



Scenario Development in Integrated Water Resources Management: coping with future challenges in Bangladesh

Netherlands Initiatives for Capacity Development in Higher Education
(NICHE/BGD/155)

Let's Talk Water:
Seminar On **“Gender Issues in National Water Resources Planning”**

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Jointly organized by
Water Resources Planning Organization (WARPO) and
Institute of Water Modelling (IWM), Coordinator, Delta Alliance
Bangladesh Wing (DABW)



Let's Talk Water:

Gender issues in National Water Resources Planning



Let's talk water: Gender issues in National Water Resources Planning

October, 2016



UNESCO-IHE
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Project delivery report

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Brief description of the document

The Let's Talk Water briefings are a series of seminars, arranged through a collaborative support between WARPO and Delta Alliance Bangladesh Wing, coordinated by IWM. This activity is a part of the dissemination strategy of the ongoing project Nuffic 155 on scenario development in IWRM in Bangladesh. The purpose is to bring about awareness and create an informed group who would play a role or influence in decision making in water sector one way or others.

For this seminar on Gender issues in National Water Resources Planning we closely work together with the Gender and Water Alliance, who are implementing a programme on gender and water in Bangladesh. The GWA Executive Director, Joke Muylwijk and Team Leader Shaila Shahid speak in the programme.

This report describes the programme and recommendations given for policy makers.

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1. Background

1.1 Nuffic NICHE 155

The project 'Scenario Development on Integrated Water Resources Management in Bangladesh', shortly known as NICHE155 project is a Dutch funded project (not under the annual development program). The aim of this project is to *deliver capacitated graduates, researchers and policy staff on integrated water resources management to contribute / support the realization of the delta plan in order to cope with future challenges in Bangladesh*". This entails, among others, to strengthen the collaboration between and the capacity of the four organizations undertaking research, dissemination and policy formulation in scenario development relevant to IWRM and climate issues in Bangladesh. The project will also mainstream gender in education, integrate labor market needs in education, develop of curricula and provide training to staff of the four organizations. The four organizations are Department of Water Resources Engineering of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Department of irrigation and Water Management of Bangladesh Agriculture University (BAU), Centre for Environmental Geographic Information Services (CEGIS) and Water Resources Planning Organization (WARPO). The international consortium comprising members from institutes UNESCO-IHE, Alters/WAU & Deltares from Netherlands guide and assist the staff of the four organizations with a broad range of expert knowledge in order to achieve the stated objectives and to implement the project activities.

The five year project is a Dutch funded started on 1st March 2013 and ends on 28 February 2017.

The project aspires to strengthen the collaboration between the four organizations The project activities are grouped under the following working packages (WP):

- **WP 1: Curriculum Development**
- **WP 2: Academic Research**
- **WP 3: Staff Training**
- **WP 4: Facilities**
- **WP 5: Modeling facilities and support**
- **WP 6: Platform and Dissemination**
- **WP 7: Gender**
- **WP 8: Labour market**

1.2 About Gender and Water Alliance and GWAPB

GWA is a global network dedicated to mainstream gender in integrated water resources management. The mission of GWA is to promote women's and men's equitable access to and management of safe and adequate water, for domestic supply, sanitation, food security and environmental sustainability.

Gender and Water Programme of Bangladesh (GWAPB) was a three year programme in Bangladesh with the support of Embassy of Kingdom of Netherlands to support gender mainstreaming in EKN supported water and food security project. This programme has been a unique opportunity to ensure

that the voice of the poor women and men in Bangladesh is heard in more decision-making forums of the water sector in Bangladesh. It has been also a great opportunity for GWA and for the GWA members in Bangladesh to be connected with the marginalised people struggling for better water access in different parts of the country. Furthermore, it served as an affirmative prospect for the technical water and food security projects in Bangladesh, amongst them many who have too low or no budgets for gender, and/or lack sufficient expertise to systematically address gender mainstreaming in water sector. The lion share of the work and the resources of GWAPB are applied for gender mainstreaming and capacity strengthening support for the water related projects financed by the EKN (EKNsPs)

The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN) is continuing with and starting new large programmes in the water sector: for water and sanitation and for food security. To make sure that these programmes are in the benefit of poor women, children and men, and to make sure that the specific local knowledge of water users is tapped, the Gender and Water Alliance has developed this programme.

