

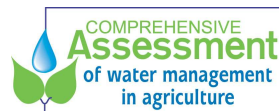
**Both ENDS, GWA, CA**

**Effective gender mainstreaming in water management for  
sustainable livelihoods: From guidelines to practice.**

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B • T H **ENDs**



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# 1 Introduction

## Gender and water

Gender specialists recognize the need for gender mainstreaming in water resources management. Different international organizations and networks have analysed the relation between gender inequities and non-sustainable water management practices. They have produced valuable guidelines and training kits. Over the past years, a wide range of case examples of more or less successful gender mainstreaming in specific projects has been documented and analysed, again confirming that gender equity leads to sustainable poverty alleviation.

Water managers all over the world, working on local, national and international level, recognise the importance of gender mainstreaming in water management. Yet, despite this recognition, and despite the numerous tool kits, guidelines and the rather conclusive evidence that gender equity is essential for efficient sustainable (water) resources management, the large majority of water management initiatives on local, national and international level fail to mainstream gender aspects. It is not clear whether this is because of lack of knowledge of where and how the best interventions could be made, key decision makers not being convinced that these are valuable interventions, inappropriate or poor guidelines, or poor outreach and uptake of guidelines.

This proposal aims to move to an informed, context specific, action-oriented approach. The proposed activities contribute to effective gender mainstreaming in the context of water management for sustainable livelihoods and poverty alleviation. It builds on initiatives that assess "what, why" and prescribe methodologies and tools, to address the practical "how" of including gender issues in field projects that relate to water and agriculture.

The project should be considered as a stepping-stone towards a longer-term initiative to effectively bridge the gap that still exists between the water management sector and those working in the field of gender. The output of this project will strengthen projects and activities by practitioners as well as policy makers from different types of organisations – civil society organisations, research institutions and governmental organisations.

## Project team

The project brings together a team of three active partners that consider gender responsiveness as a critical element for sustainable water management in the rural sector and river basin context. The team has complementary skills, networks and needs: 1) A network of gender and/or water experts – the Gender and Water Alliance (GWA)-, 2) a network of NGOs working on natural resources management coordinated by Both ENDS, 3) a network of researchers and agriculture experts working within a global program, the Comprehensive Assessment on water management in agriculture (CA, hosted by IWMI).

The **GWA** has built over the last 5 years a vast network of organisations and individuals (over 500 members in more than 80 countries) that have a special interest in as well as practical and scientific knowledge on mainstreaming gender in water management at all levels. The alliance has developed methodologies, tools, guidelines and a set of documented case examples to support this important process. Thanks to intensive campaigning and outreach water and gender issues are strongly recognised on the international fora. However, the practical implementation of gender mainstreaming within the context of integrated water resources management IWRM remains a challenge for the network and its

partners. The water supply and sanitation sector has received relatively more attention in GWA's activities

The GWA recognises the need to expand its influence to and strengthen its knowledge about the world of "water and agriculture" and "water and the ecosystems". It therefore needs to identify the main obstacles, limitations to and opportunities for gender mainstreaming in rural water management for agriculture.

Since 1986, **Both ENDS** has been active in strengthening NGOs and other local civil society organisations in their activities in creating sustainable livelihoods. Based on the case studies gathered in the Encyclopaedia of Sustainability, Both ENDS and one of its strategic partners, Gomukh (Pune, India) initiated in 2001 a 4-year project 'River Basin Management: A Negotiated Approach'. The main objective of this project is to compare locally-rooted, participatory approaches to integrated river basin management (IRBM) with mainstream, centralised approaches in seven well targeted cases across the world. Gender was one of the five critical issues to sustainable river basin management that the teams were to investigate. Most of them failed to address it practically in their approach. The experience of this group of NGOs reflects the more general challenge of mainstreaming gender in IRBM: While in international initiatives and discourses, gender equity is identified as crucial to sustainable water management, gender mainstreaming is not that widespread.

