secure financing** for implementation



Implement activities that target the priority water risks and provide tangible benefits to water users



Monitor, Evaluate and Adapt to track the progress and performance of implementation, adjusting activities as needed

- REPEAT, DISSEMINATE, SCALE UP -



Improving water security must be a cross-sectoral theme. Development strategies and investments that ignore water security usually fall short of their objectives when water issues and conflicts undermine political and social cohesion, supply and value chains, public and environmental health, and service delivery and infrastructure operation. These steps and the corresponding toolkits help break down these barriers by creating a streamlined process that can be customized for any entity aiming to improve water security in their region.





CHAPTER 3: WHAT SWP DOES

Over the past two years, SWP has carried out USAID Mission support activities (like capacity building and strategic assessments to help prioritize water security investments), implemented field-based pilot activities, created partnerships for leveraging resources to implement action plans, and managed and shared knowledge around best practices and lessons learned. This chapter summarizes current and completed SWP activities under each of these objectives.

USAID Mission Support

SWP is providing support to USAID Missions and operating units worldwide through capacity building and technical assistance on assessing, planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating activities to increase resilience to water security risks. These activities included developing technical guidance toolkits, conducting water risk assessments and specific country-level support to the USAID/Nepal, Southern Africa and Pakistan Missions.

NEPAL

Over the past several years, USAID Missions have been encouraged to achieve greater development impacts by focusing on specific geographies within each country and integrating their activities across sectors and themes. Water in particular is a growing area of interest for USAID Missions to foster improved cross-sectoral integration and achieve greater development results.

While the Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) can adequately define geographic focus, integrating activities over different offices within a Mission has proven challenging due to the cadence of the program cycle within and across offices and sometimes unpredictable funding.

To directly address this issue, SWP was called upon by USAID/Nepal's Social, Environmental and Economic Development (SEED) Office to facilitate the integration of ongoing programmatic activities across their wide



portfolio of water access and management, natural resources management and biodiversity conservation, and food security/agricultural development projects. USAID/Nepal appropriately identified water security as a unifying theme to address their overall Development Objective of "Inclusive and sustainable economic growth to reduce extreme poverty."

Focusing on two watersheds in western Nepal, Rangun Khola and the lower Karnali, SWP first conducted an inventory and review of water-related interventions being carried out by over 12 relevant USAID activities. SWP then facilitated a brainstorming session among USAID/Nepal and implementing partners to identify integration themes and define integration activities to be carried out by two or more partners.

Integration themes focused on access to and use of water information, water disaster risk reduction, water infrastructure, efficient water use, water source protection, water governance, and gender and social equity in water management. SWP then translated these themes into over thirty specific interventions, detailed into two watershed integration plans. Now, SWP is assisting partners in their joint implementation, providing technical advice, monitoring progress, and facilitating regular coordination and learning workshops.

SWP can replicate the strategic advice and integration support it provides to USAID/Nepal with other USAID Missions, helping them inform their next CDCS and integrate water security issues across Offices and/or sectors.

Water security is an integrating theme for "Inclusive and sustainable economic growth to reduce extreme poverty."

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SWP is coordinating the Big Data Analytics and Transboundary Water Collaboration for Southern Africa. This public-private research program enhances data availability and utilization to support transboundary water management in the Southern Africa region. Through four research grants, the partnership seeks to enhance current understanding of shared groundwater resources; improve transboundary ground water management and collaboration; and provide big data skills development, capacity building and networking opportunities for Southern African researchers and their students.

The Collaboration involves three USAID entities: the Global Development Lab, the Water Office and the Southern African Mission. USAID has partnered with the Department of Science and Technology of the Government of South Africa (DST), the Groundwater Management Institute of the Southern African Development Community (SADC-GMI), the IBM Africa Research Lab and the U.S. Geological Survey to provide financial and technical support to four projects aiming at merging research in Transboundary Water and Big Data. The research grants are managed by the Water Research Commission of South Africa, considered the implementing agency.

As the partnership's coordinator, SWP helps to facilitate collaboration, allowing the partners to reach consensus on critical issues influencing timely, consistent and effective implementation. SWP also supports the organization of joint events and established a Community of Practice in Southern Africa on Transboundary Water Management and Big Data.



