

Expression of Interest (EOI)

Call for Best Practices and Country-Level Analysis on Rainwater Harvesting in South Asia

Background

Projections indicate that water demand in South Asian economies will exceed available supplies by 2030, potentially doubling existing water resources (IWMI, 2018). At COP28 (2023), the South Asia region was identified as likely to experience some of the most severe impacts of changing water availability this century, largely due to accelerated glacier melt (Bhattacharya, 2023). Earlier, *National Geographic* (July 2020) warned of an impending water crisis in South Asia, linked to declining ice melt from the Himalayan region. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) similarly identifies South Asia as one of the region's most vulnerable to climate change.

Current trends confirm these projections. The region is experiencing fewer rainy days with higher-intensity rainfall events, resulting in floods, prolonged droughts, and reduced access to reliable, clean, and safe water for drinking, domestic use, and agriculture. At the same time, the frequency and severity of water-related disasters continue to increase.

The meeting “*South Asia & Neighbors: Understanding the Climate–Water Nexus*,” convened by the Asia Society Policy Institute (ASPI), emphasized the critical role of collective action in addressing climate–water security challenges. The South Asia Rainwater Harvesting Network (SARNET) proposes an intervention that brings together a transdisciplinary group of practitioners and researchers with hands-on experience in addressing water-related challenges faced by communities across South Asia.

SARNET was established in 2020 by the Lanka Rainwater Harvesting Forum with support from USAID. The network comprises over 200 members from 20 countries across South and East Asia, Africa, and Latin America. SARNET aims to strengthen capacity building, research, and knowledge exchange on rainwater harvesting as a key strategy to address current and future water scarcity in South Asia.

Historically, rainfall patterns have been the primary determinant of water availability in South Asia. However, climate change has accelerated the hydrological cycle, resulting in intense rainfall over short periods that causes floods, while extended dry spells contribute to droughts (Butt, 2022). In this context, collaborative research and knowledge-sharing are essential to identify, document, and promote effective solutions to water-induced challenges and disasters in the region.

Objective

To support the creation of evidence-based advocacy efforts for enabling policies and investments in rainwater harvesting, SARNET seeks to compile a **South Asia Report on the Status of Rainwater Harvesting**. The report will provide a comprehensive, country-level assessment to inform policymakers, practitioners, and development partners.

Content of the Report

The proposed report will include, but not be limited to, the following components:

- Hydrological vulnerabilities and water-stressed regions at countries across South Asia
- Rainfall patterns, variability, and emerging trends

- Existing national and sub-national policies promoting nature-based solutions for water-scarce areas, including rainwater harvesting for groundwater recharge (e.g., wells, check dams, runoff collection ponds)
- Policy gaps and institutional challenges
- Practices and technologies for managing rainwater to reduce flood risks
- Traditional and indigenous rainwater harvesting practices and documented success stories
- Financial mechanisms, incentives, and other support systems promoting rainwater harvesting
- Stakeholder mapping and the role and potential engagement of the private sector

Duration

One year (from March 2026 to March 2027)

Timeline of Activities

[illegible]

Final submission												
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Submission guideline:

The proposed submission should provide the following in the call for EO:

1. Country overview (500 words)
2. Organisational capacity and engagement in rainwater harvesting (500 to 750 words)
3. Methodology
4. A content outline (500 to words)
5. Timeline in alignment with the EO
6. Budget within the limit specified in the EO

Criteria for selection:

1. Demonstrated being an active SARNET member from the South Asia region.
2. Organisational expertise and engagement in promoting rainwater harvesting.
3. Previous records of similar engagements.
4. Data collection and documentation.

Deadline for submissions:

20th February 2026