

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



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Photo front page: Women in Vietnam exposed to contamination while using wastewater for their crops, Liqa Rashid

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

This Working Paper presents the main findings of a joint project of the Gender and Water Alliance (GWA), the Comprehensive Assessment of water management in agriculture (CA) and Both ENDS (BE), in which they set out to analyze why it proves so difficult to mainstream gender in water management, and to develop a minimum agenda that provides practical and realistic recommendations to *practitioners, policy makers, researchers and gender specialists* working in the field of water and agriculture to genuinely and effectively address gender differences and inequities in policy, research and in the field.

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1 Introduction

This report summarizes and synthesizes the main findings of the project "*Effective gender mainstreaming in water management for sustainable livelihoods: From guidelines to practice*", a collaborative project of the Gender and Water Alliance (GWA), Both ENDS (BE) and the Comprehensive Assessment of water management in agriculture (CA). An important concern that the project addressed was the widely felt gap between 'paper' recognition of gender issues in water management in policies and projects, and (1) the lack of real on-the-ground efforts to effectively address gender differences and inequities in water and (2) the absence of meaningful integration of gender questions in mainstream water analyses and discussions. Gender remains very much a side-issue or an after-thought and is not, as yet, seen as belonging to the core of the water management profession. An important part of the project, therefore, consisted of further substantiating and explaining this gap in an effort to identify ways of improving gender mainstreaming in water management in the future.

This synthesis report starts with a description of the background and process (section 2), in terms of activities, of the project. The different outcomes and write-ups of these activities are consequently used, first of all (in section 3) to further refine and sharpen the diagnosis, i.e. the existence of gaps between intentions and practice in gender mainstreaming in water: to what extent do these gaps exist, where do they occur, what are important manifestations of these gaps? This diagnosis is linked to a brief discussion of different definitions of gender mainstreaming, and of different ways of achieving it – a discussion that helps frame the rest of this synthesis report. The following sections of the report roughly follow the questions formulated in the original project proposal (August, 2005 – see the list in section 7) and uses the information gathered in the project to answer these questions. This effort starts with an analysis of why gender mainstreaming is not happening in water management (section 4). It continues, in section 5, with an analysis and discussion of the adequacy and relevance of the available knowledge base and then proceeds (section 6) with conclusions and recommendations on how to facilitate gender mainstreaming in water management, written in the form of a minimum agenda expressing the consensus among the consulted group of experts. In the last section (section 7) a list can be found of the separate outcomes of the different project activities on which this report is based. This section also provides some insights in planned and possible follow-up steps to further develop and implement the proposed minimum agenda.

2 Background and process of the project

In a collaborative effort to understand the issues, concerns and resistances to gender analysis in water management for agriculture, the Comprehensive Assessment on water management (CA), Both Ends (BE) and the Gender and Water Alliance (GWA, gathering 500 members interested by gender mainstreaming in water in more than 80 countries), have engaged in a series of interactions with professionals, academics and policy makers involved in water management in 2005 and 2006. Five distinct activities were undertaken. The project was financed by Oxfam Novib.

A first project activity consisted of involving twelve gender experts in the external review of the different chapters of the CA synthesis and asking them to participate in the preparation of the synthesis itself. Each of these experts reviewed one or more CA chapters, often more than once, and four of them participated in the review and synthesis workshop that was held in September 2005 where all the chapter writing teams met to look at their chapters after a month of external review. The workshop enabled initiating a dialogue process with a first set of face-to-face meetings per chapter.

The second interaction initiated and facilitated by the project was an e-survey conducted to find out the extent in which existing guidelines and manuals on Gender Mainstreaming are used. This e-survey was addressed to the networks of the three project partners, providing an outreach to both gender specialists and non-specialists. Forty-four (44) people responded to the survey, the results of which revealed that although a number of manuals and guidelines exist for agriculture and irrigation specialists, they are not used because they are either not easily accessible, or are not suitable to the changeable needs of practitioners who work in the field. In addition to the e-survey, two of the gender experts who had also participated in the review and synthesis workshop, held interviews with practitioners at different levels in the field in India (45) and Nepal (30). Results of the e-survey and the field interviews were summarized and analyzed the findings in a report that was shared among the network members.