Purpose of GWAPB

The purpose of the GWAPB is to support water programmes co-financed by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN), civil society groups, water professionals, and government organizations in Bangladesh to adopt and implement a gender mainstreaming strategy in their water related policies and practices, in order to achieve measurable and positive impact on the lives of poor women and men.

GWAPB Activities

To achieve its goals, GWAPB works along five strategic components: Collaboration, Networking, and Coordination; Capacity building; Knowledge Development; Communication; and Monitoring. Here you can find information on activities developed for this programme.

1.3 About Delta Alliance Bangladesh Wing (DABW)

Delta Alliance is an international knowledge-driven network organization with the mission of improving the resilience of the world's deltas. With increasing pressure from population growth, industrialization and a changing climate, it is more important than ever that these valuable and vulnerable locations increase their resilience to changing conditions. Delta Alliance with 16 network wings brings people together who live and work in deltas. They can benefit from each other's experience and expertise and as such contribute to an increased resilience of their delta region.

The Delta Alliance Bangladesh Wing (DABW) is an international knowledge driven network organization with the mission of improving the resilience of the world's deltas. DABW brings together many parties and supports a joint perspective for addressing issues of importance in Bangladesh and other deltas.

2. Let's talk water: Gender issues in National Water Resources Planning

“Let's Talk Water” briefings are a series of seminars, arranged through a collaborative support between **WARPO** and Delta Alliance Bangladesh Wing, coordinated by **IWM**. This activity is a part of the dissemination strategy of the ongoing project **Nuffic 155** on scenario development in IWRM in Bangladesh. The purpose is to bring about awareness and create an informed group who would play a role or influence in decision making in water sector one way or others.

Water management in Bangladesh is governed by a number of policies, plans and acts. The most recent general law is the Bangladesh Water Act of 2013, which is in the process of elaboration of the rules and procedures which will lead to the National Water Resources Planning. In the meantime the National Water Management Plan (approved in 2004) is still the valid plan and policy.

The Government of Bangladesh is outspoken in the intention to include gender issues and gender equity in the National Water Resources Plan (NWRP), and whilst this process is ongoing, it needs feedback from the ground.

Overall in Bangladesh on the one hand women are responsible for water in the households, especially in the many regions where there is no reliable piped water system, this is heavy and daily work. On the other hand decisions at all levels are mostly made by men, who themselves do not have any duty related to water. Obviously, the decisions would be more relevant and better if the knowledge of those people who have more experience and expertise regarding use, quality and quantities of water, would be tapped: women.

“Let's Talk Water” briefings are a series of seminars, arranged through a collaborative support between Water Resources Planning Organization (WARPO) and Delta Alliance Bangladesh Wing (DABW), coordinated by Institute of Water Modeling (IWM). This activity is a part of the dissemination strategy of the ongoing project Nuffic 155 on scenario development in Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) in Bangladesh. The purpose of this seminar is to bring awareness and create an informed group who would play a role or influence in decision making in water sector one way or others. For the 2nd seminar the plan was to discuss the issues of Gender in connection with National Water Resources Planning. Therefore, the topic of the 2nd seminar was ‘**Gender issues in National Water Resources Planning**’. Since Gender and Water Alliance (GWA) is working on gender relating to water in Bangladesh, Joke Muylwijk- the Executive Director of GWA, and Shaila Shahid- the Team Leader of Gender and Water Program Bangladesh (GWAPB) gave their speeches in the seminar. The discussion was presided over by Prof. Dr. M. Monowar Hossain, Executive Director, IWM and Coordinator, Delta Alliance Bangladesh Wing (DABW).

2.1 Programme

In this connection a Seminar on ‘**Gender issues in National Water Resources Planning**’ was jointly organized by **IWM, WARPO and Delta Alliance Bangladesh wing** in association with **Gender and Water Alliance** and **Nuffic NICHE 155** at the Conference Hall of WARPO, 72 Green Road, Dhaka 1215 on 05 October 2016. (See program schedule in annex 1).

Prof. Dr. M. Monowar Hossain, Executive Director, Institute of Water Modelling (IWM) presided over the event. Dr. Sujit Kumar Bala, Associate Professor, IWFM, BUET and Md. Sharafat Hossain Khan, Director General, WARPO also spoke in the seminar as discussant. A number of designated guests, from both government and non-government sector, were present in this seminar. **Ms. Joke Muylwijk**, Executive Director, Gender and Water Alliance provided a descriptive overview on GWA programme in Bangladesh and **Ms. Shaila Shahid**, Team Leader, GWAPB gave a power point presentation on Gender issues in National Water Resources Planning in Bangladesh.

