**Declarations of Regional Conference on Rainwater Harvesting and Management:** "Harnessing Rainwater for Enhanced Water Security and Climate Resilience."

Kathmandu, March 19, 2024

On the occasion of World Water Week 2024, a two-day regional conference on “**Rainwater Harvesting and Management: Harnessing Rainwater for Enhanced Water Security and Climate Change**” was organized jointly by Smart WASH Solutions and SNV Nepal as a collective effort of Department of Water Supply and Sewerage Management, UN Agencies, development partners, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, and private sector. It was organized during 18-19 March, 2024 at Kathmandu with one key note address, two Plenary Sessions with six plenary presentations, two panel discussions (Mayor’s session and Policy dialogue) and five Technical Sessions with 24 Technical Presentations. As a result of the discussion held, following points are agreed as declarations of this conference.

1. **Integrate traditional knowledge, practices, and local resources with appropriate technologies to ensure climate resilience in rainwater harvesting systems:**

We recognize the value of traditional knowledge, practices, and local resources in rainwater harvesting. Efforts need to be made to integrate such traditional wisdom with appropriate technologies reviving traditional ponds to promote climate resilience in rainwater harvesting systems.

1. **Collaboration and Policy Advocacy for Climate Resilience in Rainwater Harvesting Systems:**

Recognizing the critical role of rainwater recharge systems (roof top, surface runoff and catchment), we strongly advocate for the adoption of mandatory rainwater recharge systems during the construction of every house, promoting sustainable management of rainwater resources and scale up of the rainwater harvesting system including public space, and entrepreneurship development.

**3. Promote collaboration among network groups, research institutions, and technology developers to promote indigenous practices and to advance innovative solutions and technologies for RWH systems**:

We encourage collaboration and partnerships among network groups, research institutions, and technology developers to foster innovation in rainwater harvesting systems. We recognize that collaborative efforts, sharing of expertise, resources, and experiences are crucial in advancing the development and adoption of innovative solutions and smart technologies for effective rainwater harvesting that are based on scientific research, ensuring their effectiveness in enhancing water security, food security and climate resilience through Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR).

**4. Support capacity-building initiatives to enhance knowledge, skills, and expertise in the design, implementation, and maintenance of effective RWH systems:**

We emphasize the need to invest in capacity-building initiatives to enhance the knowledge, skills, and expertise of individuals and organizations involved in rainwater harvesting. We recognize that building capacity in the design, implementation, and maintenance of effective rainwater harvesting systems is essential for the successful adoption and sustainability of such practices. Stakeholders will join hands to generate endowment funds to support research, innovation, technological development, and capacity building in promoting rainwater harvesting as climate-resilient solutions.

**5. Establish a resource center related to rainwater harvesting:**

We recognize the importance of having a dedicated resource center for rainwater harvesting. The National Rainwater harvesting alliance will take necessary initiatives to build and promote a resource center that provides comprehensive information, technical guidance, and practical resources related to rainwater harvesting. This center will facilitate knowledge dissemination, training programs, and awareness campaigns to enhance the understanding and adoption of rainwater harvesting practices.

6. **Ensuring Water Quality in Rainwater Harvesting:**

We acknowledge the paramount importance of water quality and public health concern in rainwater harvesting systems. Considering this, we emphasize the urgent need to prioritize water quality and public health considerations in rainwater harvesting practices for social acceptance and adoption of sustainable practices and technologies that minimize the contamination of rainwater. We encourage the implementation of effective treatment systems, as well as the utilization of eco-friendly approaches, to maintain water quality standards.