A third activity consisted of a workshop organized by BE, gathering ten gender experts and representatives from field-based civil society organizations working on local water resources management from across the world in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. The workshop, entitled "Towards a Minimum Agenda for Effective Gender Mainstreaming in Water Management" aimed to (1) further examine current impediments to gender mainstreaming in water management for agriculture, and 2) analyze key issues, dilemmas and opportunities for gender mainstreaming in water management for agriculture.

Following this workshop, and as a fourth activity, the three organizations facilitated an open online discussion on gender mainstreaming, in the second half of February 2006. About 50 people, from different disciplinary and professional water backgrounds, participated in this discussion. It generated some important insights and helped establish the 'common ground' in terms of gender mainstreaming in water management in agriculture, as well as the most important points of divergence and disagreement.

As a fifth activity, the minimum agenda was presented to participants at the World Water Forum 4 (March 2006, Mexico) as a starting point from which to build recommendations to improve gender analysis in the field of water management.

3 The meaning of gender mainstreaming

There are different ideas and opinions about what gender mainstreaming is. A definition that is least threatening to the status-quo sees it as the recognition of existing divisions of labor, rights, resources and voice – and in adjusting water projects, interventions and policies to these divisions. An understanding of gender mainstreaming that is more often used by gender analysts, and one that is adhered to by many UN organizations, explicitly includes objectives of gender equality and recognizes the need for transformative measures to change existing inequities. It recognizes that some contentious changes are required to achieve real gender equity, such as land- and water rights reforms. Gender mainstreaming, therefore, not just consists of integrating women (or gender issues) into an already defined and established mainstream water agenda, but it also consists of transforming this agenda to better reflect women’s needs and gender concerns.

Effective gender mainstreaming in water management for sustainable livelihoods can be defined as the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women as well of men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequalities are not perpetuated. The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality, but adequately recognizing and addressing gender divisions, roles and identities also contributes to the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of water management.

Mainstreaming includes gender-specific activities and affirmative action, whenever women or men are in a particularly disadvantageous position. Gender-specific interventions can target women exclusively, men and women together, or only men, to enable them to participate in and benefit equally from water development and management efforts. These are necessary temporary measures designed to combat the direct and indirect consequences of past discrimination. Mainstreaming is not about adding a ‘woman’s component’ or even a ‘gender equality’ component into existing activities or projects. It goes beyond increasing women’s participation; it means bringing the experiences, knowledge, and interests of women and men to bear on the water development agenda.

Gendered beliefs are deeply embedded in educational, political and economic systems and gender belongs to the core ways in which people identify themselves and others. This is why gender mainstreaming is an intrinsically time-consuming activity; it involves changes in norms and values, in cultural styles and normal ways of doing things, in traditions and beliefs, in people’s sense of self and in their understanding of others. Such changes often meet with resistance, also because there are vested interests to uphold and reproduce existing ways of doing things.

Because gender mainstreaming is about changing the normal and cherished ways of doing things, it requires additional financial and human resources and high-level political will. Gender mainstreaming is not something that can be consigned to ‘watchdogs’ in one specialized office, but *all* water professionals and researchers must have knowledge and awareness of the linkages between gender and water, so that they can – as a minimum – identify and recognize where and how gender matters in their areas of work.

Gender mainstreaming is a process that can be roughly divided in three consecutive phases. It starts, in a first phase, with mere awareness of existing gender divisions and with efforts to take these into account when planning water projects and when managing water. A second phase of gender mainstreaming consists of a gradual questioning of these divisions, and may consist of activities to redress existing imbalances and inequities. Increased awareness of gender may, in a third phase of gender mainstreaming, lead to a questioning and transformation of the very objectives and models of water management.