For Both ENDS and its network of partners it is urgent to understand proposed gender mainstreaming approaches and to translate these into the practical, day-to-day implementation of local water management initiatives.

The **Comprehensive Assessment on water management in agriculture (CA)** aims to support water investment decisions in agriculture to enhance food and environmental security and to contribute to poverty reduction. The CA provides a process to bring together water and agriculture specialists, practitioners, as well as gender and poverty specialists and set gender in water management and policy development one step closer. Through an extensive consultation, review, and assessment process, the CA intends to guide management and investment decisions in water management for agriculture. In that process, it investigates in depth critical issues of poverty and gender in water management in agriculture. The CA will ensure that gender and poverty issues are adequately considered when building a knowledge base on water management in agriculture to support policy-making, strategies, and designs.

The main challenge of the CA is to provide clear understanding of the gender and poverty issues in water management in agriculture, and to clarify the benefits of gender mainstreaming, and consequences if not done, through a process in which researchers, gender experts and practitioners contribute their knowledge and experiences. The CA provides a platform to synthesize knowledge as well as outreach to its network of researchers and practitioners.

Of this proposed activity **GWA** will be the contracting partner for the partnership.

## **2 Challenges, objectives and target groups**

### **2.1 Key challenges of the project**

Since the adoption of the Dublin principles of water management in 1992, gender issues have been given a place on the agendas of international conferences on water management. Since then, knowledge of the close links between gender equity, poverty alleviation and sustainable water management has grown.

Today, the main challenge remains to effectively include gender issues and pro-poor approaches as integral parts of project and process design, implementation and policy discussions on water management. Whereas most water management initiatives recognise the importance of gender differences, their design and implementation often fail to utilize women's and men's different expertise, thus losing out in efficiency and impact of activities. They fail to address gender inequalities. Likewise, most policy discussions and scientific analyses of water management issues tend to approach gender and social issues as a separate dimension, failing to integrate the gender and other social inequities in water management and access to water resources as a crucial element in poverty reduction. Because women contribute substantially to agricultural production, and in many instances have limited access and control over land and water, gender mainstreaming is arguably a key to sustainable productivity increases.

## **2.2 Overall Objectives**

The overall goal is ***to mainstream gender in water management in agriculture for poverty reduction.***

The project will contribute to the goal through the following objectives.

- 1. To assess the potential, applicability, and limits to practical interventions and approaches for gender mainstreaming in pro-poor water management practices and policies by analysing existing literature, guidelines, and case studies. .*

The analysis will identify the reasons that guidelines for mainstreaming gender are or are not taken up:

- Why do the overall majority of water management experts not include gender issues as a key element in their activities? Is it a lack of appropriate knowledge and information being generated? Lack of outreach and training on the topic?
  - Do the current tools fail to address their needs, to link to their day-to-day realities? Do the kits and guidelines, for example, ignore the constant pressure to show results on income generation, on policy and action plans, etc? Are the kits missing the point by being too general, too prescriptive, or not giving the right kind of advice?
  - Or are they disregarded due to more fundamental differences of opinion on the alleged priority of gender issues?
2. To assess the knowledge base on water and agriculture to understand whether principles brought out in gender approaches and processes are backed by knowledge, and whether knowledge generated is relevant to field practitioners.
    - Are gender guidelines and practices backed by the knowledge base?
    - Is the knowledge base generated helpful to field implementers?
    - Are there important gaps in the knowledge base where gender could be better addressed?
    - What are key areas where knowledge producers are missing the opportunity to better include gender?
  3. *To define a common ground by identifying the differences and commonalities in addressing gender, poverty as well social concerns in water management in agriculture through an exchange and learning process between water managers, agriculture specialists, researchers, gender and poverty specialists and representative farmer's and water user associations.*

Knowledge exchange and discussions between water management and gender experts will result in:

- The development of a practical 'minimal agenda' for gender mainstreaming, including a set of supporting performance criteria.
- The identification and a set of guidelines to achieve the minimal agenda.
- A set of short-term recommendations on how to facilitate gender mainstreaming in the implementation of water management projects.

