



Strengthening CSO engagement in water governance

Government perceptions and strategies in the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna Basin

Survey report



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PREFACE

The Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) is a transboundary river system spanning five countries: Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, and Nepal. Water resource management in the GBM region faces many challenges, stemming from its diverse socio-political and ecological context, as well as the absence of regional basin level approaches related to water resource management.

A large number of civil society organisations (CSOs) in the region are working on water management issues with local communities. These organisations could potentially play a greater role in sustainable transboundary water management. Unfortunately, most CSOs do not have access to technical knowledge, or the capacity to effectively engage and influence decision-making resources. As a result, the CSO community continues to have relatively little impact on regional water dialogues and decision-making process.

To tackle these challenges, the BRIDGE GBM project, facilitated by IUCN, aims to build the capacity of a network of CSOs in the GBM basins to improve their ability to engagement in transboundary water management issues.

In the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) basin, the BRIDGE project is funded by [The Asia Foundation](#) and the [Transboundary Rivers of South Asia](#) (TROSA) programme of Oxfam Novib. The BRIDGE GBM project has developed a regional network of more than 30 CSOs from the five GBM countries. Through a series of regional dialogues and consensus-building activities, the GBM CSO Network developed a common vision, which is articulated in the document [A civil society vision for connecting the people of the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna \(GBM\) river basins](#). The vision, which was launched in October 2017 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, advocates for the equitable utilisation of shared river resources in the GBM basins.

BRIDGE GBM is currently facilitating activities to support the institutionalisation of the GBM CSO Network. This is being done through continued capacity building, and the development and the adoption of governance mechanism and a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework for measuring the impact on the network on shared water governance issues.

This *Strengthening CSO engagement in water governance - Government strategies and perception of CSOs in the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna Basin* report provides a summary of inputs related to CSO contribution to water governance and management, received from more than 80 government representatives from Bangladesh, China, India and Nepal.

IUCN would like to thank all the interviewees for participating in this interview.

METHODOLOGY

The report provides a summary of priority areas and strategies for strengthening CSO engagement in water governance in the GBM region, captured through a survey of government representatives in Bangladesh, China, India and Nepal undertaken between 21 July 2018 and 29 August 2018.

In each country, government ministries and agencies responsible for providing policy directives on water resources or having influence on the development and management of river basins were mapped. A common questionnaire was developed (Annex 1) and face-to-face interviews were conducted with more than 80 participants from 57 different government agencies (Annex 2: List of organisations surveyed) in the four target countries of the GBM region.

Interview requests and the questionnaire were sent to the ministries responsible for the management of water resources, forests, environment and energy, as well as to the disaster management authorities in all four target countries. Government platforms and mechanisms for transboundary water negotiation, such as the Joint River Commission (JRC), Bangladesh and the Lancang - Mekong Water Resources Cooperation Centre, China, were also included in the survey. In India, river basin organisations such as the Meghalaya River Basin Development Authority and the Brahmaputra Board, were interviewed. In Bangladesh, interviews included the agencies implementing water management projects such as the Department of Bangladesh Haor and Wetland Development (DoBHWD) and those engaged in planning and quality assurance for water projects, such as Water Resources Planning Organisation (WARPO), Flood Forecasting and Warning (FFWC) and Inland Water Transport (BIWTA). In China and Nepal, the survey also included representatives from government-funded academic and research organisations such as the Tribhuvan and the Kathmandu universities in Nepal and the South China Environmental Research Institute, as they are also potential partners of CSOs nationally. See Annex 2 for the list of organisations surveyed.

After conducting the face-to-face meetings, the information received from respondents was compiled and analysed to produce country reports. In China and Nepal, the key outcomes and lessons learned from the survey were also presented at a validation workshop with more than 10 participants. The input received from the validation workshops were incorporated into the final country reports. Based on the information captured in the country reports, this regional synthesis report has been produced. (Annex 3: IUCN Staff: interviewer and report drafting team)

1 GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVES ON EXISTING AND POTENTIAL ROLES OF CSOS

1.1 POLICY AND LEGISLATION

Though policy formulation and implementation were acknowledged by interviewees as government-led processes, CSOs were seen as useful partners in designing more effective, inclusive and holistic policies and also in providing support to their implementation.

