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Gender and Water Alliance
Members Meeting at the Sixth World Water Forum, Marseille
World Water Council Pavilion
March 15, 2012, 4:30-6:00pm
Marcia Brewster, Chair
With response of the GWA Executive Director

I. Introduction: Brief explanation of the Gender and Water Alliance and its current position

Marcia Brewster, who was chairing the meeting, welcomed GWA members and other interested participants, presented greetings from the Executive Director and other staff and gave her overview of the current situation of gender and water management and of GWA.

She noted that GWA is still the only worldwide organisation that focuses on the social and gender aspects of water management. She added that, although water is a key issue in development, water and sanitation users are seldom involved in water management, design and planning. They are rarely consulted on future development work and the budget. Moreover, the prominent role of women farmers in food production is not recognised enough. In fact, the food crisis cannot be solved until women farmers are given access to the necessary resources: land and water. Women, as water managers at the lowest level, and as farmers, have a lot of knowledge which is not used for planning. This has to change.

In projects related to climate change, there seems to be funding available for mitigation, but not much for adaptation. There is limited attention paid to water in climate change discussions; it is not acknowledged that poor people, especially women and children, suffer from climate change mainly because of too much or too little water. Four times as many women die in disasters worldwide than men do! The work of GWA adds to the empowerment of poor women.

These are a few current issues that explain the continuing need for an organisation such as the Gender and Water Alliance.

All GWA members had recently received a letter from the Executive Director Joke Muylwijk in which she explained the current situation of lack of funding for GWA. The work continues, but only that for which other organisations pay the lion's share. Much of GWA's contract work involves taking care of gender mainstreaming in the work of other more technical organisations. While it is likely that GWA will survive, that is not good enough.

Considering the urgency of the problems, GWA is needed in this world, and not only in response to what larger organisations ask us to do. The demand from the grassroots needs to be answered. That is why we spend a lot of time writing proposals and concept notes in collaboration with our members. Some are still in the pipeline.

At present it is difficult to get the commitment of donors. Many funding opportunities are only for organisations that are registered in developing countries. These options are not open to the GWA as the secretariat is based in the Netherlands. It also seems to be more difficult to find money for gender concerns than for other subjects. That still has not changed in this world.

II. First Observations from Global Water Partnership (GWP)

As Mercy Dikito-Wachtmeister, who is now responsible for the Gender Program at the Global Water Partnership, had only a few minutes, Marcia asked her to speak first about the options for GWA in the future. She noted:

- GWA was an associated program of GWP;
- She would like GWA and GWP to be associated more closely now that GWP has a gender focus; Mercy herself is a member of GWA.
- GWP is developing a gender policy and strategies and is making an effort to integrate gender into all programs of GWP and its partner organizations;
- The new gender policy and strategy are expected to be completed by the end of December 2012 for feeding into the new GWP Strategy process that commences in 2013. Mercy informed that she is working with an international team of gender experts to put together the

substance of the gender strategy (Table of Contents) to be ready for sharing with GWP regions for their inputs hopefully at the beginning of May 2012. Many GWA members participate in GWP meetings and are part of the international team of gender experts (in their individual capacity) supporting the GWP gender strategy elaboration process.

Joke Muylwijk:

GWA is very happy with the GWP gender strategy that is in development. Various GWA members are involved in the process, including the GWA Chairperson Eva Rathgeber.

Like Mercy, I am very interested to be more closely associated to GWP. In the past years we have worked together in various countries and regions, but on the global level we really could work together more.

III. Suggestions from the members for how GWA can be more effective with few resources:

Marcia noted that GWA has a membership of 2100 members, 45% men, and 55% women. About 30% are in the name of an organization, and 70% are individual memberships. 60% are Anglophone, 18% Francophone, 13% Spanish language, 6% Arab language, and 2% Lusophone. About 40% of our members are in Africa, 29% in Asia and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, and 15% in Latin America and the Caribbean. The remaining 14% are spread among Europe, North America, Russia and Central Asia, Australia and the Pacific. This justifies our emphasis on Africa (40%) and South Asian countries (10%). It is important for GWA to keep the network of members alive, in such a way that we can all benefit as much as possible from each other's expertise and experience. We need to share lessons learnt and best practices. GWA continues to collect case studies and places them on the website, for other people to use. The Web site and listserv will continue.

She asked the members present to provide their ideas on how GWA can be most effective with few resources. The ideas are summarized below. GWA is very grateful for the suggestions of the participants. The response of GWA is included in italics.