### **2.3 Target groups**

The three partner's networks are the primary target group:

- NGOs and community based organisations involved in agriculture, natural resources and river basin management;
- NGOs and community based organisations specialising in gender and resources management strategies and actions;
- Practitioners managing natural resources or developing agriculture;
- Researchers working on water and poverty issues at community, national and international levels;
- Experts and policy makers advising decision makers and donor organisations on gender, water and poverty issues.

## **3 Activities**

*Objective 1: Assess gender processes, guidelines and approaches. :*

1a) Examine existing gender guidelines, including the instruments developed by GWA and IUCN, to understand what is in them, and why they work or not. Water management experts will:

- Critically evaluate existing guidelines, manuals and tools
- Interview people on their use
- Develop a document with findings and recommendations

*Objective 2: Assess the knowledge base on water and agriculture*

2a) GWA identifies and engages people to review CA chapters and the Both ENDS proposed 'Negotiated Approach' from gender lens.

2b) First discussion round with the project team at a CA meeting on September 26 CA meeting to work with chapter authors.

2c) Prepare a joint document is prepared synthesizing findings on the knowledge base, paying special attention to the links between water, gender and poverty in the framework of the CA and to the operational work of the GWA, Both ENDS and partner organisations.

*Objective 3 – Common ground:*

3a) Hold a focused meeting (5 to 10 people) to define the minimum agenda – the way forward after examining experience of both exercises.

3b) Hold a web-based discussion to get further input on a 'minimal agenda' and set of bottom-line criteria, as well as guidelines that are context relevant, but not prescriptive. Key questions for discussion include

- Do guidelines match the knowledge base – or are there missing or impractical elements?
- Are there convincing arguments?
- What updates on guidelines could be recommended?

3c) Synthesis document, including:

- A 'minimal agenda' for practical, realistic gender mainstreaming, including a set of supporting performance criteria.
- A set of key guidelines, providing context specific, flexible and practical actions to achieve the minimal agenda.
- A set of short term recommendations on how to facilitate gender mainstreaming in the implementation of water management projects.

3d) Presentation of results during the 4<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum (Mexico 2006).

### Communication and outreach

The proposed set of activities is closely linked to the ongoing work of the three partners and will be incorporated in their own process and work. As the work unfolds, they will assure that preliminary and final results will be mainstreamed in and communicated through their regular project and programme activities.

The advantage of linking it with the various programs is that the results can be transmitted to a variety of audiences. The CA results will be widely available to the water management community at national and international levels, and research communities. Both ENDS and the GWA will involve their members throughout the process, on the one hand facilitating the exchange of experiences and on the other hand raising awareness where necessary.

The results of the effort will be highlighted at the 4<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum, the 2006 Stockholm Water Week, and other upcoming events related to water. In addition, the documents will be presented during relevant meetings in which each project partner participates independently.

## **4 Concrete results and long-term outcomes**

### **4.1 Results**

The results of the project will consist of

1. An analysis of the impediments to gender mainstreaming in water management, and recognition of the limits to gender mainstreaming; an analysis of gender "bright spots" highlighting key reasons for success.
2. A minimal agenda for the near future, which both gender experts and agricultural water managers agree to be a realistic first step towards genuine gender mainstreaming. and a simple set of indicators to monitor progress;
3. Plan of Action towards implementation of the minimal agenda.

### **4.2 Outcomes**

The project will make steps to contribute to:

- Improved guidelines and processes to mainstream gender, in water and agriculture activities made possible because of the identifications of main constraints in their uptake.
- Improved collaboration between researchers, managers and practitioners with gender and poverty experts to find practical and realistic approaches to gender mainstreaming.
- Better targeted research on gender, water, agriculture, and poverty.

- Practical, realistic recommendations to bridge the existing gaps between gender, water, and food security in policy and practices.
- Small steps toward a change in attitude about mainstreaming gender.