The role of CSOs in providing informed input to policy dialogues was seen as important in most of the cases and their involvement during policy formulation was often recommended. CSOs bring experience from the ground on policy implementation and are sometimes more informed than governments on the effectiveness of the policy framework, through the work, research and dialogues they conduct at the local level. They can bring first-hand feedback or feedback from communities on policy implementation. They are also a useful integrator of multi-sectoral policies, often having an understanding of possible overlaps or even contradictions between policies on the ground.

Through their experience, CSOs also bring new thinking and new issues to the policy domain. Climate change, disaster risk reduction and gender were cited as domains in which CSOs have expertise that could be fed into policy formulation. An example given was the current National Water Policy of Bangladesh, which lacks a gender dimension; increased involvement of CSOs in legislation formulation could certainly improve this gap in the next revision of the law.

The role of CSOs in promoting transboundary policy on water was also highlighted (see 3.7), as they have greater freedom than governments to advocate for transboundary or global conventions and agreements. Informed CSOs can create movements and campaigns on global policies, which can result in interest from government to learn more about them.

On the other hand, some respondents argued that CSOs may not have much of a role in policy development, but can play a role in policy implementation. CSOs can do assessments of policy implementation and influence the government by identifying possible social and environmental impacts of the policy or project.

1.2 RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE

Research and knowledge production were seen as a core area of CSO engagement. From the government standpoint, their contribution is useful as it enables government institutions to access data from remote areas or on specific topics, therefore playing a vital role by informing the governments about on-the-ground realities. CSOs, by being on the ground, can collect and supply valuable data (on topography, hydrology, ecology and social issues), which governments may not easily obtain. CSOs understand the local context and have no language barrier; this makes it easier for them to collate information and data on community-level water governance challenges and opportunities. CSOs can also be economical sources of data generation (as they are often able to access and generate data without incurring high costs) and can play an especially important role in remote areas. CSOs also have the capacity to test research and data collection models for scaling up. These opportunities should be leveraged.

While the role of CSOs in data generation was identified as one of the core areas of CSO work, a number of government interviewees raised the issue of data credibility. Respondents felt that CSOs often did not have the capacity or resources for undertaking good research initiatives. Collected data has to be authentic, validated, and focused. Suggestions for improved data validation processes were made, including proper peer review of data and publication in reputed journals. The credibility of data remains the main barrier to the integration of CSO-produced knowledge into government-led processes.

1.3 CAPACITY-BUILDING

Capacity-building was seen as a major strength of CSOs, as they can play a very important role, especially with regard to community sensitisation on water issues. CSOs have the manpower and presence at the grassroots level, so they can give training to the community and other local stakeholders on relevant water issues. CSOs can involve communities living in shared river basins and strengthen their capacities on transboundary issues. When working in synergy with government, CSOs can be very effective in disseminating government messages, plans, strategies and policies to the community level, as they have experience in adapting languages and contents to a grassroots audience.

A few respondents mentioned that, even though capacity-building has historically been at the core of CSO missions, when it comes to transboundary water governance they sometimes lack proper knowledge and capacity themselves. Furthermore, CSOs are often working at a micro level or on some very specific topics and therefore do not have a broad view of the issues. It is important that CSOs build their own capacity on complex issues related to transboundary water governance so they can build the capacities of communities. The funding they receive from international donors and organisations, and the programmes developed through this funding, is an effective way to build their own capacity. This has long-term impact, as this capacity and knowledge is then transferred to the communities.

However, a few interviewees felt that there is a need to develop regional benchmarks and guidelines on capacity-building that should be followed by CSOs. It was also felt that CSOs should work closely with the government to ensure best results by implementing capacity-building in areas where it is required most. However, a limitation identified was the lack of long-term planning on capacity-building programmes, as CSOs are often project dependent and funding is often of limited duration. It is important that CSOs have a core team with needed capacity, which should focus on multiple issues of importance to the communities with which they are working.