What gender mainstreaming is also depends on the context of mainstreaming: politically contentious questions about for instance land-and water redistribution, about the legitimacy of water authorities, or about the validity and reliability of water knowledge are not likely to be taken up by employees of state water agencies – who are bound by the mission and targets of their organization – or by researchers who strongly identify with established water authorities. State-employed water managers are not likely to consider objectives of gender equity or the empowerment of women as belonging to their professional responsibility. To be effective, gender goals should therefore be translated in terms and goals that do fit with their professional mandates. Likewise, the private sector is likely to engage in gender mainstreaming efforts only if there is a chance that it increases profits, such as for instance when women are recognized as consumers or as cheap providers of labor. Many NGOs and researchers can take a more critical distance from the water status quo, and are in a position to challenge existing ways of doing things. The more critical and questions that are related to challenging the balance of power will have to come from them. A good example here is the experience from the Licto project in Ecuador, where women irrigators after having gone through a process of consciousness raising initiated and facilitated by an NGO asked for a change in the ways in which water titles were allocated to allow for titles in the names of both wives and husbands.

4 The gaps between intentions and practice in gender mainstreaming

This section uses the project activities to explore and substantiate the existence of a gap between intentions in terms of gender mainstreaming, as for instance expressed in policy documents, and actual practice as manifested in water writings and projects. The two main manifestations of this gap, already referred to in the introduction, are investigated:

1. the absence of meaningful integration of gender questions in mainstream water analyses and discussions;
2. the lack of real on-the ground efforts to effectively address gender differences and inequities in water.

4.1 Gendering water knowledge and analyses: asking the right questions

Both the draft CA chapters and Both ENDS final report *River Basin Management: a Negotiated Approach* were reviewed by gender experts on the inclusion of gender issues. It was clear that there was insufficient presentation of awareness, knowledge or analysis on gender in both these initiatives. In the case of the CA review, gender experts commented on two versions of each chapter and met with the authors. This process helped the chapter authors to improve the gender content of their chapter, but failed in some cases by lack of references¹. Although it proved not easy to integrate gender in a meaningful way, the process led to fruitful discussions and insights, some of which are summarized below.

The views of the gender specialists on how the lack of gender awareness manifests itself in the analyses include:

- A lack of recognition that women are water-stakeholders and -actors, too.
- A lack of recognition, and an undervaluation, of the importance of women's skills, knowledge and labor contributions to water management.
- An uncritical, unspecified and undifferentiated use of the words 'farmers', 'water users', 'fishers' or 'irrigators' – and a tendency to associate these terms with men.
- No analysis of how declining quantities and qualities of water, proposed management strategies, or technologies, affect different people differently.
- No or little realization of the fact that water needs are also, and importantly, socially and culturally constructed rather than just ordained by biological, technological and market imperatives.
- An uncritical use of the word households as consisting of relatively egalitarian families that are altruistically headed by a senior man.
- Use of an erroneous assumption of equality in terms of people's abilities, capacities, capabilities and entitlements to access water and to voice and articulate water concerns and needs, especially in strategies that involve user participation or stakeholder platforms.
- Little allowance for, and analysis of, social diversity and differentiation among water users.
- Use of erroneous assumptions about how people make claims to water, about what determines their claim-making abilities and powers, and about how water allocation and use priorities come about.
- The categorization of women alongside other marginal and vulnerable groups, alongside or next to already identified categories of water actors.

¹ A table listed in section 7 summarizes the gender issues profiled throughout the book after the interactions between thematic experts and gender experts.

- The overall lack of information disaggregated by gender, or by any other axis of social differentiation.