After a few months of coordination, SWP has ensured a timely launch of the Call for Research Proposals. This included the organization of one dedicated event, hosted at the IBM Africa Office in Johannesburg (RSA), and participation in two events organized by the DST to showcase funding opportunities.

The official launch of the program, scheduled for early 2019, will coincide with the first technical workshop with the awarded institutions. This is expected to be a high-profile event, with representatives from other programs and regional research and funding institutions.

PAKISTAN

USAID/Pakistan requested SWP's technical assistance in conducting a water governance assessment on their recent government-to-government contribution of \$140 million for the completion of the Gomal Zam Dam and associated hydropower, irrigation infrastructure and command area development.

Adopting a holistic water security vision, SWP determined that some benefits had been achieved by ensuring year-round irrigation in large areas downstream of the dam. However, delays in developing the command area and in implementing accompanying capacity-building activities (such as establishing water user associations (WUAs), and supporting livestock management, crop diversification, horticulture, and value chain development) were preventing the full realization of most envisioned targets. These were due to a lack of technical, coordination and institutional capacities among the implementing counterpart organizations, as well as inherent limitations of the direct government-to-government support mechanism.

SWP convened a provincial-level stakeholder workshop to present these findings; propose immediate, medium and long-term actions to operationalize the command area; and make recommendations for improved planning, design, procurement, implementation, and M&E of future similar investments.

SWP also proposed the facilitation, support and institutionalization of a provincial level dialogue on agricultural water management and governance to achieve higher water productivity and sustainability.

WATER SECURITY FOR RESILIENCE TRAINING (BANGKOK)

In May 2017, USAID carried out a four-day training course in Bangkok, Thailand on "Water Security and Resilience." Over 20 USAID staff participated in the training. The course had four objectives:

1. Introduce water security concepts and the global context, including threats and vulnerabilities to current and future water security.
2. Increase familiarity with tools and approaches that can facilitate water security assessment, planning and implementation.
3. Develop water security programming that meets USAID's institutional and legal requirements in the water, agriculture and environmental sectors; and
4. Communicate the relationship and importance of water security to development and Agency objectives.

SWP provided USAID with support in developing content and materials for the training course led a session on "Water Security Analysis and Decision-Making" and helped to organize a field visit to the Hydro and Agro Informatics Institute.





Field Implementation

SWP has designed two field-based pilot activities now being implemented in Cambodia's Stung Chinit watershed and the transboundary Mara River Basin in Kenya and Tanzania. These activities demonstrate the process and scope of water security assessment, planning and implementation measures needed to achieve tangible outcomes for increased resilience to water security risk.

STUNG CHINIT BASIN (CAMBODIA)

The Stung Chinit River, located primarily in Cambodia's Kampong Thom Province, is a major tributary of the Tonle Sap Lake, the country's largest and most important lake both in terms of economy and water supply. The river itself is around 260 kilometers long, merging downstream with the Tonle Sap River. Its watershed is approximately 8,000 square kilometers in size.

Water security is of key importance for the people living in this area of central Cambodia. With a population that is growing by two percent annually, the watershed's communities are putting increasing stress on the landscape and its water resources. Land use changes in the watershed have resulted in the loss of 30 percent of its forests between 2000 and 2015, with the vast majority of those forests being converted into cropland or plantations. Cropland in the Stung Chinit is most commonly devoted to rice farming (90 percent of agricultural land), and a dozen irrigation schemes operate along the Stung Chinit river. A reservoir was built ten years ago, to allow for dry season rice farming over about 2000 hectares.

The watershed's communities are putting increasing stress on the landscape and its water resources.

SWP is implementing a stakeholder-driven water security improvement process that has so far:

- Identified and engaged 40 local leaders from farming, fishing and forestry communities along with provincial authorities.
- Conducted a multi-disciplinary assessment including: a stakeholder inventory and analysis, a water quality testing campaign, a household Knowledge Attitudes Practices survey, a biodiversity assessment, and a land use change and water balance study.
- Acknowledged and prioritized four key water risks (access to drinking water and sanitation, agricultural pollution, environmental impacts from upstream land concessions, and irrigation allocation), and formed four working groups to develop and implement actions to mitigate those risks.
- Partnered with [Water.org](#) to provide over 35,000 people with microloans for building their own piped water connections and latrines.
- Developed a basin hydrological model using the WEAP decision support system to better understand the future magnitude and occurrence of floods and droughts.
- Initiated the process of establishing a River Basin Management Committee to provide a sustainable transparent platform for water management at watershed level.