1.4 COMMUNICATION, OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY

CSOs have a very strong role to play in communication and outreach. The reach of government agencies can be amplified through CSO networks as they have the capacity to reach out to communities (see also 3.3). CSOs can create awareness about the importance of sustainable use of water resources and they also have the capacity to build awareness on the need for regional water cooperation. Through their networks, CSOs can open multiple channels of communication, leading to the sharing of national and international research, standards and data. By sharing information with different levels of society, CSOs can help pre-empt conflict situations before they arise, if they work well.

However, several respondents felt that CSOs' role in advocacy and communication should be done with caution, as this could infringe on the role and responsibility of the government. The advocacy approach of CSOs was also said to be more effective when supported by experienced international organisations. They can help ensure quality control of the information disseminated and also ensure a language and approach suitable for various audiences, including government, in order to design constructive and impactful outreach strategies. The benefits of networks were emphasised; for example, networks can lead to improved harmonisation of CSO work, resulting in improved visibility, credibility and clarity of messages to governments. Many government agencies also felt that CSOs should focus primarily on capacity-building, education, outreach, etc. Nearly 40% of respondents in India were not comfortable with having CSOs engage in advocacy (except at local levels). Here, the role of organisations such as IUCN can become very important in acting as a bridge between CSOs and government organisations

1.5 COORDINATION ROLE AMONG RELEVANT GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The role of CSOs in strengthening coordination of government agencies at local level was cited as a valuable contribution, albeit often an informal and unofficial one. CSOs are an interface between governments and communities. Government processes are sometimes slow, as they follow certain information-decision pathways. CSOs can collect information from the local level and can help governments to take decisions faster. Coordination meetings at local levels (e.g. in Bangladesh at sub-district and district levels) could be considered as platforms to communicate “inputs on decision-making processes.”

CSOs enable coordination between communities, including at transboundary level. CSOs can help information sharing between communities and support trust-building across communities living in shared river basins. CSOs have the advantage of belonging to the local region and therefore of knowing the local languages and cultures.

In Bangladesh, CSOs and NGOs are already part of the government administration’s coordination system at the local level. CSOs can demonstrate integration in water resources management by bringing in knowledge on various themes related to water management (biodiversity, fisheries and livelihoods, hydropower) currently managed by different ministries.

However, most respondents felt that CSOs should have a catalytic role (related to information sharing) and not a direct implementation role when it comes to coordinating government agencies. The attitudes of government officers can be a barrier to the involvement of CSOs in projects, and mutual trust needs to be built so that governments can enhance their engagement with CSOs.

Also, it was felt that only reputable and trusted CSOs could be involved in this role. CSO networks could especially play a role in sharing information on impending natural disasters (e.g. floods) across state and national government agencies.

1.6 IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF GOVERNMENT-LED WATER RELATED PROJECTS

It was largely felt that CSOs would not be able to fully handle an implementation role unless it was on a small demonstration or pilot scale. CSOs can undertake small projects on their own (e.g. water management, irrigation and water channels, and “soft” activities like alternative income generation and livelihood activities, health and sanitation). CSOs should not be given full responsibility of government projects.

However, most respondents felt that CSOs could play a role as government partners. This role could focus on monitoring and learning, and providing feedback to government agencies. Partnerships with CSOs also appear to be a way for governments to raise additional funding.

Government-led national water initiatives, such as the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) programme in India, were cited as an example where CSOs are engaged, especially at the local level, in monitoring the impact of programmes and creating community awareness.

Monitoring mechanisms with CSOs and other stakeholders have been useful in many mega-infrastructure projects in Bangladesh in the past (e.g. Meghna-Bairab Bridge). CSOs can play a useful role in following up water projects to ensure that environmental standards are met and that local social

needs are fulfilled. However, one respondent felt that CSO evaluation of government projects could not be absolute, although their feedback would be valuable for the government to consider.

1.7 TRANSBOUNDARY COOPERATION

Governments face a range of political and diplomatic limitations when engaging in transboundary issues. It was acknowledged that, in some instances, CSOs can work more effectively beyond borders, through the use of more informal cooperation mechanisms. They can create awareness among governments about the activities of CSOs in other countries and the challenges faced by local communities. In theory, this should enable CSOs to fill important gaps in government-led work and to trigger new and innovative processes for effective government cooperation on transboundary issues. In this regard, CSOs are seen as an interesting potential agent of change on transboundary processes, enabling fair identification of transboundary problems, providing analysis for best solutions and advocating for implementation.