In the surveys and (online) discussions, the following underlying causes were identified which can help explain the lack of gender awareness:

- Skills, knowledge and labor associated with women often continue to be seen as of lesser importance, mostly because they are associated with the intimate and private domains of care, reproduction and domesticity that are generally seen as far removed from what matters in water terms.
- An emphasis on the marketable, price-able, visible and quantifiable, whereas a lot of what women do and 'produce' occurs in the non-market sphere and is less easily seen and quantified. Calculations of water savings, to give one example, may be over-optimistic in not taking into account the time women spend on collecting water. Other examples include calculations of water use efficiencies and productivities, which are ambiguous for not reflecting investments of unpaid (family or own) labor. Accounting for women's labor may reveal that nominal efficiency or productivity gains, in actual fact, are achieved by a shifting of costs from the paid to the unpaid economy.
- Men and women are often seen as pawns in the game, ignoring their power to actively look for solutions to their problems themselves (and other forms of human agency).
- An implicit belief in, and identification with, the powers of (technocratic and centralized) state agencies or authorities to allocate and manage water according to rational and scientific principles.
- The overall neglect of power and politics from the analysis, which for instance shows in a strong preference for deductive methods and ideal-typical models.
- A tendency to reduce gender to an attribute of a social category of people (women or men) and making it impossible to see gender as social relations.

Rather than to unwillingness or persistent biases of individual water analysts, the difficulty to see women and gender in water is linked to different views on how to conceptualize, and make abstractions about, water realities:

- The traditional subject matter of water analysts is 'non-social'. Water knowledge is primarily concerned with 'the resource' water. The physical, biological and chemical characteristics of water constitute the heart of much water knowledge. Although efforts are increasingly made to also include social questions in the analysis of water problems, preferred scientific languages and methods continue to be derived from the physical sciences and are not always best suited for understanding the behavior of human beings and their interactions.
- A different type of problem is caused by the realization that gender is a deeply contextual phenomenon, and that what gender *is* – and what it means to be a man or a woman – is dependent on time and place, and also varies depending on class, caste, religion or ethnicity. This realization makes it difficult to make general statements about men and women in relation to water. It is also difficult to reconcile with a desire for generic truths and universally applicable solutions.
- Analyzing gender and analyzing water not just seem to require different ways of ordering and making abstractions about reality, but the levels and units of analysis may also be difficult to reconcile. Manifestations of gendered inequities and injustices in water occur, or are most clearly visible, at the level of the end-users. If the unit of analysis is a river basin, or a large surface irrigation system, the group of end-users is so large that it becomes conceptually difficult to do justice to all diversities and differences, including those based on gender, between stakeholders and actors. This is even more so because water interests and needs

are not usually clearly gendered; although women may have specific water interests, they are usually not a homogeneous group in terms of water.

4.2 Water professionals and on-the-ground actions: doing the right things

The field interviews in Nepal and India and the e-survey, on the use of manuals and guidelines for gender mainstreaming in agriculture, water and environment revealed a different set of dimensions of the gap between intentions and practice in terms of gender mainstreaming. A large set of guidelines and manuals exists, which are developed to assist water practitioners and policymakers in addressing gender questions. And yet, the surveys and interviews show that:

- There are still many water and agriculture professionals who believe that gender has nothing, or only very little, to do with their work.
- Many water and agriculture professionals, especially those working in national and international research organizations and those working in government agencies, are unaware of the existence of gender manuals and guidelines or do not use them.
- Instead of belonging to normal water professionalism, gender often continues to be the responsibility of specially assigned staff and is seen as a separate concern.

The lack of gender awareness or lack of commitment to work on gender has several reasons:

- Existing manuals and guidelines are not always easily accessible or available in the water and agriculture networks, even if they were originally developed for this group.
- Most existing guidelines and manuals are not translated in the working languages of water and agriculture professionals. This hugely reduces their accessibility and applicability at field levels.
- The manuals and guidelines are phrased in general terms, often use jargon, and do not include examples with which professionals can identify and that they recognize. Their applicability to local situations is therefore often limited.
- The need to address gender concerns and questions is often not identified by staff working inside water organizations, but by external donors.
- Institutional incentives and rewards for addressing gender concerns are often lacking, especially in government agencies. Staff is not held accountable for their performance in terms of gender, gender goals are seldom explicitly formulated, planned or budgeted, and their achievement is also not routinely monitored or assessed.

