

# Water and Energy

## Report on the Journalists Workshop

20-21 March 2014. Tokyo, Japan

**UN-Water Decade Programme on Advocacy and Communication  
(UNW-DPAC)**

### **Summary**

---

The Journalists workshop gathered Journalists from 11 countries in Asia including Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Korea, Pakistan, The Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Uzbekistan and Viet Nam. The workshop was an opportunity for the media to have first hand pre-interaction with experts on water and energy, identify and plan feature stories and for Asian Journalists to exchange information. The workshop, facilitated by Roel Landingin, an experienced journalist from the Philippines Center for Investigative Journalism, ended with a plan for 4 joint stories among journalists from different countries, more than 20 individual story ideas and the agreement for creating a social media based network of Asian Journalists writing on water (and energy).

The World Water Day Media Workshop ended on Saturday 22 March 2014 with a group of Journalists visiting Kumamoto City, the Award winning city of the 2013 edition of UN-Water 'Water for Life' Best Practices Award.

### **Introductory Presentations and Expert Panel**

---

The journalists met on the evening of the 19<sup>th</sup> for a small informal discussion on their work and their angle on the topic of water and energy. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of March, after a series of presentations on World Water Day, the World Water Development Report, the Water for Life Award and information sources in the UN, there was an opportunity for participant Journalists to introduce themselves. This led the way to the expert panel discussion including experts from the energy and the water community, as well as governments and public energy companies.

During the expert panel session conducted by Roel Landingin issues raised by Journalists included:

- There are many trends towards Privatisation of services, what are they? In some cases we need engagement of small entrepreneurs at local level if we want services to reach everyone.
- Why has there been no integration between water and energy? What happens when it is fragmented? What difference does it make to have an integrated approach in people's lives?
- How can we monetize the water services? Will this help us in the same way as with energy?

- Has the opposition to dams for hydro changed? What is the proportion of geothermal in the energy mix today and is it really a solution?
- Will water trading be promoted? What are the technological solutions we are talking about?
- The same technologies may not be relevant for everyone. What are the top three technologies that will help large numbers of people?
- How can we break the silos? What is your pitch for convincing governments?

## **Working Groups**

---

The workshop afternoon session aimed to identify and work through stories to report on. The questions posed by the facilitator were:

1. What is the Headline for the story?
2. What are the Story Focus and audience?
3. What is the core information to be gathered to complete the story and how?
4. What resources are required, for example budget and time line?

Four joint feature stories were identified. There was also an opportunity for a short ad hoc discussion on science reporting:

### **1. *The South Asia Water Charter***

#### *Headline*

Could a Water Charter deal with the increased risk of flooding?

#### *The focus*

We have observed that glaciers are melting, floods in South Asia are devastating the landscape and the people living in it, and 12 scientists have recently predicted worse flooding still. These are just some of the reasons for a number of bodies asking for a South Asia Water Charter. Today the only existing regional Charter is the “Democracy Charter”. The fact that the second important one is on water reflects how critical the issue for the region is. The Water Charter is also expected to focus on the investments in dams and other projects as well as who the beneficiaries will be. It would be important to highlight that the Climate and Energy nexus has not been discussed enough in South Asia.

#### *Core information for the story*

The backbone of the story has to be science. To complete the story it would be important to know: the estimated risk in South Asia; what would be the legal status of the Charter; what countries would commit to; how would they need to change? An important issue in the region is the scale of the new energy projects being developed, how and where new hydropower projects would be developed. It is important to know: the countries affected and involved; who has a stake in

the energy output? Who will benefit? What is being suggested in the charter in relation to energy? How can projects be affected by climate change?

To develop the story, interviews will need to be carried out with:

- Lawyers who are drafting the charter;
- Scientists and especially cross border water experts;
- Ground level people who will be impacted;
- Planners and policy makers.

#### *Resources and timeline*

The story can be completed in 3 months with the support of the reporters in 5 countries.

## ***2. Cooperation in water/energy among nations – The Mekong Story***

#### *Headline*

Water and energy nexus. Experts call for greater cooperation among Nations.