The ability of CSOs to look at issues from a basin or ecosystem perspective, and to engage in transboundary research and data sharing, was highlighted. CSO research programmes and their interactions with other CSOs and communities on the other side of the border lead to data generation, the identification of key transboundary issues, and to the design of solutions.

CSOs play a key role in demonstrating the need for, and the benefits of, transboundary cooperation, through the work they carry out at local level on issues such as fisheries, navigation, biodiversity conservation and disaster risk reduction (DRR).

When combined with official, government-led processes, the advocacy role of CSOs was seen as useful for progressing transboundary cooperation between states. CSOs are seen as capable of effectively influencing governments to take positions and viewpoints. When there is a joint vision between government and CSOs on an issue, CSOs can be effective in acting as informed pressure groups at the regional level, in the role of “unofficial ambassadors;” they are able to say things that a government representative cannot. The CSOs of downstream countries can highlight issues, impacts and facts about their territories to the CSOs and policy-makers from upstream countries.

Nevertheless, it was largely agreed that this positive role can only be fully effective in those situations in which governments and national CSOs have first had an opportunity to discuss and harmonise their views, before CSOs begin advocating at regional level. This requires important, in-country coordination work to be done. It was acknowledged that this first, internal step could be a challenging one, considering the diverse opinions of CSOs and the mandate of government. In particular, in India, 30% of interviewees felt that transboundary cooperation is only a mandate for government agencies and that CSOs do not have a role to play (or should function only under the direction of government bodies).

2 SUMMARY OF MAIN RISKS AND CHALLENGES OF WORKING WITH CSOS

The main issues identified by participants, underpinning their involvement and engagement with CSOs, were categorised as follows:

Capacity - Data Generation and Use:

Capacity-building and the development of knowledge and research were seen as core areas of work for CSOs (see 3.2 and 3.3). However, significant concerns were raised by interviewees about the credibility of the knowledge produced and the capacity of CSOs to tackle complex water governance issues through research and training. The acceptability of CSO-generated data was generally seen as low by government interviewees. This represents a major barrier to the effective contribution of CSOs to major policy or planning exercises on water.

Advocacy vs activism:

The role of CSOs in alerting authorities to new issues, identifying new pathways and providing new thinking emerged clearly during the interviews with government; however, a number of concerns were also associated with this mission.

A number of interviewees still perceived CSOs as having vested interests, taking sides without evidence or becoming too one-sided during discussions and negotiations. The neutrality of some CSOs was questioned and some were seen as acting “out of their mandate” when advocating against governments. This leads to trust issues and a lack of willingness of government to involve CSOs as partners.

Misinformed advocacy:

Some interviewees pointed to a lack of understanding on the part of CSOs about government policies and legislative processes, leading to misuse of data and information and negative influences on communities. The lack of “realism” was also mentioned; CSOs are seen as idealistic and sometimes disconnected from responsibilities, duties and constraints of government.

Lack of readability of messages from the CSO movement:

The division among CSOs was also presented as a constraint that prevents government from interacting effectively with the CSO sector. There is often a multitude of views and opinions within the CSO community. Improved coordination among CSOs would enable them to convey a stronger and more constructive message.

In China, the government is developing a classification system (A to AAAA levels) to evaluate CSO activities and impacts. The system is aimed at improving engagement between government and those CSOs that are rated the highest by the evaluation. Government interviewees felt that this would also help to ensure that CSOs work in a transparent manner and are willing to share data and information on their activities with the government.

3 PRIORITY AREAS FOR FUNDING

3.1 THEMES AND AREAS OF WORK

The specific themes and areas of work identified by government counterparts for CSO engagement were as follows:

- **Knowledge and research providers**, through mass meetings, conferences, development of sound databases and materials for policy improvement. CSOs can also make suggestions for reforms or amendments, especially on key focus areas such as climate change, disaster risk reduction, etc.
- **Capacity-building and awareness** of local communities: CSOs can develop learning tools and facilitate capacity-building workshops on innovative and best practices in water governance. Gender, youth and social inclusion issues were seen as priority areas of work where CSOs can contribute positively, as governments often have limited reach and capacity.
- **Representation of local communities** and their knowledge in government processes: There is an important role for CSOs to play in collating and cataloguing traditional knowledge and customary laws as practiced at the local level and in identifying the issues and challenges faced by communities and sharing these with government.
- **Implementation of local projects and activities** through improved coordination among key government agencies. CSOs can provide data and information in a timely manner to support planning and post-disaster responses. They can also help ensure participatory monitoring and feedback on relevant government initiatives and plans.