We recognize that there is a huge task of mainstreaming gender in water and agricultural projects. This project will be an important step in that direction, but much more work will be needed in working with people on gaining an understanding of gender issues, and changing attitudes.



## 5 Planning

	2005				2006			
	aug	sept	oct	nov	dec	jan	feb	march
<i>Objective 1: Understanding though analysis</i>								
1a) Assess, gender processes, guidelines, approaches								
<i>Objective 2: Assess knowledge base water and ag.</i>								
2a) GWA to assess CA and Both ENDS RBM documents								
2b) First discussion round								
1d) Synthesis of main findings								
<i>Objective 3: Common ground</i>								
3a) Focus meeting								
3b) Web-based discussion								
3c) Synthesis document								
3d) Presentation 4 <sup>th</sup> WWF								
<i>Spin-off: Communication and outreach</i>								

## **Annex 1**

### **Integrating gender and poverty in the Comprehensive assessment on water management in agriculture**

The overall objective of the Comprehensive Assessment of Water Management in Agriculture is to support water investment decisions in agriculture to enhance food and environmental security and to contribute to the alleviation of poverty. This will be achieved by strengthening the knowledge base on water-agriculture-environment and promoting its use in developing its consensus on investment strategies.

The CA is carried out by a growing alliance of some 90 institutes and 200 agricultural and environmental scientists with development and livelihoods specialists from the South and North. Its goal is to focus the best minds in the scientific and development communities on assessing water use in agriculture and its impacts on food, livelihoods, and environmental security to guide future investments.

The programme's research agenda has been progressing since 2001 through a wide range of studies, all focused on issues of sustainable development of rural communities through better use of water for food production and nature ([www.iwmi.org/assessment](http://www.iwmi.org/assessment)).

The CA contributes to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) by looking at improving access to water to eradicate poverty and hunger, reducing vulnerability to drought in poor communities, reversing land and water degradation, and sustainable approaches to increasing agricultural productivity on irrigated and rain-fed lands. With the research progressing in all its topic areas (2001-2003), the CA now enters its crucial assessment phase. This phase entails a critical scientific review, synthesis and knowledge sharing (2004-2006).

The Comprehensive Assessment of Water Management in Agriculture provides a process to bring together IWRM specialists, practitioners, as well as gender and poverty specialists and set gender in water management and policy development one step closer. Through an extensive review, consultation, and assessment process, the CA intends to guide management and investment decisions in water management for agriculture. In that process, it investigates in depth critical issues of poverty and gender in water management in agriculture. It will also look at the interlinking of water, agriculture, education and equity. This will provide essential inputs into the MDG upcoming review and Beijing 10+.

The process of producing the assessment calls for teams to provide a critical review of existing knowledge and experience on a number of topics including rainfed agriculture, irrigation, reversing trends of land and water degradation, and water governance. Gender, poverty, health and environment are cross cutting issues. These issues will be synthesized into an assessment document, and then disseminated in various formats to a broad audience. The process of building the assessment itself disseminates as it proceeds with hundreds of practitioners involved in its making. The proposed set of activities including the workshop contributes to the making of the CA.

## **Annex 2**

### **River Basin Management: A Negotiated Approach A Both ENDS/ Gomukh project**

Heightened interest in sustainable water management provides an opening to begin to envision new forms of managing river basins. Efforts are being made to rethink water planning and management. "River Basin Management: A Negotiated Approach", initiated by Gomukh, India, and Both ENDS, the Netherlands, sets out to present and discuss innovative approaches to river basin management with policy makers and decision makers on national and multi-lateral policy levels. Through an analysis and comparison of seven case studies, the project has generated a set of conclusions and recommendations on the potential of river basin management based on local visions and experiences.

Working together as a diverse group of organisations, ranging from universities and governmental institutions to action oriented NGOs and community-based organisation has been valuable learning experience. In this fact sheet, the project team offers a description of the methodology applied.