One interesting finding is that the extent of gender ignorance varies with the level at which professionals are working. Those working closest with water users in rural areas generally have practical and hands-on gender awareness in that they know through their everyday experience that water is also very much a women's business. They often meet with and talk to women, and many of them rather matter-of-factly deal with gender questions in their everyday work. Those water professionals working farther from real-life situations, for example staff in government bureaucracies, in general find it much more difficult to recognize and address the importance of women, and to understand the linkages between gender and water.

5 Relevance of the existing knowledge base

One recurrent reason given by water professionals and policymakers at different levels why gender issues are not addressed is that the information and knowledge required to do so is lacking. The diagnosis of knowledge gaps is of course directly linked to the assessment of what kinds of information and knowledge are needed. Important here are the changing ideas and approaches in the water world about the role of water managers: the conventional emphasis on 'managers who know it all' is slowly making place for a view of managers as cautious actors who operate in contexts rife with uncertainties, and whose decisions and actions are constantly negotiated and contested by different civil society groups and researchers. For a better understanding the following description is of two models, which in practice may not occur quite so extreme.

The model of water management and governance that supports the 'manager who knows it all' is based on a belief in the possibility of full information and total controllability, with decision makers as (patriarchal) rationalists who synthesize the available information in order to arrive at informed and objective decisions within constraints imposed by an external unruly world. To those in the water world who adhere to this rationalist, top-down model, detailed gendered water information needs to be collected and made available for synthesis by those decision makers who sit at the top of water management hierarchies. This often proves difficult, if not impossible, not just because the required information is not available but also because gender is such a 'slippery' concept in that its meaning differs and changes with time and place, and with ethnicity and class.

In contrast, those in the water world who approach water management as a much more open, non-linear and on-going process of social dialogue and debate, tend to ask for an entirely different type of gendered water information, emphasizing the identification of gendered constraints and barriers to participation in water decision making and focusing on ways to effectively include all possible actors involved in water. In general, this 'management and policy as process' approach is much more conducive to dealing with gender questions, also because of its more explicit recognition of power and politics as inherent to water management.

In what follows, different types of knowledge that are needed are listed, followed by an assessment of the availability of this knowledge.

5.1 Knowledge needed for water analyses and research

1. A first type of information that is required is general information about numbers of women and men in relation to water. Figures about male and female labor contributions to (irrigated) farming and to construction and maintenance of water infrastructures, time spent by women and men on fetching water, on other water-related activities such as watering cattle or washing clothes, etc. are needed and useful to establish, at a general level, how water responsibilities are divided between men and women and to formulate general ideas about the composition of target groups in water related interventions and projects.
2. In addition, information is useful about how water-rights and powers are divided between men and women, because such information helps to obtain a first idea about the extent of the 'gender-gap' in water: the existing inequalities in rights, resources and voice.

3. Information about trends in (1) and (2). Of particular relevance here are trends related to migratory labor. In the Philippines and Sri Lanka, for instance, many rural women migrate to other countries (Thailand, the Middle-East) to work as domestic servants. In other countries (Nepal, Bangladesh, India, the Andean countries and countries in Southern Africa), mostly men leave rural areas to work in cities or in other countries.
4. To allow more refined and useful assessments of the relevance, meaning and causes of gendered divisions and gaps in labor, rights, resources and voice in water, more qualitative information is needed to establish intra-household and inter-household patterns of organizing water rights and responsibilities, and of managing agricultural and livestock enterprises.

Some of the gender knowledge referred to above is available, but mostly in the form of quite detailed anthropological case studies. Such case studies provide interesting and useful examples of gendered patterns in using, accessing, controlling and managing water, but do not usually present information in forms that are easily used by water analysts.

Indeed, there are epistemological and methodological differences between gender analysts and water analysts that form a real barrier to gender mainstreaming, and that may explain why gender-and-water studies are not easily integrated with regular water analyses. Explicit discussion about such differences between gender experts and water experts, and about ways of overcoming them, is needed.