MARA BASIN (KENYA/TANZANIA)

Originating from the Mau Escarpment in Kenya's Rift valley, the transboundary Mara River covers approximately 13,750 square kilometers (of which 65 percent is in Kenya and 35 percent is in Tanzania). The Mara River Basin (MRB) holds global conservation significance and economic importance at local, national and regional levels, providing critical water and ecosystem services for people, livelihoods, wildlife and livestock in Kenya and Tanzania. Growing risks are affecting water availability and quality in the MRB and, in turn, threatening development and conservation gains. Human population in the MRB is growing at an annual rate of more than three percent, and the river is the primary domestic water source for rapidly growing towns and settlements. Land use change, due to growing agricultural land use, is affecting the basic hydrology and ecosystem functions and potential of the MRB, impacting both seasonal availability of water and water quality. Water pollution caused by unregulated wastewater discharge from urban centers, industrial centers, hospitals and agricultural activities is contaminating surface and groundwater supplies, potentially hampering access to WASH services, negatively impacting health, livelihoods and overall development outcomes.

SWP's three-year activity in the MRB is implementing strategic interventions at the transboundary, national and sub-catchment levels to address these critical risks and improve water security. SWP's activity strategically builds on past and current USAID investments in the Mara (in particular USAID/Kenya and East Africa's PREPARED Program) to directly support the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Joint Water Resources Management in the Mara Basin, which was recently signed by the Governments of Kenya and Tanzania. Throughout our activities, we are working with key governance institutions in the Mara, including the Lake Victoria Basin Commission, Ministries of Water in Kenya and Tanzania, Basin Water Boards, Water Resource User Associations (WRUAs), Narok Water and Sewerage Company, Bomet Water Company, and Kericho Water and Sanitation Company.

The health of
the Mara is
at stake

SWP's activity in the Mara improves water security at transboundary, regional and local levels and has so far:

- Advised Tanzania's Ministry of Water and Irrigation to develop its first-ever Water Allocation Planning guidelines.
- Initiated the development of a water allocation plan in Tanzania's portion of the Mara Basin by conducting an abstraction survey to determine current and future water uses.
- Started building a basin hydrological model using the WEAP decision support system and trained over 40 Kenyan and Tanzanian decision-makers and technical staff on its use.
- Arranged and is now carrying out several partnerships with WWF, GIZ, and other donor activities to achieve higher impacts.

Partnerships for Leverage and Sustainability

SWP developed and formalized institutional and implementation partnerships with public, private and civil society organizations, which are expanding the results and improving the sustainability of our water security activities in Cambodia and the MRB.

INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

For both activities, SWP has developed and formalized partnership arrangements with key water governance institutions that are contributing to the implementation and sustainability of water security actions. In Cambodia, SWP is supporting the Tonle Sap Authority, the Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology and the Ministry of Environment to strategically plan water resources development and management. In the Mara, SWP is working with and through the Lake Victoria Basin Commission and Mara Basin Joint Management Committee to operationalize the MOU. Specifically, SWP is providing targeted support to these institutions to define and agree upon their specific roles and responsibilities for implementing the MOU, while also clarifying inter-institutional coordination mechanisms between the transboundary, national and sub-catchment levels.

In both watersheds, SWP engages and builds the organizational and leadership capacity of local water entities such as Water User Associations (WUAs) and Farmer Water User Committees (FWUCs). SWP is also establishing new participatory organizations, such as a River Basin Management Committee for the Stung Chinit.



IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERSHIPS

Mara

Organization	Areas of Collaboration
World Wildlife Fund (WWF)	WWF Kenya and Tanzania are providing resources and expertise on stakeholder engagement. The organization is supporting the Transboundary Water Users Association Forum and implementation of concrete water security interventions. WWF has contributed over \$250,000 to date.
USAID Adaptation Thought Leadership and Assessments (ATLAS)	ATLAS is supporting SWP in the MRB by conducting a basin-wide climate vulnerability assessment, as well as two case study vulnerability profiles to identify and prioritize mitigating investments.
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)	GIZ is supporting the allocation planning process in the MRB by conducting the reserve and environmental flows analyses for wetlands and riverine ecosystems. GIZ expects to contribute over \$750,000 to support these activities.
Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (SERVIR/RCMRD)	SWP is coordinating closely with SERVIR/RCMRD on strategic opportunities to build on and leverage geospatial tools and products to support awareness-raising and decision-making in the Mara Basin.
BASF and EcoLab	SWP is supporting a public-private partnership in the Maasai-Mara Serengeti Ecosystem with BASF, EcoLab and the Mara-Serengeti Hoteliers Forum to introduce water use efficiency technologies and products in hotels and lodges in the Mara and Serengeti.
Birdlife International	Birdlife is collaborating with SWP to support implementation of on-the-ground water security activities in the Mara Wetlands, Tanzania.