Welcome Address:

Mr. Saiful Alam, Director, WARPO as Coordinator of “Let’s Talk Water”

The welcome speech was addressed by Mr. Saiful Alam, Director (Technical), WARPO as coordinator of the Let’s Talk water platform. Then he talked briefly about the background of the platform let’s talk water and the needs of incorporating Gender issues in National Water Resources Planning. He also mentions that Recently Prime minister of Bangladesh expressed on SDG – to include in policies. SDG5 is on gender. SDG6 on sanitation and IWRM. WARPO responsible on 6.4. Gender issues are very much Important in the coastal part, because of scarcity of water, quality of water and how it impacts livelihood. Various documents have been prepared in the past like National Water Policy (1999), National Water Management Plan has 5 volumes (2001, approved 2004), National Water Act (2013) etc. Besides Guidelines being drafted (next year to Ministry for approval). ECNWRC (Executive Committee Nat Water Res Council). National Water Resources Plan in the making (not yet materialised, WARPO trying to get approval).

The seminar began with a brief word of welcome by Mr. Saiful Alam, Director of WARPO. He briefly explained the aim and importance of that seminar as well as the content of the key issues to be discussed.. He then requested participants to introduce themselves one after another to the larger group of participants.

2.2 Presentation Gender Issues in National Water Resources Planning



Joke Muylwijk, Executive Director, Gender and Water Alliance (GWA), gave a speech regarding the **Gender issues in National Water Resources Planning** (details in table 1).

After Prof. Dr. M. Monowar Hossain’s opening address, a presentation of GWA program in Bangladesh took place by Joke Muylwijk. She started her presentation with some nice imaginary words that when she had to discuss this certain subject, she sit on the moon for sometimes and look down. This time she sat and found the planet very beautiful. However, when she came closer she found some troubles that planet is full on waste, blue oceans are full on plastics. She said that this is

definitely a huge big trouble that we don't notice it. So we have to be aware of this and that is why she was mentioning it. She added that coming closer she also saw flood, flooded areas and also desert. She said that therefore it is not that everywhere life is so marvelous. There are some places where it is very difficult to people to live. Then when she became closer to habitation and saw people, she found that people are different form each other. They are not all the same. They seem to have all different customs and everywhere she found all the people need safe and clean water but only women work with the water. Women always have to work up water because the water flows down and that is the first thing an engineer learn. So women have to work up water that is not an easy thing. Joke also said that she found poor people, rich people and they all are different but all people need pure and safe water to drink, rich or poor does not matter. She added that therefore in that sense when we work with water, it is important for each and every person to work on gender.

She mentioned that water is available in limited quantities, and not increasing, whilst the people and their demands are increasing. She also mentioned that poor people around the worlds are struggling for their livelihoods and also for their drinking water. Women who carry water all over this globe, heavy water, and they carry it up, against the natural flow of water, which is only down. "I see men in offices with desks and computers and these are the men that make the decisions, plans, and the policies: who gets what and when? And under which conditions? Women need appropriate and sustainable technology. According to GWA mendate and GWAPB in Bangladesh we try to give the rural women a louder voice so that it can be heard by the decision making men. On the other hand we try to teach the decision making men the language of these women, try to make them understood that it is their own benefit to listen to these far away voices of water carrying people. GWA is a network of people and we all want to make water management more efficient, more effective, and more sustainable and of course more equal". Mrs Muylwijk also indicated the wider setting in Bangladesh, and how GWA has already contributed also in the context of the Bangladesh Delta Plan, to make it gender responsive.

Joke mentioned that women need agriculture engineer, water engineer, proper technology, sustainable technology and very solid technology. She also said that engineers need to hear from the poor women of remote villages to know what the good technologies and policies are, as well as what is their need. Accordingly, Joke mentioned the motto of GWA that is "Giving water users a voice" and said that GWAPB is trying to hear the voice of poor women of Bangladesh. She added that sometimes politicians also make decision about water but how a person behind the desk can make right decision. Therefore, there should be a direct link between exact water users and water professionals. When we would listen to the water users, the work of the water engineers and water professionals will be more effective, efficient, sustainable and equitable. Because then poor people will think that they own water resources and they will also be eager to protect these resources as well as will think that this is their responsibility.