Thematically, there seems to be a consensus on the government side that CSOs could be an important ally on the following themes, when looking at rivers and river basin management:

- **Climate change and DRR** appeared as an important theme of work due to the capacity that CSOs have to interact closely with communities, and to support adaptation measures, plans and post-disaster responses.
- **Livelihoods in river basins:** CSOs can recommend ecologically-sound and locally relevant livelihoods to improve the socio-economic situation of communities.
- **Agriculture and fishing:** In the Upper Meghna Basin, CSOs are working with communities to improve their agriculture and fishing practices in the face of recurrent flooding. In the Mahakali Basin (India and Nepal), it was suggested that CSOs could work on improving local irrigation practices and cropping patterns, and develop strategies to increase income per drop of water use in agriculture.
- **Ecotourism:** Ecotourism and transboundary benefit-sharing are new concepts emerging in transboundary water governance. The Meghna Basin (Bangladesh and India) was cited as an example of where there are opportunities for CSOs to work with communities in developing transboundary ecotourism circuits.
- **Water, sanitation and hygiene:** This has been the traditional focus of CSO engagement in water governance. CSOs have capacity and are already contributing through their engagement in government-led initiatives and by supporting the achievement of water and sanitation targets set by the governments.

3.2 FUNDING PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIES

Based on recommendations from government interviewees, funding programmes aiming to support the work of CSOs on transboundary water governance should look at developing and strengthening the role of CSOs as government partners and allies on water governance and management issues in the region.

➤ **CSOs as trusted and credible evidence providers:**

It was commonly agreed by interviewees that CSOs can help to address government limitations and gaps in knowledge and science, and assist government to perform better through their wider access and reach. CSOs can produce reports on their research and dialogues, which can be distributed to government agencies to support the decision-making process.

To achieve this role more effectively, there is a need for programmes to strengthen the capacity of CSOs, so that they can effectively act as trusted and credible science providers on key issues related to basin management. This includes the need to strengthen capacity to develop, publish and disseminate credible scientific research, which can be acknowledged and used within government processes.

- Programmes could fund CSO training programmes on scientific methodologies, data management, scientific publications and research. Capacity-building programmes should also support CSOs to better understand policy implications and to address emerging topics and issues in transboundary basin management (e.g. global conventions on water). This capacity strengthening would enable CSOs to work as knowledge providers in a credible and impactful manner.
- Several government interviewees mentioned the possibility of joint research between government, CSOs and academics. This would provide an opportunity to strengthen cooperation, improve the credibility of CSOs, and to build mutual trust. CSOs can play a vital role in bringing on-the-ground realities to the discussion table via their respective governments. Joint studies are seen as an important mechanism for identifying facts and bringing about technical consensus; this, in turn, can lead to political consensus and to political relationships. Joint research also has the benefit of generating co-funding for government-led research.

➤ **CSOs as organised ambassadors of the voice of the people and informed pressure groups:**

Programmes of work should also look at the governance of CSOs, in order to increase their visibility as a coherent network, and their ability to interact with governments at all levels and to deliver joint messages on water issues. There is a need for separate CSO groups, forums and platforms on water; existing environmental forums do not adequately address water-related issues, as they become diluted amongst the multitude of other concerns. These platforms (e.g. the GBM CSO Network) can act as a coherent and harmonised pressure group to convey demands, knowledge and recommendations from the ground. Programmes of work could include developing and/or strengthening regional and national alliances and networks, in order to create clear institutional structures which are recognised by governments and with which governments can interact. Frequent and direct communication between those platforms and government should be established at all levels (central, provincial and local).

