



# Future IWRM in South Asia What we have achieved and outlook by focusing on River Basin Level

Priyanka Dissanayake Regional Coordinator  
Global Water Partnership (GWP) South Asia

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Post-2015 development goals need to address five priority areas...

.. which cover the dimensions of sustainable development and contribute towards poverty reduction

**Healthy  
people**  
**Increased  
prosperity**  
**Equitable  
societies**  
**Protected  
ecosystems**  
**Resilient  
communities**

through

- Universal access to safe **drinking water, sanitation and hygiene**, improving water quality and raising service standards
- The sustainable **use and development of water resources**, increasing and sharing the available benefits
- Robust and **effective water governance** with more effective institutions and administrative systems
- Improved **water quality and wastewater management** taking account of environmental limits
- Reduced risk of **water-related disasters** to protect vulnerable groups and minimize economic losses

## IWRM in South Asia



- IWRM play an important role for river basin management in the South Asia Region.
- Population increase in the urban sector and consequently demand for electricity, domestic water and industrial water there was a huge stress for water balance in the key river basins in the region.
- uneven distribution of water resources, inefficient (trans-boundary) river basin planning and cooperation, lack of capacity/illiteracy
- All the above issues largely created some pressure on Water Security. In addition there is an urgent need to address impacts of global climate change which occurs due to various human activities and subsequently affect on water security.

# Case Study -Mahaweli River Basin Sri Lanka



- The Mahaweli River Basin- extent of **over 10,000 sq km** covers almost **one fifth of the land area** of the country
- **2500 MCM** of water from the basin is being **transferred** to other water short basins/ sub basins for meeting shortfalls especially of agriculture and for hydro power generation.
- Expected to develop **1000 MCM** during the SDG period
- Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka (MASL)- established in 1979
- Planning and implementation of the Mahaweli Development Programme, which include construction, operation and maintenance of reservoirs, dams, canals, and drainage systems and other infrastructure.

# Case Study -Mahaweli River Basin Sri Lanka



## Key messages of case study

- Improve water security through IWRM – If the current irrigation efficiency continues in the future, the country will face a severe water security
- Reduce over use of water and inequitable sharing of water in traditional Bethma practice and other plans using basin wide IWRM
- Introduction of better water management practices and application of modern irrigation technologies to achieve optimum water productivity and system efficiency of major irrigation schemes.

# Case Study -Mahaweli River Basin Sri Lanka



## What has been achieved

- MASL moved towards the river basin management since twentieth century to face the expected challenges of the water security by overcoming the adverse impacts of sectoral approaches
  - Lack of linkages among upstream and downstream water uses
  - Inequitable sharing of water for sub-sectoral uses and within sub-sectors (small tank cascades)
- Water quality deterioration leading to health hazards, Watershed degradation affecting water sources