5. Information is also needed to assess gender-gaps at other levels than that of the end-users. Numbers of male and female students in water education, numbers of female and male water professionals in government and non-government sectors, and numbers of male and female water policymakers at different levels.
6. To better understand the causes and meanings of the numerical dominance of men in water education and professions, more in-depth studies are required to look into how the water profession has been historically constructed as a masculine domain, and how ideas of good professionalism are linked to cultural masculinities.

So far, few systematic efforts have been undertaken in the water sector to routinely collect this information, and to monitor the extent of the 'masculinity' of the water profession. Gender research attention so far has tended to focus on understanding the end-users. While useful and needed, the recognition that the resilience to gender mainstreaming in the water sector also partly stems from the rather strong associations between professional water identities and masculinities underscores a need to also study and understand the gendered-ness of water realities at other levels.

There is no longer any doubt that water rights, rights to irrigated lands, and rights to water infrastructure and technology are predominantly vested in men. Nor is there any doubt that water decision making, at all levels, is dominated by men. It has likewise been clearly established that in many areas and countries, women provide a large amount of water labor that is generally not or under-remunerated. And it is well known that water and agriculture education continues to attract more men than women, and that the water profession continues to be one that is dominated by men, although this is changing in some countries. In this sense, the lack of knowledge can never be a legitimate reason not to pay attention to questions of gender.

At the same time, however, precise figures to establish the extent of gender gaps between rights and responsibilities, and to quantify the masculinity of water education

and professions, are often lacking. Within water analyses the information about gendered divisions in labor, rights and voice and about numbers of students and professionals is often not routinely collected. Regular water databases likewise do not normally include this type of information. On the other hand, most gendered water information is available in the form of anthropological case-studies which provide in-depth accounts of gendered divisions of labor, rights, responsibilities as linked to gendered identities and structures and that allow for nuanced understandings of the shifting and contested meanings of gender. The knowledge and information generated through such gender analyses are often not in a format and form that is easily used by water researchers. There is, in other words, a lack of congruence between the information that water analysts and policymakers need and the type of knowledge produced by gender analysts.

The experience of the CA exercise in bringing together gender experts with other water professionals are promising in this regard, and were appreciated by most involved.

5.2. Knowledge needed for water projects and programs

As mentioned in the previous section, there is a wealth of gender and water information available in the form of checklists and guidelines that may help guide water professionals in asking the rights questions, properly identifying and including different stakeholders and assessing impacts of water interventions for different groups. Specially assigned gender specialists in international research and donor organizations, or in development banks and universities, are usually aware of the existence of these guidelines and some use them more or less regularly.

However, the project findings show that the mere existence of guidelines and checklists, irrespective of their quality, is not enough to make water professionals at different levels use them. A review of the guidelines and checklists revealed that many of them have their use, and some are clear and comprehensive, but most are not geared towards the specific contexts in which they are used. Most are also not available in local languages, which hugely reduces their applicability.

Intensive gender trainings are needed to instill some basic gender awareness in staff, and adequate accountability mechanisms for monitoring progress need to be established. Rather than just training lower-level staff, it is important that some basic commitment to addressing gender questions is also present at higher levels, and gender awareness training is therefore also needed here. Some important lessons can also be learnt by improving the information and communication flows from the field to higher-level managers and policymakers, because field-level staff often has quite some hands-on experiences and know-how about gendered problems and solutions.

6 A minimum agenda for gender mainstreaming in water management

Addressing and mainstreaming gender in water is easier when water management and policy are treated as open, non-linear and on-going processes of social dialogue and debate. A flexible, bottom-up and participatory approach is more conducive to recognizing women as water actors, and to identifying gender concerns, than more hierarchic and prescriptive top-down policy models.

Full gender mainstreaming efforts are likely to be more successful when part of:

- ✓ an approach that recognizes the dynamic interlinkages between physical water resource systems, farming systems and the larger social, economic and institutional context within which they are managed.
- ✓ a wider and explicit recognition of the large variety of actors whose individual or collective decisions influence water use patterns and, ultimately, water management needs and options.
- ✓ an approach to understanding water management that recognizes the centrality of the question of the balance of power, because when the balance of power within society is weighed against those most affected by water problems, effective strategies to management are unlikely to evolve.
- ✓ an approach in which questions about the divisions of the costs and benefits of water investments, about priorities for water allocation; about how these priorities come about and about the legitimacy of water authorities are central.
- ✓ an approach that recognizes that water management is intrinsically political and therefore contested, because it deals with the allocation of (public) resources.