#### *The Focus*

The focus will be on the Mekong River: An expose on how climate change and global warming are creating disasters in the region; demonstrating how more people are affected and the water/energy nexus may be part of the solution. On the contrary we see many countries engage in conflicts over sharing rivers for hydropower and other uses. We need to ask, why the UN is calling for a Nexus perspective. How can it help? Is this a call for action? We must highlight the stakeholders who are able to take the action. We will need to ascertain: why the nexus is needed – some potential reasons being the economy/CC/development and conflict over water in the region.

#### *Core information for the story*

Information can be drawn from: the World Water Development Report; interviews with people who are affected by disasters; people who do not have access to water and energy; what dams are under construction in countries in the Mekong river basin; how many people are being displaced? This affects a huge number of people, can this be statistically supported? Find out what the local law and order situation is. What is the Asian approach to international water law? This can provide a conclusion, suggesting the need for greater cooperation over the sharing of water resources.

To develop the story, interviews will need to be carried out with:

- Policy makers, governments, and policy influencers;
- Government officials and issue experts;
- The voices of the affected communities.

#### *Resources and timeline*

The story can be prepared in 2 weeks.

### **3. Conflicts on water sharing**

#### *Headline*

Creating harmony with water and energy.

#### *Focus and audience*

The audience will be policy makers and regulators, NGOS and civil society and the private/corporate sector.

The focus will be on conflicts, in an effort to discover where harmony could come from: Water management and policy gaps and the role of governments in disputes on allocation. The focus is not so much on transboundary issues but those internal to the counties; locality and inter-states. For example one state has devised a policy of price tagging the energy generated and buying back – so an individual can get energy back if they are using the resources (Payment for Ecosystem Services); how to manage droughts and flooding if water is not shared. The idea is to focus on some success stories using them as a starting point. There will be one main story and a number of sub stories.

#### *Core information for the story*

The information and data from the WWDR report including what the proposed specific policies on water as well as energy are. The region specific data will need to be gathered from reports and studies. We need information on affected communities (energy and water users) and what the impact on livelihoods is. The group will use UN resources and links and relate the local/country situation with global scenarios. Interviews will be taken with experts, investors and activists.

#### *Resources and timeline*

A photo feature.

The story will be ready between 2 weeks and a month.

### **4. Hydropower**

#### *Headline*

Privatization of hydropower causes conflict of the region: Handle with care.

#### *Focus and audience*

The audience would be common people (there are many powerful private players; policy makers need to know better the concerns of the people).

The story will start with a statement from R. Taylor. Then we will provide some information on the entire region and collate other data. In the 5 countries of the journalist network we will generate data on the last 5 years of Hydro projects and those that are upcoming; which are private, PPP or government projects. What difference does it make to people's acceptance/perceptions?

### *Core information to be gathered*

Gathering the views of the people by talking to them, to the common man, government agencies and implementers of such policies.

### *Resources and timeline*

The story could take 2 to 4 weeks to prepare, realistically 4 weeks if we need to gather and analyze data plus interviews.

## **5. Discussion on Science Reporting**

Scientific information/studies can be an excellent source of information in place of anecdotal data. It is true we need to de-jargonize science; from the discussion on Science reporting came the following points that may help shape the way the journalist network report on water and energy:

- The best starting point is with an abstract, which can be deconstructed by using Google for definitions or speaking with the authors, who are usually keen to attract media attention;
- It is possible to contact authors through the PR of University/Research Institutions;
- Reading scientific literature is a must for journalists and a skill that should be acquired and developed;
- Scientific conferences are a good source of exclusive material, that are rarely covered in conventional media;
- Satellite images can be used to effectively report on water issues and are generally catalogued and available from many years prior.

## **Final Editorial session**

---

The final editorial session was an opportunity for brainstorming on the individual story ideas, and evaluation

The story ideas emerging included:

- 1) Dr. Suthir Bhongale (India) - International Disputes. Crisis in Pakistan plus energy project in the industry.
- 2) Abu Bakar Siddique (Bangladesh) - Looking at the impact of reducing Teesta (a transboundary river in Bangladesh) water on agriculture.
- 3) Phak Seangly (Cambodia) - Lack of access to water and energy.
- 4) Stella Paul (India) - Data Gaps. The Issue of Gender on Water Resource Developments.
- 5) Rhaydz Barcia (The Philippines) - Renewable energy: geothermal as water-extensive resource in water-scarce areas.
- 6) Chandan Kumar Duarah (India) - Policies and guidelines (from UN Global).
- 7) Le Thu Luong (Viet Nam) - Conflict in transboundary sharing of water.