Civil society organisations give a high priority to the provision of direct service and participation in grass root movements. Often, these organisations do not have the time, financial support or the inclination to analyse and document their own work. In the end, this restricts their ability to influence policies with underpinned statements and examples in black and white.

Recognising the broad spectrum of innovative approaches to sustainable land and water management, the project 'River Basin Management: A Negotiated Approach' sets out to develop a long-term vision. A group of organisations committed to implementation and policy reform came together to raise awareness amongst decision makers and policy developers on the potential of bottom-up strategies for negotiated integrated management of river basin ecosystems, based on participatory decision-making and appropriate technology.

The seven case studies were selected from over one hundred organisations that showed interest in participating in the project. All seven cases have been engaged in river basin management for a relatively long period of time, and have combined implementation activities with engagements in regional, basin or national policy discussions.

In order to strengthen the activities that the participating organisations were already engaging in, the project has developed and implemented an action-research approach. It provides a framework for combining concrete activities of the partner organisations while simultaneously creating the opportunity to analyse these actions through knowledge sharing, joint discussions and exchange visits. Being able to actually see and discuss each others' situations and actions inspired all partners tremendously and helped them to develop their own actions and processes further. Thus, the project addressed both the individual, immediate priorities of the participating organisations and their shared objective to present their approach in a more generic, analytical way to feed policy discussions. Through this process, the project team was able to develop a common methodology, exchange experiences and ultimately present a shared vision on the negotiated approach to river basin management.

As the cases stand today, they reflect a 3 year time slice cut out of the total experience which had begun several years earlier and will continue long after the completion of the project cycle. Each case represents a unique situation in time and space. Each one has a specific historical, cultural, political, religious and ecological background. The river Sand in South Africa has a set of revolutionary laws promulgated by a post-apartheid government, while the Cambodian case is still very fluid in terms of legal trans-boundary agreements. Unlike the Mekong River, which meanders through many countries, the Bhima Basin in India is a sub basin of Krishna River that starts and ends within India. In Cochabamba, Bolivia, water management in a rapidly urbanizing environment is looking for a way out of the clashes between traditional rural water allocation systems and growing urban demands. The Peruvian and Thai cases lie in the high altitude with the upper watersheds located above 1200 feet, where communities still live in near natural environments, whereas the Khulna-Jessore case in Bangladesh lies within one of the world's largest delta regions, where the waters of the mighty Brahmaputra, Meghana and Ganges mingle and create tidal basins of enormous proportions.

Of all the different issues that were encountered by the case holders, the case holders for further elaboration and in-depth analysis chose three issues. The three issues, negotiated approach, eco-systemic thinking and use of appropriate technology, have been described in detail in the final report. The description focuses on how these issues were dealt with in the various case studies and what their importance is in the case studies.

Several discussions and position papers were dedicated to gender equity. Despite the advances made in these discussions, the group did not come to a shared understanding of the ways in which to address gender. The project agreed that the group of practitioners would continue to analyse the issue, in order to create a major understanding of the challenges and possibilities for gender mainstreaming in their activities on integrated water resources management.

However, this did not preclude the other issues that the case holders dealt with, it is simply an arbitrary choice made. This project does not offer 'best practices', but builds its analysis on real-life experiences, including both successful and less successful attempts at implementing local visions and then trying to upscale them. It builds on action research, and suggests goals that are realisable and the way to reach them.

## **Annex 3**

### **Gender and Water Alliance, a description**

The GWAlliance is a network of organisations working to achieve equity and equality amongst women and men, irrespective of age, colour, religion culture, language or income, regarding sustainable water resources development and management at all levels. The GWAlliance is a participants' organisation where decisions are taken collectively and structures are transparent and accessible. The core mandate is in the field of mainstreaming gender in Integrated Water Resource Management.