Gender mainstreaming requires the recognition of different types of water actors that are, in an ideal world, in dynamic and creative engagement with each other. In particular, the project clearly shows that bridging the gaps between (1) field level staff (and their experiences) with higher level water professionals and policymakers; and (2) gender experts and other water specialists is a key priority to enhance the success of gender mainstreaming efforts.

① All actors involved in water development and management

First of all there is a need for all to:

- Demonstrate how a gendered approach to water management in agriculture by increased contributes to increased efficiency, visible impact and sustainability.
- Document pathways taken to overcome difficulties and constraints.
- Raise awareness and share experiences and lessons learned.

② Practitioners in the fields

Water and agriculture practitioners should:

- Always carry out a comprehensive social analysis, including:
 - stakeholder analysis: who is involved or impacted, who does what
 - agency analysis: ways and strategies to formally & informally access resources
 - water use analysis: who are the users (not just in agriculture, but also domestic and other use); how much do they get and how; what water do they use (surface, ground, saline, wastewater); what are spheres of influence.
- Collect and make use of gender & diversity disaggregated data in design, implementation and monitoring of water and agriculture projects.

- Involve all local stakeholder groups - men and women of different age groups and classes through a facilitated dialogue process from the start.
- Involve social/gender experts in projects and programmes from the design stage.
- Share expertise and knowledge among practitioners and give feedback to academics and policy makers on gender issues and mainstreaming efforts.
- Lobby at higher political levels to stimulate the right environment for social changes enabling equity.

To be able to do this they need:

- Practical tools for comprehensive social analyses
- Access to information on rights and responsibility for women and men regarding natural resources.
- Essential social sciences training, including facilitation skills and appropriate methodologies and terminology to use (tailored to local contexts).
- Documented evidence of gender mainstreaming's impact on efficiency.
- Financial, institutional and legal support from policy makers to mainstream gender.

③ Policy makers (and funding agencies)

Policy makers should:

- Avoid gender neutrality in policies, laws and budgets by making the impact and benefits for, and rights and responsibilities of men, women & other socio-economic groups explicit.
- Base their policies on comprehensive social analyses, including sex disaggregated data and gender impact analysis through a dialogue process, with the ability to take corrective actions.
- Reflect social diversity in policies, laws, financing agreements and institutional arrangements for the development and management of water for agriculture.
- Build upon existing studies and cases and use the expertise at the local level.
- Facilitate equity and gender mainstreaming efforts with financial support.
- Stimulate institutionalized learning and sharing between practitioners, academics and policy makers on gender issues and mainstreaming efforts.
- Ensure the right to information on rights for women and men regarding natural resources as well as the right *to be* informed.
- Integrate gender mainstreaming in the formal and non-formal education streams.
- Develop mechanisms to reward positive gender practices with regard to water management for institutions and individual practitioners and build these into performance appraisals.

To be able to do this they need:

- Clear arguments for and cases of gender mainstreaming in water management in agriculture
- Expertise/case studies tailored for policy and decision makers
- Training of staff on key elements of social sciences to allow for gendered policies (skills in collecting sex-disaggregated information, analyzing data sets, and monitoring).

④ Researchers and trainers in water and agriculture

Researchers and trainers should:

- Always include gender specific and disaggregated data in all disciplines, analyses and document findings.
- Enhance the gender content of disciplines, by:
 - updating conventional social sciences with state-of-the-art gender studies;

- updating existing curricula to include social issues especially in technical training courses.
- Make sure that research is participatory involving all stakeholders, including women, from the onset and recognizing that local men and women are also experts with relevant knowledge.
- Respect women's difficulties in participating in meetings by taking into account the time and place most suitable to them.
- Ensure that researcher's knowledge does not remain in isolation, but is shared with local people and policy makers (tailored for their needs).
- Work in multidisciplinary teams, including social scientists and gender experts and share knowledge and expertise among researchers of different disciplines and with practitioners.