- 8) Nataliya Shulepina (Uzbekistan) - Water partnership in Uzbekistan and South Asia.
- 9) Abhijit Vasant Ghorpade (India) - Other similar issues and solutions between countries.
- 10) Malaka Rodrigo (Sri Lanka) - Conflicts in water use (i.e. Kithulgala white water rafting site in Sri Lanka but conflict arises from the proposed construction of a dam which may affect livelihood of rafters).
- 11) Subhra Priyadarshini (India) - policy focus on why energy and water should come together.
- 12) Myrna Velasco (Philippines) - Look at the water use of various energy facilities and examine possible pollution impacts that they may have on water resource and the environment.
- 13) Peng Qian (Korea) - Comparative study between Seoul, Beijing and Tokyo.
- 14) Sirinya Wattanasukchai (Thailand) - Link this information from forum to sustainable farming in the north of Thailand.
- 15) Sangeetha Rajeesh (India) - Small hydropower projects – there are lot of things that one can find about these ones – some experts say they are very good – but there are lots of issues.
- 16) Sharada Balasubramanian (India) - Water conservation practices in agriculture and if there are other technologies that could lead to less consumption of water.
- 17) Mohammed Syful Islam (Bangladesh) - Prospect of Hydropower in Bangladesh: What are the Government's Initiatives on this Alternative?
- 18) Mahadiv Amar Guriro (Pakistan) - Controversies over Hydropower Projects on River Indus, given its tributaries and distributaries being the lifeline of Pakistan.
- 19) Ermelinda Dias (Bangladesh) - Transboundary river governance to discuss the feasibility of treating the entire river basin. To discuss whether it can be applied in the case of River Teesta flowing between India and Bangladesh.
- 20) Darshana Ashoka Kumara (Sri Lanka) - Political Economics of Hydroelectricity generation and the electricity crisis in Sri Lanka - dependence on hydro plus subsidies - inflationary impact.
- 21) Ruby Shaira F. Panela (The Philippines) - small hydropower projects potential in regional areas.
- 22) Athar Parvaiz (India) – Transboundary issues of water use – in case of India it is much of a regional sharing of water uses.

### **World Water Day Press Conference**

The press conference started with a round of impressions in relation to World Water Day by UN Officers including Michel Jarraud (UN-Water Chair); Michela Milleto (Acting coordinator of the World water Assessment Programme); Zafar Adeel (Director of the Institute of Water and Health of the United Nations University); Josefina Maestu (Director, UN-Water Decade Programme on

Advocacy and Communication); Daniella Bostrom (UN-Water Communications Manager).

Issues/questions raised during the press conference included:

- World Water Development Report: Gender focus in the WWDR;
- Purpose of the WWDR and target audience? Progress since the first WWDR?;
- Transboundary issues in water and energy. These have not been really addressed in World Water Day;
- Private sector. Why is there no private interest in investments in water and energy?
  - Technological and institutional lock ins. What do they mean?
  - Level of public participation in WWD and participants' profile at the event in Tokyo?;
- Climate change issues did not seem to be addressed enough in the day. What are they and will they affect the nexus?

### **Follow up**

---

- Follow up with the collective stories/finalizing between 2 weeks and 2 months.
- Collect/share individual stories.
- Create social media group

Published Articles (provisional list)