Integrated water resources management refers to the coordinated development and management of water, land and related resources for optimising economic and social welfare without compromising the sustainability of vital environmental systems. Optimising development implies recognising that women and men of all strata have different requirements and often unequal opportunities for domestic and productive uses of water and the use of catchment areas and that women and the poor generally have fewer opportunities to share in and benefit from development and management. Changing practices for greater equity is required through more effective mobilisation of human resources and institutional capacities and resulting in more logical sharing of burdens, benefits and responsibilities between women and men.

The World Water Vision has declared that every woman, man and child must have access to safe and adequate water, sanitation and food, but also be responsible for ensuring maintenance of the ecosystem. Governments are urged to involve interest groups in all levels of decision and policymaking, and to establish and strengthen mechanisms at national, regional and international levels to facilitate the required participation of all stakeholders.

The GWAlliance through the associated programme thus aims to contribute to enabling governments to concretely implement these recommendations, and incorporate gender and equity practices into legislation, policies, and decision-making processes concerning design and management of water resources and systems. It will help to establish mechanisms according to local conditions and needs, and so ensure equitable and meaningful participation of all interests groups in managing water resources. It will also contribute to mobilising the rights and meeting the demands of poor women and men to have affordable working and accountable services.

To achieve the objectives of mainstreaming gender through the programme, the GWAlliance is working with more than 500 organisations all over the world, working at all levels (from political to grassroots) based on the following principles:

- a The Gender and Water Alliance (GWA) believes that promotion of water security for both men and women is integral to the efficiency of water resource management initiatives and services.
- b The Gender and Water Alliance believes in the equitable distribution of responsibilities, burdens and benefits between women and men as well as their equal participation in dialogue and decision-making in the development and management of sustainable water resources.

- c The Gender and Water Alliance believes that by working strategically and collaboratively, it can add value to the work of organizations working in the water sector at the global, regional, national and local level in the area of gender mainstreaming.
- d The Gender and Water Alliance believes that by working to strengthen the capacity and role of existing organizations in gender mainstreaming it will be able to work in a manner that is cost-effective and avoid duplication.
- e The Gender and Water Alliance believes that by working collectively through a strong networking arrangement with its partners it can help to strengthen the objectives of gender mainstreaming.
- f The Gender and Water Alliance believes it can have significant impact influencing the practice of existing organizations working at the policy, planning, implementation and research level in the water sector.
- g The Gender and Water Alliance believes that it needs to enhance its impact by mobilising commitments from governments, agencies, professionals, the private sector, CBOs and other civil society organizations to invest in resources required for gender mainstreaming.

Mainstreaming gender implies that knowledge and skills are used in a more holistic and systematic manner so that gender equity practice becomes an integral dimension of programmes and community level processes for integrated water resources management. Human and organisational resources for a systematised and holistic application of gender concepts and strategies are increasingly available. However, they lack both the critical mass and obvious entry points necessary to be pro-active in meeting the growing demand, and filling knowledge and skills gaps in this developing subject area. Emphasis should therefore be given to linkages across current disciplinary, subsectoral /organisations and grassroots organisations reflecting the specific historical, political and cultural backgrounds from which organisations dealing with gender and water have sprung.

A critical mass for meeting and developing gender mainstreaming requires more effective and professional networking and information management through an alliance of partners at all levels, and representing all sub-sectors and themes. Such an alliance makes it possible to establish a memory bank and knowledge base and facilitate the coordinated undertaking of action to enhance information and skills, mainstream their application and fill new knowledge gaps.

The GWAlliance through the associated programme activities will:

- a Collect, share and use - in electronic and hard copy version - key existing policies and practices in the water sector
- b Analyse and share key elements of success and failure in the gender mainstreaming practice of Alliance members and others, and develop new strategies
- c Develop and implement targeted advocacy on good practice of gender mainstreaming in national, regional and international fora
- d Develop and implement new, improved and tailored methodologies and tools for training and capacity building
- e Test and replicate good practice in gender mainstreaming through pilot initiatives developed by Alliance members