To be able to do this they need:

- Guidance on a minimum set of specific & gender-disaggregated data for different scientific fields.
- To assess lessons learned from existing "gender projects" in their discipline to identify gaps.

6 Gender experts

Gender experts should at least:

- Focus on revising methodologies and tools for different audiences, and as per context and community needs.
- Always attempt to view the water management situation from the perspective of the water technician for better communication, avoiding the use of gender jargon.
- Contribute to improved integration of gender in disciplines in the formal and informal sectors by:
 - updating conventional social sciences with latest gender studies approaches;
 - updating existing curricula to include more social and gender issues especially in technical training courses.
- Raise awareness and create sensitization on what difference a good gender approach can make in water management and agricultural growth, as well as the inherent dangers of *not* mainstreaming gender in policies and decisions on water management and agriculture.
- Communicate information, cases, experiences, and research, using gender study centers.
- Provide tailored training/capacity building according to specific needs of projects, institutions;
- Suggest pathways to involve stakeholders on the ground and at different levels from the design to the implementation and evaluation phase of projects.
- Lobby at all levels to get the appropriate environment for social transformation.

To be able to do this they need:

- To get regular feedback from non-specialists on tools, approaches and methodologies.
- Revisit existing tools to make them accessible to non-specialists by tailoring and contextualizing them to specific local needs, users and uses (changing the language and guidelines with multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural teams).

7 Background information and follow-up

This report is based on the outcomes of different project activities. The separate reports of these project activities and the original project proposal are listed below. These can all be downloaded from our websites at: www.bothends.org, www.genderandwater.org, or www.iwmi.cgiar.org/assessment.

- Project proposal: *Effective gender mainstreaming in water management for sustainable livelihoods: from guidelines to practice*, BE/GWA/CA, August 2005.
- Report of the gender review of CA chapters: *CA synthesis workshop: Gender*, Sri Lanka, 26-30 September 2005.
- Workshop report: *Towards a minimum agenda for effective gender mainstreaming in water management*, 5-6 December 2005 at Both ENDS in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.
- Analytical report based on questionnaires and interviews: *Use of Manuals and Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming in Agriculture, Water and Environment*, Pranita Udas and Meena Bilgi, January 2006.
- Invitation for, and inputs into, the *online discussion on Gender Mainstreaming in Water Management for Agriculture*, February 2006.
- Powerpoint presentation: *Effective gender mainstreaming in water management for sustainable livelihoods*, Meena Bilgi, Stockholm Water Week, August 2006.
- Summary of *gender issues profiled in CA final book*, September 2006.

The minimum agenda presented in this report should be seen as a living document. What is needed is to substantiate this agenda with demonstrative examples and case studies and supportive tools, and to stimulate different stakeholders in the water sector to start working with this agenda in their respective roles and activities.

GWA, CA and BE will continue to put efforts in disseminating the agenda and discussing the possibilities to implement it with all stakeholders involved. As became clear during the process of this joint project, much more constructive and honest dialogue on gender mainstreaming between different groups in the water sector is needed: between local water practitioners and higher level professionals and policy makers, but also between gender specialists and water experts. The project showed not to underestimate the different perspectives and 'languages' spoken by gender and water experts. Such a process takes time and is difficult. Recognizing this is important and steps should be taken to come to a more 'common language' to build mutual understanding. This way, water professionals can better tailor and translate the issues raised by gender experts to their specific field or context, and gender experts are better equipped to support water professionals and develop guidelines and advice in a language and format that they are able to understand and use.

The minimum agenda will also serve as a base for Both ENDS, GWA and CA partners in their respective strategy processes to strengthen the integration of gender in their organization and work, and we hope it is of use also for other organizations that are developing similar exercises.