Nº	Article	Media	Journalist	Link
1	Taming the perverse water-energy balance	Nature India	Subhra Priyadarshini	<a href="http://www.nature.com/nindia/2014/140327/full/nindia.2014.44.html">http://www.nature.com/nindia/2014/140327/full/nindia.2014.44.html</a>
2	Deep-rooted nexus between water, energy highlighted	The Financial Express	Syful Islam	<a href="http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/2014/03/23/25000">http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/2014/03/23/25000</a>
3	Rainwater harvesting, recharging aquifers a must: Dr. Shimada	The Financial Express	Syful Islam	<a href="http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/2014/03/29/25908">http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/2014/03/29/25908</a>
4	India, Singapore win 2014 UN "Water for Life" award	China.org	Xinhua	<a href="http://www.china.org.cn/world/Off the Wire/2014-03/21/content_31859014.htm">http://www.china.org.cn/world/Off the Wire/2014-03/21/content_31859014.htm</a>
5	India, Singapore win 2014 UN Water for Life award	The Hindu	Xinhua	<a href="http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/world/india-singapore-win-2014-un-water-for-life-award/article5813697.ece">http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/world/india-singapore-win-2014-un-water-for-life-award/article5813697.ece</a>
6	It's water day, every day	The Hindu	Marianne de Nazareth	<a href="http://www.thehindu.com/features/metroplus/society/its-water-day-every-day/article5809991.ece">http://www.thehindu.com/features/metroplus/society/its-water-day-every-day/article5809991.ece</a>
7	Lack of electricity, water and toilets. On World Water Development Report (Article in Khmer)	The Phnom Penh Post	Seangly Phak	<a href="http://www.postkhmer.com/national/1-national-news/112290-2014-03-24-03-36-29">http://www.postkhmer.com/national/1-national-news/112290-2014-03-24-03-36-29</a>
8	Rising global energy demand stresses fresh water resources: UN report	Xinhua English News	Peng Qian	<a href="http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2014-03/21/c_133203468.htm">http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2014-03/21/c_133203468.htm</a>
9	UN warns water energy needs coming to crunch- point	The Sunday Times	Malaka Rodrigo	<a href="http://www.sundaytimes.lk/140323/news/un-warns-water-energy-needs-coming-to-crunch-point-90171.html">http://www.sundaytimes.lk/140323/news/un-warns-water-energy-needs-coming-to-crunch-point-90171.html</a>
10	War for water in Kithulgala	The Sunday Times	Malaka Rodrigo	<a href="http://www.sundaytimes.lk/140316/news/war-for-water-in-kithulgala-89392.html">http://www.sundaytimes.lk/140316/news/war-for-water-in-kithulgala-89392.html</a>
11	Little water for Hydropower, Irrigation and Drinking; CEB pleads deities for rain	Window to Nature	Malaka Rodrigo	<a href="http://window2nature.wordpress.com/2014/04/07/as-drought-continues-ceb-switches-to-88-4-per-cent-thermal/">http://window2nature.wordpress.com/2014/04/07/as-drought-continues-ceb-switches-to-88-4-per-cent-thermal/</a>

12	Off to Kumamoto to see Japan's famed cherry blossoms	The Sunday Times	Malaka Rodrigo	<a href="http://www.sundaytimes.lk/140406/plus/off-to-kumamoto-to-see-japans-famed-cherry-blossoms-91446.html">http://www.sundaytimes.lk/140406/plus/off-to-kumamoto-to-see-japans-famed-cherry-blossoms-91446.html</a>
13	UN: Fresh water sources to suffer from energy need	Dhaka Tribune	Abu Bakar Siddique	<a href="http://www.dhakatribune.com/safety/2014/mar/22/un-fresh-water-sources-suffer-energy-need#sthash.qmjv1cwY.gbpl">http://www.dhakatribune.com/safety/2014/mar/22/un-fresh-water-sources-suffer-energy-need#sthash.qmjv1cwY.gbpl</a>
14	On World Water Day 2014 (Article in Russian)	Sreda.Uz	Natalya Shuleipina	<a href="http://sreda.uz/index.php?newsid=1164">http://sreda.uz/index.php?newsid=1164</a>
15	On World Water Development Report (Article in national language. Sri Lanka)	Randora.lk	Darshana Ashoka Kumara	<a href="http://www.randora.lk/index.php/opinion/editorial/item/2530-world-water-development-report">http://www.randora.lk/index.php/opinion/editorial/item/2530-world-water-development-report</a>
16	News items aired over the SLBC's main news bulletin	Radio Sri Lanka	Darshana Ashoka Kumara	
17	Sri Lanka: In The Mid Of Water-Energy Nexus	Countercurrents.org and Sri Lanka newspaper	Darshana Ashoka Kumara	<a href="http://www.countercurrents.org/kumara030414.htm">http://www.countercurrents.org/kumara030414.htm</a>
18	Change in climate and its worst effect (In Marathi language)	Loksatta News	Abhijit Ghorpade	<a href="http://www.loksatta.com/vishesh-news/change-in-climate-and-its-worst-effect-419663/">http://www.loksatta.com/vishesh-news/change-in-climate-and-its-worst-effect-419663/</a>
19	<a href="#">Rising energy demand will strain global water resources</a>	Rural 21	Sangeetha Rajeesh	<a href="http://www.rural21.com/english/news/detail/article/rising-energy-demand-will-strain-global-water-resources-00001087/">http://www.rural21.com/english/news/detail/article/rising-energy-demand-will-strain-global-water-resources-00001087/</a>
20	World Water Development Report 2014 launched	Rural 21	Sangeetha Rajeesh	<a href="http://www.rural21.com/english/publications/detail/article/world-water-development-report-2014-launched-00001089/">http://www.rural21.com/english/publications/detail/article/world-water-development-report-2014-launched-00001089/</a>
21	<a href="#">Publication du rapport mondial sur la mise en valeur des ressources en eau 2014 (WWDR 2014)</a>	Rural 21	Sangeetha Rajeesh	<a href="http://www.rural21.com/english/news/detail/article/publication-du-rapport-mondial-sur-la-mise-en-valeur-des-ressources-en-eau-2014-wwdr-2014-0000108/">http://www.rural21.com/english/news/detail/article/publication-du-rapport-mondial-sur-la-mise-en-valeur-des-ressources-en-eau-2014-wwdr-2014-0000108/</a>