Members and Participants	Suggestions	Response by GWA ED Joke Muylwijk
Mr. Anthony Akpan, PAVE, Nigeria Earlier the GWA Regional Focal Point of Anglophone West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GWA and its country level members should work jointly with ministries to get funding, because ministries have funding for gender mainstreaming; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It is a good idea for GWA members in the different countries to propose activities together with their governments' ministries, responsible for agriculture, water and sanitation. The GWA Secretariat can support such activities with suggestions based on experience</i>

Members and Participants	Suggestions	Response by GWA ED Joke Muylwijk
Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GWA could partner more closely with Cap-Net; • Groups with partners from the developed world are taken more seriously by their governments (this could be a negative effect of GWA moving to a developing country). 	<p><i>elsewhere, with trainers, etc. but not with money (for the time being).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>GWA has always been close to Cap-Net, many ToTs were organised together. At present also GWA is considered as one of the organisations under the Cap-Net umbrella. To organise ToTs together is now in that form a bit problematic, because of the necessary part of the costs to be covered by GWA itself.</i> • <i>To have the Secretariat in a developed country has its advantages (more easy funding, but perhaps not for global activities) and also its disadvantages, as Anthony mentions.</i>
Mr. P.C. Misra, Indian Institute of Youth and Development, working in rural areas with the Fresh Water Action Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggests that GWA should work more on climate change, and provide training for response to climate change for developing country citizens; • He has used GWA materials that have been translated into local languages; • GWA should register/locate its HQ in India. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>One of the priority themes of GWA is climate change, especially the adaptation part, in which poor women and men have to cope with droughts and floods, all related to water and gender. In all training of GWA attention is paid to climate change.</i> • <i>Good to hear.</i> • <i>India has some advantages: large country where already so many organisations are active, very good for GWA to collaborate with. There are also disadvantages. India is very difficult for visa, for international payments, etc.</i>
Mr. Oliver Kulah, Liberia, AMCOW and water resource engineer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GWA should follow the progress of other organizations (and learn from this?); • Members should meet face-to-face at least once per year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It would be fantastic to have an annual members' meeting, face-to-face, but how to pay for travel and accommodation of 2100 members worldwide?</i>
Ms. Dorothy Whyte, Women's Resource and Outreach Centre, Jamaica	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GWA needs to partner with an organization that has more money, such as GWP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We agree with this, and can say that all GWA's activities are implemented in partnerships with other organisations.</i>
Ms. Abby Waldorf, University of Pennsylvania/wH2O journal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership fees could help – perhaps of varying rates for non-profits and for-profit organizations; • Link wH2O to GWA Web site and vice versa; • Create a survey for GWA members → <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ needs assessment, ○ what can member organizations contribute to GWA? ○ what do groups want from GWA? ○ how can resources be shared? gather inputs from active members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It could be a good idea to raise fees, which we have considered. However, 1. International payments are costly, so it would mean that a lot of money is lost to the banks. 2. The membership would then consist of a different group of people and organisations. Perhaps those who need the GWA material most, would decide not to be a member. 3. The administration for the inking of the contribution would be costly.</i> • <i>Sometimes we have done such surveys, and otherwise such questions are included in regular letters to the members. At this point in time it is a question what we would do with the results of such a survey. We will remember this for the future, when we are surer to be able to follow up the outcome of the survey.</i>
Mr. Kees Leendertse, Cap-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommends moving to a developing country - Cap-Net did this in 2007 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>This is a good idea with different sides to it. GWA needs to ascertain new funding first.</i>

Members and Participants	Suggestions	Response by GWA ED Joke Muylwijk
Net	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Had secured funding prior to move, funders recommended that they move to a developing country so that it would be easier for them to give the funds, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N.B. Important to note that Cap-Net had secured these funds before making the move; - Perhaps GWA could start with a branch office in a developing country; • Should GWA merge with Cap-Net? - Kees says perhaps not because they have different constituencies - It was raised later in this meeting that the merge might make sense if GWA brings back training as its main focus; • GWA should work with partners who do have funds (or are willing to provide space, activities, and staff) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ex: Cap-Net has funds for gender training and collaboration with GWA - Cap-Net needs new ideas that would respond to the demand in order to provide this funding → - would like to receive a more formal request for funds from GWA; • Does not like the idea of having a meeting for members once/year; • Likes the idea of a survey of members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Apart from Capacity Building as the main activity of GWA, there is a different issue at stake. All water organisations can choose to give a lot or just a little attention to gender. They can also choose to involve GWA for the mainstreaming of gender in their work, or that they will do this themselves.</i> <i>For an organisation that has gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women as her main objective, it is not a good idea to merge with an organization for water management.</i> • <i>GWA is very happy to cooperate with Cap-Net, and we always have appreciated to work together. GWA plans to continue doing so.</i> • <i>See above. GWA agrees.</i> • <i>See above. GWA agrees.</i>
Ms. Galina Stulina, Uzbekistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes the idea of meeting once/year; • Has translated the training materials from GWA into local languages using funding from foundations and funders of their own; this has been a successful approach; • Supports the idea of having materials on climate change and adaptation; • GWA could make videos on gender and climate change, as these would be easy to translate and useful for local people; • We need to expand education for local people, and GWA could help. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>See above: GWA does not see the possibility.</i> • <i>Yes, with help of Galina, GWA material is available in various Central Asian languages.</i> • <i>GWA has a brochure: Gender, Water and Climate Change.</i> • <i>This could be made a proposal and included in some of the applications to donors.</i> • <i>Anything to do with water management and the social aspects, GWA can help with.</i>
Ms. Rehema Bavuma, Katosi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes the idea of membership fees, which should be an annual fee, especially because all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>As such this could be a good idea, see above for my remarks.</i>

