

Summary of the Portuguese language conference (in English)

Two hundred and twelve collaborators were enrolled in this third work stage with the important inclusion of new lusophone colleagues from Portugal, Mozambique, Angola and Cabo Verde who joined the net after the Johannesburg Sustainable Development Summit – WSD - held in South Africa last August.

Sixty-six messages were received in the period from September 16 to 16 October 2002, including the orientation messages from the coordinators and moderator. Of this universe, most were messages from women, and the male contribution was from 8 participants, of whom 3 were from African countries. About 27 people contributed during this stage of the e-conference. Based on the work agenda proposed by the moderator, valuable contributions were presented, especially those from participants Andréa Carestiato and Maria do Carmo Zinato, whom we thank for their performance in collaborating. Others also made constructive contributions including Carolina Dubeux, Amyra El Khalili, Malu Ribeiro, Maria Helena Murta, Ursula Zimmermann, Lucia Praciano Minervino, Joenia Wapichana, Laura Jesus, Rosangela, Flavia Mochel, Muriel Saragoussi, Lara Miranda, Manuela Moreira and Ruth Saldanha, whom we thank for ideas and suggestion and also our companions Sergio Travassos, Mick, Carlos Alberto Pinheiro, Adilson Vieira, Landu Kama, Rafael Neto, Edinaldo Souza, Jorge Silva e Livaningo.

This third stage started slowly as did the e-conferences in Spanish, French and English. Perhaps the necessary interruption between stages 2 and 3 because of summer holidays in the countries north of the equator and the Sustainable Development Summit in Johannesburg, between the end of August and the beginning of September, reduced participants' attention on the activities of this final stage of the e-conference. The lack of manifestation and discussion, as well as the total silence of the majority during the development of the conference work, might be explained by the lack of knowledge of the themes treated, ongoing commitments and also the lack of interest some have shown in sharing their knowledge, because it is a cooperation exercise, even though they had access to other information and aggregated knowledge.

The work of colleagues Marco Leão Gelman and Carmen Baldo at the Agencia Contato Aquariana (Aquarian Contact Agency) should be mentioned with their report produced on the workshop and research carried out during the meeting of the Encontro da Cidadania pelas Aguas (Meeting of Citizenship for the Waters), in Nogueira, Petropolis, Brazil, in March 2002. About 150 participants of a universe of 600 specialists and persons interested in the water theme were questioned at the time on the incorporation of gender in water resource management and the results are summarized in the third stage recommendations in this document.

The need to deepen the knowledge of the relationship between gender and water in subsequent stages became evident from contributions, such as from Andréa Carestiato, in this third stage of the e-conference, both from the results of the workshop and the research done in Nogueira, Petropolis, and further by the research done among participants at the end of each preceding stage. It was found that many Portuguese-speaking countries, according to the universe previously indicated, do not have a cultural base yet of the members of society that allows results to be obtained, as in other areas of the planet and where their introduction is already more advanced and with expressive results.

There are indications that in the Portuguese speaking countries the power of decision in general is still in the hands of the men and the situation is not different for the subject of water resource management, even though there is legislation regarding the equity between genders, such as in Mozambique, referred to among the cases.

Further we present the points raised by Carolina Dubeux on the need to consider/include the economic value to water, and mechanism of charging for its use. It is important to find the balance between use and price, where the poorest could have access to minimum quantities, without charge, to meet their basic needs and other layers of society would pay for their consumption, following a distributive process and decrease in social inequalities.

Our colleague Ymá Almeida presented results that the United Nations and its Gender Commission defined internationally in 2002, in addition to what had been discussed in Bonn in December 2001 during the Conference on Fresh Water whose central theme was 'Water for the Poor'.

This third stage brings to an end the e-conference discussion on the Incorporation of Gender in Water Resource Management, that had two previous stages, carried out between 28 January – 24 February and 04 April - 31 May 2002, respectively.