➤ **CSOs as government partners on transboundary water governance and management**

It was acknowledged that governments have limitations of time, resources, capacities (e.g. technical know-how, understanding of the situation on the ground), and processes (e.g. procedures and formalities that delay intervention in non-disaster situations) and that CSOs are needed to overcome these limitations. Programmes supporting this interaction and complementarity between government

and CSOs would benefit both groups and lead to enhanced results at all levels and impactful scaling up.

- These programmes could create and support interface between governments and CSOs at all levels, through the development of institutionalised platforms and forums. This should go along with the development of guidelines for cooperation, establishing clear methodologies for joint working. Furthermore, it was suggested that adoption of good governance practices by CSOs, such as transparency and sharing of performance evaluation reports on CSO project and activities, would help strengthen trust and programmatic engagement between government and CSOs.
- Programmes of work could also support joint projects co-implemented by governments and CSOs. CSOs need to find their particular niche within such projects. Interviewees suggested that the government could focus on policy intervention whilst the CSOs could lead on community engagement. CSOs could also become involved in monitoring government-led interventions.

Some interviewees mentioned government-led initiatives to create space for CSOs, through the development of CSO-friendly policies and the allocation of dedicated funding to support the engagement of CSOs in water governance projects. There are a number of such initiatives that promote and fund CSO-led actions on environmental and nature conservation issues, as well as water and sanitation. A good example is the support that is being provided by the Ministry of Environment in India for CSOs to undertake mass awareness campaigns on nature conservation.

Summary Table on Priorities for CSO Programme Development, as Proposed by Government Interviewees

Types of engagement expected	Themes of work proposed	Programmatic strategies and approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research and science (including citizen science); ▪ Capacity-building to CSOs and local stakeholders; ▪ Informed outreach and advocacy to governments; ▪ Monitoring of government-led programmes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction; ▪ Livelihoods in river basins; ▪ Agriculture and fishing; ▪ Ecotourism; ▪ Water, sanitation and hygiene. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capacity-building programmes for CSOs on scientific research methods, communications and outreach; ▪ Capacity-building programmes for CSOs on water governance and emerging issues (e.g. global conventions on water); ▪ Joint research involving government organisations, academic institutions and CSOs on water/river issues; ▪ Development and capacity-building of national and regional CSO platforms and networks; ▪ Support for the development and strengthening of institutionalised GO/CSO cooperation frameworks (dialogue platforms and guidelines); ▪ Support for CSO involvement in government-led projects (e.g. monitoring, outreach to communities).

Annex 1: Questionnaire for Government Survey

Duration of interaction: 40-50 minutes

Objectives of the survey

The survey has been designed to capture suggestions, ideas and perceptions of relevant stakeholders from the government on following two aspects:

- a) How best BRIDGE GBM CSOs Network and individual CSOs could contribute to the improved governance of shared water resources in the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) region.
- b) Specific opportunities where multilateral donors and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) can prioritise their activities to be able to better contribute to the regional and national priorities

The survey will be done in Bangladesh, China, India and Nepal. Based on the outcomes of this survey a synthesis report will be developed identifying specific action points for aligning activities of CSOs with the priorities and programme of local and national governments in the water governance sector.

Questions

1. How **could CSOs strengthen cooperation** for the sustainable governance of the GBM Rivers? Consider following themes and indicate how you value CSOs engagement and why.

Themes	1-4 (1 Very valuable; 2 Valuable; 3 Not much value; 4) Not Sure)	Justify score and indicate one entry point for each (specific opportunities for CSOs engagement)
Transboundary cooperation		
Policy and legislation		
Research and Knowledge		
Capacity-building		
Communication, Outreach and Advocacy		

(Please consider the actions identified by the GBM CSOs Vision under each theme)

2. Sanitation and early warning are traditional areas for CSO engagement on water governance¹ issues. What in your view are the emerging or priority areas for CSO engagement on water governance or management issues?
3. From a donor's perspective, what type of CSOs activities (national and local level) shall be prioritised for funding? Where there is a requirement and CSO engagement will support the achievements of government objective.

¹ Water governance is the set of rules, practices, and processes through which decisions for the management of water resources and services are taken and implemented, and decision-makers are held accountable.