Cambodia

- **Water.org**

Access to safe water supply and sanitation is a serious water security risk in the Stung Chinit watershed. Water.org is building the capacity of local microfinance institutions to provide loans to households to build piped connections and latrines. The partnership aims to:



Reach
37,000

people with access
to improved water
and/or sanitation



Disburse
8,600

WaterCredit loans



Mobilize
\$3.9 million

in loan capital

Communications and Knowledge Management

Over the past two years, SWP has developed and refined water security tools and methodologies; tested innovative approaches; and initiated a program of knowledge management, collaborative learning, and communication on best practices, lessons learned, tools and other resources to support water security programming and implementation.

SWP is establishing itself as a water security thought leader through knowledge platforms like [SWPwater.org](#), the program's main vehicle for content. There, SWP's audience can find a variety of resources, including:

- Introductions to [water security](#) and [SWP](#) itself.
- All six [SWP toolkits](#) on water security improvement.
- [Technical papers](#) on private sector engagement, water security decision-making, and environmental flows.
- Spotlight stories on our activities in [Cambodia](#), [Kenya](#) and [Tanzania](#), and [Southern Africa](#).
- Opinion blogs on [WASH and water security](#), the [U.S. Global Water Strategy](#), and more.
- Success stories on [workshops](#) and [trainings](#) in the field.
- Webinars on SWP's [WSI process](#) and [work in the Mara River Basin](#).
- Information for both [USAID Missions](#) and the [private sector](#) on how to partner with SWP.

Since its launch in 2017, SWPwater.org has been accessed over 10,000 times, with over 25,000 pageviews. The toolkits alone have been viewed over 1,500 times.

SWP has further disseminated its water security content through its newsletter and social media channels. In the last year, the program has attracted more than 1,400 followers across Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, and gained 740 newsletter subscribers – 360 of them USAID employees.

EVENTS

1. Water Security Conversations

SWP hosted and facilitated a series of water security events titled "Sustainable Water, Resilient Communities" with the Woodrow Wilson Center, each event focusing on a different theme among "Too little, too much, too dirty, too erratic."

These conversations were action oriented; in the midst of understanding the drivers and impacts of these distinct water challenges, there was a focus on the need for co-operation, consideration and partnership as well as the necessity of integrated solutions. The events had over 200 attendees, 500 online watchers, and 600 posterior views.

LEARN MORE:

[SWP Presents the Challenge of Too Little Water](#) | [Hope is Not a Strategy](#) | [Solutions for Pollution](#) | [Saving Lives Saving Livelihoods](#)

Knowledge platform

SWP developed and launched its own website [swpwater.org](#). It has so far been accessed over 10,000 times, with over 25,000 pageviews.

- Monthly newsletter has grown to 740 subscribers (360 USAID employees)
- Over 1400 total social following:
 - 900 Twitter followers
 - 300 Facebook followers (27% growth since June)
 - 200 LinkedIn followers



2. Developed and Led High Visibility Water Security Sessions at World Water Week:

a. 2017 Showcase session: Sustainable Water Partnership: Delivering Stability and Benefits through Water Security

Description:

Debuting USAID's flagship water security project at World Water Week 2017 (theme: "Water and Waste – Reduce and Reuse") hosted a showcase entitled, "Delivering Stability and Benefits through Water Security," where presenters and panelists shared methods to engage local leaders in water management and raise stakeholder awareness of water security risks. Following presentations from Eric Viala, Winrock's SWP Director, and Betsy Otto of World Resources Institute, a panel of representatives from the private sector, civil society, scientific and development organizations discussed the links between water security, development and stability.

b. 2018 Sofa Session: Safeguarding water-related ecosystems in the Mara River and Tonle Sap

Description:

Building on the previous year's showcase, SWP hosted a live-streamed sofa session at World Water Week 2018 (theme: "Water, Ecosystems and Human Development"). The session put team leaders from the two SWP activities front-and-center to reflect on their experiences implementing the WSI Process. SWP staff and representatives from key institutional partners, namely the Lake Victoria Basin Commission and Tonle Sap Authority, described the challenges and opportunities in the Mara River and Tonle Sap Basin, provided an overview of the approaches employed under the SWP Activities, and discussed accomplishments related to improving water security and meeting human development and ecosystem needs.