## Evaluation

---

Following the Journalist Workshop, the Journalist Network was asked to provide feedback to summarise their personal experiences. This allows the event to adapt to the demands of the media, as well as continuing to provide subject specific resources and training and ultimately maintain a mutually beneficial, productive relationship.

The evaluation highlighted the satisfaction of participants with the organization of the workshop, materials distributed, the value of the opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with journalists from Asia and the relevance and quality of experts. Many expressed their interest in more time for interaction among Journalists and experts and proposed longer workshops in the future. They also expressed the necessity of having a field visit and the problems generated by the lack of wifi and/or press room for Journalists.

The Network was asked the following questions.

### 1.- What did you like the most?

---

Journalists expressed the importance of networking within the group and felt they received strong benefit from the opportunity to interact, meet and greet and exchange details before the workshop began. As well as an emphasis on technique and expert advice, it has been noted that in future events more focus should be given to the necessity for 'networking' which creates the basis for future collaboration.

Following the pre-workshop networking Journalists appreciated the Talk Show Panel in which they were able to benefit from exclusive insight into new water and energy issues. They praised the selection of experts, who were able to provide new information and perspectives that would have been otherwise difficult to attain individually.

The most positive feedback came from perhaps the most essential element of the Workshop, the working group exercises, which allowed journalists to apply their individual skills to forming new ideas on reporting issues. During this session many ideas, opinions and experiences were exchanged that would lead to future cooperative reports. In summary of this information, an editorial meeting allowed the honing of their ideas into media worthy material.

Following the workshop, journalists were given access to high level UN and government representatives for interview. This was a valuable opportunity that many took advantage of, to be used as the basis of future publications.

The main event also saw the release of the World Water Development Report (WWDR) which was sighted, amongst other materials and documents provided, as an enormously valuable resource.

Overall, journalists expressed satisfaction with the cooperative event support, accommodation, venue and opportunities provided for present and future collaborative work within the Asian Journalist Network.

#### Contents/activities

- Informal meeting before the workshop started.
- Talk Show Panel helpful to get acquainted with the new subject of water and energy issues. Pre-session exclusive very helpful.
- Right Experts. Good selection of panelists. New information and perspectives from the experts.
- Working group of Journalists: space to share views among journalists and argue on what to report on. Open discussions and free opinions. Interactive sessions, scope for discussions. The open presentations of Journalists to identify new ideas and think on the different sides and issues to the subject was helpful.
- Getting lots of story ideas which can be used for feature stories. Got good ideas for future cooperative reports.
- Editorial meeting.