Members and Participants	Suggestions	Response by GWA ED Joke Muylwijk
<p>Women Development Trust, Uganda, and GWA Country Facilitator for Uganda</p>	<p>organizations use information from GWA, they should have some sort of financial obligation to this;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supportive of the idea to move GWA to Africa; Joint fundraising efforts: Members should seek funds in partnership with GWA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>We keep this as an option, if conditions are fulfilled (see remarks of Kees)</i> <i>When the GWA Secretariat knows of funding options and calls for proposals, we involve our members in that region or country. We hope that GWA members will also seek the partnership with the international GWA Secretariat.</i>
<p>Ms. Luna Lin, World Water Forum organizer for women's sessions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> She notes that women are powerful in expressing their opinions There was clear media and public interest in women and water → GWA should use this to attract donors; Emphasize the connection between gender, water and women's empowerment and economic development → this will provide leverage for obtaining funding. 	<p><i>The contribution of Luna Lin is appreciated and we agree with this.</i></p>
<p>Ms. Champa Navaratne, NetWwater, Sri Lanka</p>	<p>GWA should work more closely with members</p>	<p><i>Yes!</i> <i>And v.v.</i></p>
<p>Ms. Yinka Ajobe, Nigeria representative from Women for Water Partnership</p>	<p>Use Internet for communication and information dissemination</p>	<p><i>Yes, without it there would not be GWA or any other international network.</i></p>
<p>Ms. Kusum Athukorala, NetWwater, Sri Lanka</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes having men run training sessions is more successful (such as the case in South India) GWA should not be based in the Netherlands anymore GWA should continue training programs with support from Cap-Net; Perhaps GWA can locate with Cap-Net, if GWA concentrates more on training and capacity development. Note on membership fees: in some countries you cannot transfer foreign money (e.g. Sri Lanka). GWA should encourage active membership in the organization: Develop a niche for training (perhaps have all members who create variations of GWA materials put them on the GWA website to share and expand). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Training sessions are run by qualified trainers, for GWA it does not matter if they are men or women. Regretfully there are not many very good male gender trainers, but thanks to the GWA ToTs, in which most trainees are men, the number is increasing.</i> <i>OK, see remarks above here.</i> <i>Yes, whenever we can.</i> <i>See response above.</i> <i>Exactly.</i> <i>The Secretariat is not always informed about all the organisations, members and non-members, who make use of the GWA material, such as manuals. It is all openly available to all on our website, but this should perhaps be changed.</i>

III. Member group information:

NetWater, Sri Lanka:

- Gender and water solutions—wetland conservation;
- Facilitates gender and water dialogues;
- Works on climate change and adaptation; Disaster reduction;
- Teaches community how to protect rivers;
- They use GWA training materials but modify them to fit local conditions.

India Institution of Youth and Development, India

- Works on water and sanitation;
- Started a short course on climate change for the universities
 - Maybe GWA can use this information (from Mr. Misra).

Peace Women across the Globe (PWAG), Sudan, part of Women for Water Partnership:

- Works with rural women;
 - Not a member of GWA yet

PWAG, Switzerland, part of Women for Water Partnership

- Environmental justice;
- Peace for women;
 - Not GWA member.

Women's Resource and Outreach Center, Jamaica:

- Reforestation—focus on planting trees to benefit watershed/environment
 - Involve men and women;
 - Funded by Forestry Conservation;
- Provide funding for women to employ men to help with farming (interesting play on gender roles here).

wH2O Journal, UPenn

- Not GWA member (yet!);
- Student run journal on women and water;
- Aim to leverage skills of students and young professionals in writing and social media skills to spread word about women/water issues and create a centralized location for work in this area.

Katosi Women Development Trust, Uganda

- Use many GWA materials including research results, figures and statistics in their own reports;
- Use the materials in the Resource Guide often.

[Note: not all members present gave an overview of their organization, some just made further suggestions to GWA so this list is not representative of all groups present.]

Marcia thanked everyone for their active participation and encouraged them to take the GWA materials on the table. Following the meeting she also took some of the GWA materials to a joint session of the International Water Association's joint session of its Women in Water program and the Young Water Professionals Program and encouraged the participants to take copies of the materials.

Abby Waldorf (taking notes) and Marcia Brewster (chair), 20 March 2012