3. Other Events

Attended high visibility events throughout the year and delivered water security presentations, focusing either on water or on related topics such as food and energy security, economic growth, governance and political stability, or environmental conservation (UNC Water and Health Conference - Poster, World Water Forum 8 - Poster, and 1st International Conference on Water Security in Toronto - Poster).





WEBINARS

SWP Has Hosted Three Webinars:

1. Sustainable Water Partnership Webinar: How to Improve Water Security

58 broadcast attendees | 90 recording views

2. Mitigating Transboundary Water Conflict and Improving Water Security: SWP's Sustainable Water for the Mara Activity

35 broadcast attendees | 84 recording views

In a third webinar in collaboration with Water CKM, SWP presented the accomplishments of the Leader Award to date, the technical assistance services offered by SWP, and the simplified mechanism of collaborating with SWP under an Associate Award:

3. How to Collaborate with SWP to Improve Water Security and Resilience

Illustrative examples of technical assistance available through SWP include:

- Training on water security and sustainable water programming complying with the USG Global Water Strategy.
- Strategic assessments to identify water risks and integrate water security considerations into CDCS processes.
- Implementation of in-country programs that build resilience and improve water security through coordinated improvements in water resources management, WASH services and climate resilience.



CHAPTER 4. WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

Implementing in the field is also an opportunity for SWP to learn and to encourage all partners (from government officials to local leaders, businesses, and fellow implementers) to consider water security improvement as a collaborative, iterative and learning process as well.

Lessons from Stung Chinit: Local Champions Matter

As part of the WSI process's initial assessment phase, SWP identified local water user groups and organizations in the Stung Chinit watershed. The project engaged representatives from local farmer associations and FWUCs, community forestry and fishery groups, private sector rubber plantations, and rice mills about their key concerns regarding water issues in the Stung Chinit watershed, their willingness to get involved and their capacity needs.

SWP selected 40 representatives from these user groups (20 women and 20 men) to attend an assessment validation workshop in April 2018, which presented the main findings of the various assessments (stakeholder analysis, water quality testing, land use change analysis, biodiversity evaluation, household water knowledge attitudes and perception survey). The assessment results opened the eyes of many attendees, including Sin Phally, a representative from the Chhouk Khsach FWUC.

"I very much appreciate all the information that SWP provided us regarding the key water risks in our area," she said. "I understand we all need to be more careful in protecting and using the water for both household consumption and farming, notably in terms of the impacts of using too much fertilizers and pesticides."

Sin Phally, a representative from the Chhouk Khsach FWUC



By communicating these ideas to local leaders, SWP hopes to disseminate information about water security to the community at large. Phally, for one, is willing to help. "I will share with my family, my neighbors and my community all that I learnt," she said.

These leaders were also asked to pledge their active and voluntary participation in SWP's WSI process. On April 4, 2018, they endorsed SWP's eight guiding principles and acknowledged that:

- Achieving tangible benefits for their constituents requires proper assessment and planning;
- Behavior change and management solutions are as important, if not more important, than infrastructure; and
- Collaboration with other local leaders and provincial authorities is essential.

In May and June, SWP continued their education and support to these leaders by providing soft-skills trainings. These sessions covered crucial topics like leadership and communications, community mobilization and organization, needs assessment and action planning, community budgeting and financial management, and conflict resolution.

SWP is now engaging these community representatives along with provincial officials through working groups addressing four key water risks: access to drinking water and sanitation, agricultural pollution, environmental impacts from upstream land concessions, and irrigation operation. Their eagerness and energy are the main drivers of SWP's success.