4. Please provide some examples of existing platforms, mechanisms or processes linked to governance of shared water resources where CSO engagement is possible. Do you feel CSOs could contribute to transboundary dialogue mechanisms?
5. What are the strategic risks linked to CSOs engagement in transboundary water issues? What will be your recommendation to manage these risks?
6. How can communication and trust between governments and CSOs be strengthened? What are current opportunities for interaction? Please indicate specific examples of strategies that CSOs could apply.
7. What in your opinion is the value of CSO engagement in the following areas? (Please consider transboundary and regional cooperation aspects):

Thematic areas	1-4 (1 Very valuable; 2 Valuable; 3 Not much value; 4) Not Sure)	Justification (how?)
Data generation on socio-ecological and cultural aspects of the shared river basin		
Coordination among relevant government agencies		
Implementation, monitoring and evaluation of water related programmes/schemes		
Building trust across communities living in shared river basins		
Inland Navigation		
Early warning and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)		
Others		

Annex 2: List of Organisation Surveyed

S/ No	Organisation Name	Country
1	Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR)	Bangladesh
2	Department of Bangladesh Haor and Wetland Development (DoBHWD)	
3	Agriculture, Water & Environment Division, Department of Bangladesh Haor and Wetland Development (DoBHWD)	
4	Joint Rivers Commission Bangladesh (JRCB)	
5	Environment, Forest and Fishery Section, Water Resources Planning Organization (WARPO)	
6	Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB)	
7	Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC), BWDB	
8	Dhaka Laboratory, Department of Environment (DoE)	
9	Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA)	
10	International Cooperation Center, National Forestry and Grassland Administration (NFGA)	China
11	Wetland Department, National Forestry and Grassland Administration (NFGA)	
12	China- ASEAN Environmental Cooperation Center, Ministry of Ecology and Environment (MEE)	
13	China- ASEAN Environmental Cooperation Center, Ministry of Ecology and Environment (MEE)	
14	China Association for NGO Cooperation (CANGO) under Ministry of Commerce (MOC)	
15	PowerChina, State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council (SASAC)	
16	China Three Gorges Corporation (SASAC)	
17	Division Head, Ministry of Transport (MOT)	
18	Navigation Bureau, Ministry of Transport (MOT)	
19	Chinese Academy for Environmental Planning, Ministry of Ecology and Environment (MEE)	
20	Lancang - Mekong Water Resources Cooperation Center, Ministry of Water Resources (MWR)	

21	South China Environmental Research Institute, Ministry of Ecology and Environment (MEE)		
22	Guangdong Provincial Department of Forestry		
23	Yunnan Provincial Department of Forestry		
24	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)		
25	Central Water Commission (CWC)	India	
26	National Water Development Agency (NWDA)		
27	National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM)		
28	National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)		
29	Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER)		
30	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)		
31	Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)		
32	Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR)		
33	Brahmaputra Board, Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation (MoWR, RD&GR)		
34	Technical Advisory Committee, Water Resources Department, Government of Assam		
35	National River Conservation Directorate (NRCD)		
36	Watershed Management Directorate, Government of Uttarakhand		
37	Ministry of Energy, Water Resource and Irrigation (MoEWI)		Nepal
38	Ministry of Forests and Environment (MoFE)		
39	Water and Energy Commission Secretariat (WECS)		
40	Chief District Office - Province -1		
41	Baraha Municipality, Chakraghati - Province 1		
42	Ministry of Industry, Tourism, and Forest and Environment – Province 4		
43	Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperatives – Province 4		
44	District Coordination Committee – Province 4		
45	Ministry of Industry, Tourism, and Forest and Environment – Province 7		
46	Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperatives – Province 7		
47	Ministry of Social Development – Province 7		

48	Ministry of Physical Infrastructure Development – Province 7	
49	Bhimdutta Municipality- Province 7	
50	Department of Irrigation (DOI), Ministry of Irrigation	
51	Department of Water Induced Division Management (DWIDM), Ministry of Water Resources	
52	Department of Hydrology and Meteorology (DHM), Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation	
53	President Chure Conservation Programme (MoFE)	
54	Department of Forest and Soil Conservation (DoFSC)	
55	National Planning Commission (NPC) of Nepal	
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