The moderator will also use recommendations made in stages 1 and 2 – messages 126 and 256, respectively, by the participants as a way of positioning the needs of the Lusophone world that is spread throughout several regions of the planet such as Africa, Southeast Asia, Europe and Latin America. The first stage discussed general concepts while the second explained case studies in gender and water. It is pointed out that four of the 10 referred cases in the Synthesis Document that served as base for the discussion of this third stage of the e-conference, were from Portuguese speaking countries as mentioned, that although national, also have an international perspective.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

FIRST STAGE:

1. Obtainment for diffusion on the lusophone net of successful and unsuccessful experiences from other parts of the world for diffusion in the community of Portuguese speaking countries – partially met in the Synthesis Document of the previous stages carried out in the four languages, as presented by the WEDC, available to all the participants and also placed on the GWA site.
2. Obtainment for diffusion on the lusophone net of the specialized bibliography and didactic material in Portuguese for training in important gender and water themes.
3. Effective in-field training of local communities to know and master techniques that enable a change in role focus, for both women and men, in water resource management and in the decision making process, providing the opportunity for effective participation by women, whether at the level of technical qualification, or the social and economic level so that they can exercise their function at local level, on the water basin committees and also at the highest level of power of decision and in the formulation of public policies.
4. Deeper knowledge of the national and international legislation on water resources, from the level of water basin level, especially areas of natural springs.
5. Need to democratize access to water in physical, financial and institutional terms, meeting what was agreed internationally by the UN with the Millennium Aim of Universal Access to Potable Water by 2015, with the addition of the aims agreed in Johannesburg, at the Sustainable Development Summit, that also included universal basic sanitation by 2015.
6. Increase in knowledge on underground water and sources of mineral water.
7. Need to internalize the concept of gender for the Portuguese speaking countries that is still unknown to many and little applied by others.
8. Low internalization of the themes of gender and water was also detected in academic circles in general.
9. Time is needed in Portuguese speaking countries for further maturing on the potential existing on themes of gender and water, unlike findings in other regions on the subject.
10. The insertion of the theme of gender and its equity in legislation in Portuguese speaking countries is still infrequent and it does not contain assessment and monitoring tools to define the best ways to obtain the greatest dissemination of the theme in areas of knowledge, academics, popular knowledge in the local communities and the day to day life of civil society.

THIRD STAGE

The indication of key intervention points for the Portuguese-speaking countries in gender and water was substantiated at three levels, as follows:

- Local level – extensive mapping of the social, economic and environmental conditions per water basin is needed to know the state of the art of the subject;
- Institutional level – the central normative agencies, when they exist in the countries, need to incorporate the theme in practical terms, the same is applicable to the states and/or other forms of territorial sub-division and institutional jurisdiction, and location, besides incorporation in pertinent legislation. The university also needs this incorporation while the creation of work groups and/or technical chambers on the theme is a prime necessity.
- Strategic level – policies that define the fostering of research and technology lines besides guide lines for education, training and diffusion on the incorporation of the themes gender and water.

12. Setting up of a suitable diffusion structure for the lusphone net that considers the cultural peculiarities and diversities and the various and appropriate vehicles that allow proper dissemination of the information both at country level and considering the existing international connections.
13. Systematic monitoring of the state of the water resources in the countries included in items of legislation and public policies for gender and water integration.
14. Elaboration of training programs for leadership for water resources that takes into account opportunity for everyone.
15. Perfecting, where suitable, of the charging mechanisms for use of the water resource as a means of overcoming difficulties of scarcity, waste and other habits that should be reconsidered.
16. Definition and implementation of policies for gender and water that are in line with the recommendation of the UN regarding equal opportunities and rejection of discrimination in civil society as a whole, projecting and implementing structures that combat discriminatory power and increase citizens' self esteem.
17. The need to integrate efforts in gender and water with other themes such as poverty, pollution, health, environmental education, leadership, exercise of citizenship, and other themes connected and related in public policies.

FINAL INFORMATION

At a date to be informed later the summaries the other conferences carried out concomitantly in English, French and Spanish will be made available, duly translated into Portuguese. We thank you all for your collaboration