

3 Pages

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **IWMI-Nepal Open Day to Celebrate IWMI's 25 Years of Research**

*Jawalakhel, Lalitpur, 08<sup>th</sup> June 2010.* Today, the Nepal Office of the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) is organizing an IWMI-Nepal Open Day to celebrate IWMI's 25th anniversary and highlight its long and fruitful relationship with Nepal. The event takes place at Hotel Himalaya, Lalitpur from 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm and will be followed by a reception. The invitees include Secretaries of the ministries of Irrigation, Energy, Water and Energy Commission, Environment, Agriculture, Rural Development, members of the IWMI-Nepal Consultative Committee, academics and water professionals, representatives of donor agencies, embassies, consulates, INGOs working in agriculture and water management in Nepal.

The program for the Open Day will highlight IWMI's global research program, IWMI's work in Nepal and present an overview of the upcoming program and areas that IWMI could contribute to in sustainable land and water management in Nepal. Although Nepal is a water-rich nation with over 6,000 rivers, the country has to cope with acute economic water scarcity. IWMI's current research activities aim to improve water availability and access in river basins and devise adaptive management strategies to deal with climate change. In this respect, "IWMI will further strengthen partnership with national water related institutions and local researchers by enhancing and developing their capability for research", said Dr. Dhruba Pant, Head of IWMI-Nepal.

IWMI first began its activities in Nepal in 1986, with a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Nepal. The primary objective was to undertake research in irrigation management and strengthen the research capability of concerned government agencies.

Research highlighted the importance of the users' role in irrigation management which paved the way for the introduction of participatory irrigation management in Agency Managed Irrigation Systems (AMIS). The formation of a Water User's Association (WUA) and inclusion of women in it, the introduction of an irrigation service fee and the increased role of users in operation and maintenance, were some of the major policy reforms introduced. In addition, IWMI initiated a policy dialogue on water use, food grain production and environmental protection issues in the East Rapti river basin.

IWMI has studied the socio-economic and ecological implications of groundwater in the Nepal Terai. The institute documented experiences in community-based electricity management in Nepal and its application for promoting community-managed electric tube wells. The institute also conducted studies in one catchment in western Nepal, identifying community-based strategies for integrated resource management through a 'platform' approach.

The development of appropriate tools for studies on irrigation management, river basin, gender, institutions and guidelines for research on FMIS and AMIS were the successful outputs of collaborative research between IWMI and partners, but there is more work to be done. Nepal urgently needs a functional water resources information system (WRIS). At present, water-related information and data are managed by multiple agencies.

IWMI is currently working with government agencies, mainly the Ministry of Irrigation and Water Energy Commission Secretariat, and several departments of the Government of Nepal, local institutions, INGOs and CBOs.

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**Notes to Editors:**

**About IWMI:** IWMI is a nonprofit, scientific research organization focusing on the sustainable use of land and water resources in agriculture, to benefit poor people in developing countries. IWMI's mission is "Improving the management of land and water resources for food, livelihoods and the environment." IWMI has its headquarters in Sri Lanka and regional offices in Africa and Asia. The Institute works in partnership with developing countries, international and national research institutes, universities and other organizations to develop tools and technologies that contribute to poverty reduction as well as food and livelihood security.

See [www.iwmi.org](http://www.iwmi.org).

**About the CGIAR:** The CGIAR, established in 1971, is a strategic partnership of countries, international and regional organizations and private foundations supporting the work of 15 international Centers, of which IWMI is one. In collaboration with national agricultural research systems, civil society and the private sector, the CGIAR fosters sustainable agricultural growth through high-quality science aimed at benefiting the poor through stronger food security, better human nutrition and health, higher incomes and improved management of natural resources.

See [www.cgiar.org](http://www.cgiar.org)