#### Sharing/interviewing

- Accessibility of experts.
- Networking and sharing information with reporters (most of them) around Asia- Opportunity for cross-cultural, cross-country interactions.
- Opportunities for Interviews high profile experts in the UN and from Government.

#### Documents

- Useful documents. Wide array of information and data for future stories.
- The World Water Development Report data base and other relevant materials.

#### Organization/Support

- Nice venue;
- Well organized;
- Accommodation;
- Staff helpful/cooperative attitude/good facilitators.

#### 2.- What would you do differently?

---

In a continued effort to improve the way that water and energy is reported on, journalists were asked to provide critical feedback on the workshop. The greatest critical factor appeared to be the allocation of time. More time was requested for the interaction between journalists, again focusing on the importance of creating a fully formed network, this was suggested in exchange for shorter Talk Show Panel presentations, allowing a more interactive approach to 'getting to know each other.' In addition to this, more time should be

allocated to a 'skill sharing' session, taking advantage of having journalists from such broad fields and publications is a great opportunity to learn from each other, as well as the experts present. Finally, time to de-jargonise scientific papers in order to prepare material and help better understand the upcoming water and energy talks that may contain information that could be difficult to comprehend.

It was suggested that a more rounded view of the issues was necessary to provide complete coverage. This could be achieved through the opportunity to interview locals effected by the issues to give an on ground perspective. It would also be of benefit to have talks from more energy sector and government experts, again providing a more complete range of voices.

Journalists expressed an interest in hearing more about the future of water, stating there was a lot of information regarding the challenges, but more was required on the solutions and water management.

Finally, in order to provide continual coverage, blog, research topics and prepare reports, journalists require a consistent connection to the internet.

#### Contents/activities

- Talk show with less presentations and more time for interaction with journalists.
- Try to avoid repeating contents. Many of the speakers were saying the same thing during World Water Day.
- Invite representatives from the energy sector and from the Governments to have a more rounded perspective.
- More focus on how to manage water better for the future.
- More time for journalists interaction to de-jargonize papers.
- Time for “skill” sharing among Journalists with different backgrounds.
- Organize the press conference before the main programme.
- Local organizations sharing good practices with the group.

#### Sharing/interviewing

- Interviewing the locals;
- More time for interviews;
- More time for networking among journalists and with experts;
- More time to discuss ideas among Journalists and their individual stories and giving suggestions.

#### Organization/support

- More time to relax;
- Allow to take photos and recording of Japanese officials;
- Short time, tight schedule. Too hectic. Hardly managed to do interviews;
- No Internet connection (all complained). What is the point of having the journalists if they cannot use social media on the spot?

- Not enough information on what we needed to do next, with many meeting rooms.

### 3.- What would you suggest for improving future workshops?

---

Feedback from this question should allow reporting on water and energy to take into consideration the media point of view.

Journalists expressed an interest in more of a 'scientific' angle in terms of reporting, with more talks and data available from the science perspective. They also felt the ability to be involved in the design of the workshop would produce the most efficient output for all, this could be achieved through a 'needs assessment' prior to the workshop.

Again, in terms of how the information is reported there were requests for a more inclusive approach with field trips. This was strongly emphasised as a 'must' in providing experience on the ground, the opportunity to gain local opinions and interview those affected by the issues for a more complete feature length story.

In general, it was felt that more time was needed, perhaps a four day event, with an extra day at the end in order for journalists to prepare a report before leaving and exchange experiences. In terms of post-workshop activities, it was suggested that an email loop keeps the Network connected and informed on upcoming events, with invites to future workshops.

#### Contents/activities

- Add the science angle to train journalists in the trade;
- Do a needs assessment for journalists to help design workshop, and include some reporting techniques;
- Field trip “is a must” so Journalists can report on local success stories and get a flavor of what is happening in the country. Trip to a research institution or a water agency? An opportunity for a feature story.

#### Organization

- Longer. Four days to have more interaction with experts and UN Officials and field trip;
- Schedule departure one day after so Journalists have time to pitch/write at least one story;
- More time for interaction with the experts.

#### Maintenance

- Invite the group of Journalists for future workshops and keep them in the email loop;
- Also supply information to rural Journalists.