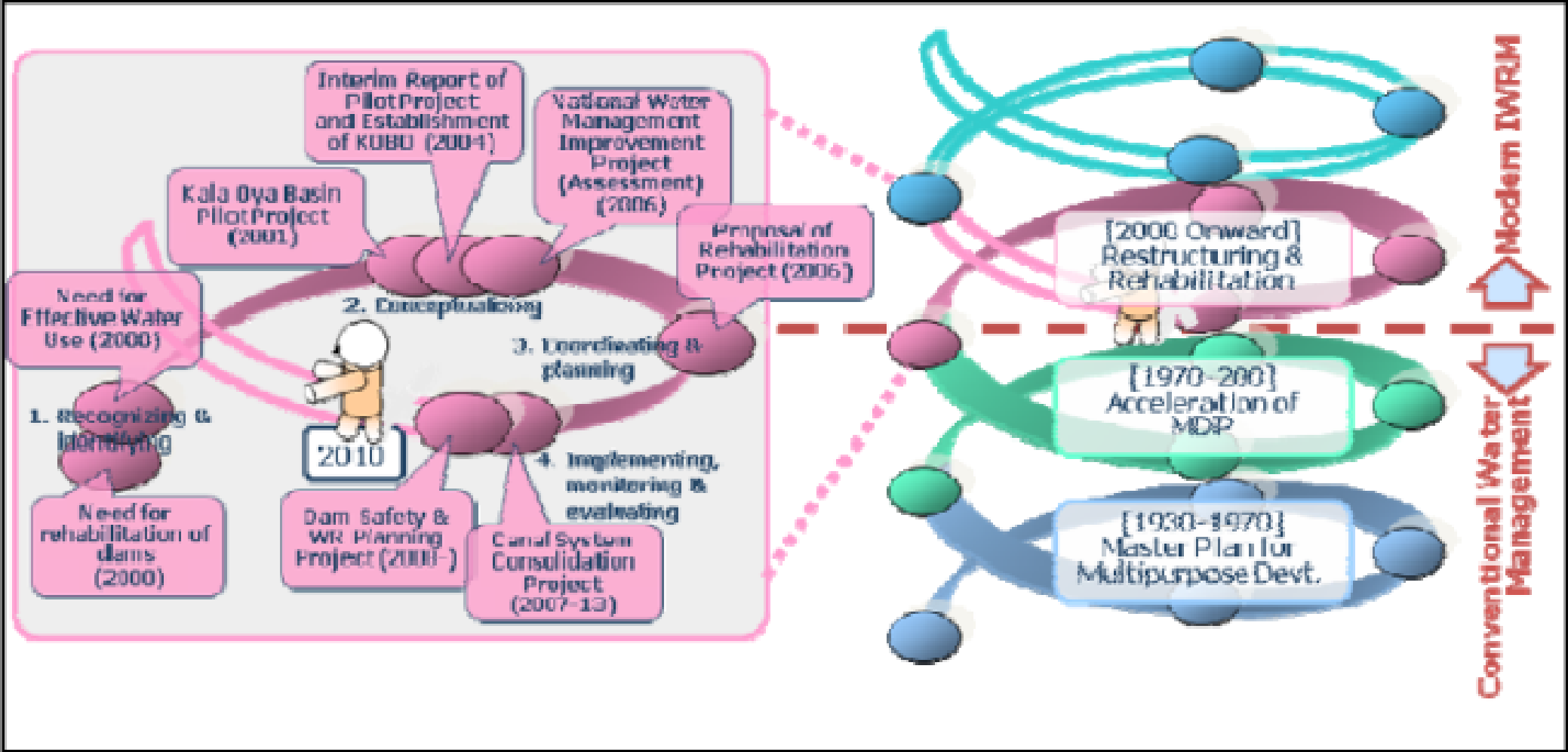
# Case Study -Mahaweli River Basin Sri Lanka



## Key for success

- The **high level of autonomy** that MASL enjoys was considered essential for the ability to implement the development programme on time and successfully.
- MASL **has Financial autonomy** - MASL has a large annual budget compared to many other RBOs in South Asia. It is also the oldest of the RBOs and, as such, has had more time to mature.
- Establishment of the RBO **improved the level of stakeholder participation.**
- In the case of the MASL, **mechanisms exist for participatory governance.**
- Community participation in MASL – In most RBOs community involvement was very limited. However the role of women in decision-making and management of water resources was not addressed by MASL.

# Case Study -Mahaweli River Basin Sri Lanka





# Case Study -Mahaweli River Basin Sri Lanka

## Bottlenecks

- Understanding and awareness of IWRM in the policy environment remains low and a big constraint to better implementation of IWRM. Specifically **politicians and government officials** are found to lack understanding of IWRM and the requirements that are needed for implementing it
- The biggest remaining challenge for MASL is the **lack of a national water policy** for an effective functioning of the RBO
- Although MASL has higher number of staff, they are **not equipped with the tools for implementing IWRM effectively**
- There is also **uncertainty about available financial resources** as the State is trying to reduce expenditure in the sector. The **dependency on donors** for projects for improvement is not a good sign for sustainability

# Case Study -Mahaweli River Basin Sri Lanka

## Innovation

- The MASL, having been enacted to implement a large-scale development projects, appears to operate more like a development agency in which the main focus appears to be on the integrated management of water quantity and allocation of that water for socio-economic development
- The nature of the MASL as development agency is also visible in activities, which it undertakes which seem quite far removed from river basin management (such as the construction of roads, schools, post offices and hospitals)

# Key Messages South Asia



- Need for proper institutional set up in the region
- Need to promote further cooperation in trans-boundary river basins under the “from the mountains to the sea” concept
- Strengthen inter/cross-sectoral cooperation to make IWRM happen and ensure integration takes place at policy level
- In particular the need for creating broad awareness of IWRM and the need for inter-agency coordination and cooperation were identified as capacity gaps
- increased awareness and knowledge about IWRM and the requirements for its implementation need to be translated in changes in the governance structure under which the RBO operates
- Improvement of water security has to be ensured through IWRM

# Key Messages South Asia



- Inter-agency coordination and cooperation - Although RBOs can have a mandate covering an entire basin, the management of water resources will continue to involve numerous different agencies and organizations operating at various levels in the basin
- For these organizations to function effectively these organizations need to coordinate their various contributions to water management in the basin
- Currently, this level of coordination appears to be insufficient in most basins
- This means that capacity building will have to focus on acquiring a good understanding among the different agencies and organizations on their fragmented and shared responsibilities for effective water resources management

# Thank You