Lessons from Mara: Strengthen Existing Institutions and Governance Structures

It's not just nature that depends upon the Mara River. When you add humans to the equation, things become a bit more complicated. Straddling the border between Kenya and Tanzania, the [Mara River Basin](#) might easily have been a point of international conflict. But instead, by working within the institutional structure and encouraging cooperation, it's become an opportunity for unity and collaboration between the two countries.

Over the last few years, several important institutional, policy and planning developments have proven that Kenya and Tanzania are willing to invest in meaningful actions to improve water security in the Mara:

- An MOU between the governments of Kenya and Tanzania signed in September 2015 marks an agreement to cooperate over water resource management in the Basin. These developments are a promising first step– and SWP plans to build on and support this agreement.
- Since 2015, the Mau Mara Serengeti Sustainable Water Initiative (MaMaSe), funded by the Government of Netherlands, has been supporting Kenya's Water Resources Authority (WRA) with the development of a Water Allocation Plan (WAP) for the Kenyan portion of the MRB. Extending planning to the Tanzanian side of the Basin was not immediately possible due to funding limitations but in the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) meeting in November 2016, the need for a transboundary WAP for the entire MRB was underscored. This requires development of the WAP for the Tanzania portion of the MRB and harmonization of the WAP for the entire Basin.
- Several plans exist at the sub-catchment level that provide SWP with excellent opportunities to support stakeholders in moving towards implementation.. With support from the PREPARED Project, Birdlife International has recently developed an Integrated Management Plan for the Mara Wetlands, as well as a Conservation Investment Plan (CIP) that prioritizes and costs-out conservation interventions in the area. The CIP will be used by national stakeholders to solicit funding.



- SWP is carrying out a Quality Service Improvement Program (QSIP) with several WASH service providers (Narok Water and Sewerage Company, Bomet Water Company, and Kericho Water and Sanitation Company) who are interested in addressing the reduction of non-revenue water, which is responsible for poor water utility performance (due to commercial and physical water losses) and puts heightened stress on a water-constrained basin that is facing growing water demand. The program will define key actions for improved WASH service delivery and strategies for operational improvements with the goal of improving internal commercial and technical operations.

SWP is building upon these successes and ongoing processes by working directly with existing governance institutions in the Mara and creating a robust coordination and collaboration process to leverage existing efforts in implementing its water security activities in the region. These projects and relationships have paved the way for SWP, providing opportunities to achieve significant results with limited resources.



CHAPTER 5. WHAT'S NEXT

SWP is improving water security through methodological guidance documents, successful demonstrations and evidence-based reports. Beyond guidance and demonstration, SWP also strives to promote water security as a cross-sectoral development theme and ensure the sustainability of development activities.

Our first challenge is ensuring that water security is a consideration during the planning, design, implementation, monitoring or evaluation of any development program or activity. This necessitates raising awareness about the wide-ranging consequences of water insecurity, i.e. the insecure or unreliable supply or access to water. The lack of safe water endangers lives and impacts public health, as most diseases are waterborne. Water scarcity also undermines livelihoods and food security, since most rural populations rely on agriculture. It ultimately discredits the government's capacity to provide basic services or adjudicate water conflicts and can destabilize fragile states. Any development activity striving to improve public health or address food insecurity, nutrition or poverty will likely fall short if it ignores water risks and stresses. Likewise, any development activity meant to stabilize a region or country should consider access to water as an essential component.

Our second challenge is ensuring the sustainability of water security improvements. To successfully assess and mitigate key water risks, SWP focuses on engaging and empowering both local authorities and water user groups so that they can jointly:

- Reach a better understanding of their local water security situation, especially how water use behaviors and management practices impact that situation;
- Acknowledge the multiplicity of competing water demands and the diverging requirements that the essential goals of economic efficiency, environmental soundness, and social equity may demand from water management;
- Discuss, negotiate, and implement fact-based interventions that consider watershed management;
- Behavior change and managerial improvements along with infrastructure development; and
- Acknowledge, disseminate and advertise benefits, and learn to adapt to changing conditions over time.

The success of this collaborative effort relies on identifying accountable community leaders along with provincial officials, and on mentoring and facilitating a trusting relationship between them. As people change or move away, sustainability relies on establishing and/or strengthening formal entities and platforms that support dialogue, planning and action at different levels.

Sustainability requires consistent support from donors so that institutional changes, which typically require more than the four to five years of a given program, actually take hold. Donor longevity requires evidence of clear progress, and SWP intends to continue defining water security indicators to that end.