Joke also shared that in 1992 conference on environment and development in Rio-De-Jeneiro it is said that this is women who care for water and who are also responsible. So IWRM has a close connection with gender. After that she discussed about Bangladesh Water Act- 2013 and told that water act is very

beautiful but it needs to be elaborated, supportive and its rules have to be described. She appreciated the initiative of Bangladesh and said that for the beginning that act would be very helpful. Finally she emphasized on empowerment of women in water sector and mentioned that women's economic empowerment, social empowerment, physical empowerment and political empowerment should be included in that act and then it would be really great. Appreciating the initiative, Joke said that we can say the name of Bangladesh as the number one country in the world for having a fantastic water policy. She also said that we all can influence the procedures and the descriptions to make it international water resource planning and that would be real great thing. She also said that it is also a matter of proud feeling because not all the country have this water act.

2.3 Presentation Gender Issues in Water Resources Planning

Shaila Shahid, Team Leader GWAPB presented the main paper of this event as **Gender issues in Water Resources Planning**. In her presentation, she focused on Multiple use of Water in Bangladesh: Bangladesh Scenario; Existing Policies in Water Management; Gender and National Water Policy; Gender issues in NWMP; Gender and SDGs; How to address Gender issues in Water Resources Planning; Women's empowerment in Water; Gender, SDGs and Empowerment in Water Sector: *GWA Approach and Learning*; Gender Responsive Indicators. She indicated various actions to be taken for more gender sensitive planning in water resources management. **(Annex 4: Presentation Gender Issues in Water Resources Planning)**



Shaila Shahid presented the key note of the seminar on “Gender Issues in National Water Resources Planning”. At the beginning of her presentation she presented how water is being structuralized at the national level and how water is increasingly becoming so scare at the national level and also globally. Afterwards she showed the water scenario of Bangladesh showing the multiple use of water in different sector. She mentioned that Bangladesh is crisscrossed by more than 57 rivers but 65.4% people are still in lack of safe drinking water. Regarding sanitation she showed that among the total population only 42.2% people have access to improved sanitation but more than half of the total population don't have access to proper sanitation. In rural areas, sustainability of sanitation is a challenge, especially for coastal belt and the sanitation coverage in hard to reach areas is below the minimum level. Although recently it has been declared that Bangladesh is open defecation free, a number of open defecation are still present. And, people especially women are suffering from all these sanitation access problems. Additionally she said that in Bangladesh 51% population with extreme poverty receive little attention regarding water and sanitation due to geo-physical, socio-economic, and political reasons. She then shown the figure that 50 districts, with more than 1000 unions under the coastal belt are living with very poor water and sanitation facilities and very less gender equality issues are addressed at the local level.

Next, she presented some secondary data regarding water usage in Bangladesh. She showed that the average water usage in urban areas is 200 liters per person per day, while in rural areas usage is 14 to 20 liter per person per day. Then she said that basically the main sources of water in Bangladesh is surface water, underground water and rain water but the underground water is going down 1 to 3 meter every year and the situation of Dhaka is very alarming. She mentioned that according to DWASA, in

Dhaka, people are in need of 2.2 billion liters per day but only 1.9 to 2 billion liters is possible to produce. Therefore, it is a huge gap between availability of water and the demand of the water. Then mentioning the issue of water pollution she said that every day from industries, households and medicals a number of tons of toxic materials and plastics are going to the water bodies and rivers that pollute water seriously.

Later, Shaila Shahid presented the gender issues in National Water Resources Management. First she gave a clear idea of gender and gender plus. Then regarding gender issues in water she said that worldwide it is historically recognized that women play the major role in collecting water and they are also the communal and social users of water. In developing countries including Bangladesh women, especially in rural level women have to spend 2/3 hours per day to collect water from different distances. In geographically hard to reach areas this hours are far more and sometimes it is 5/6 hours. Besides, carrying all these heavy pots of water in number of times from far distances is also painful for women. Therefore to address these issues properly we need to have proper realization about gender roles, relations, and inequalities. Additionally, which really can help us is to explain the choices people make and different options which can increase projects' effectiveness and efficiency for any water related intervention.

Afterwards, Shaila Shahid highlighted on some existing initiatives in water management at the national level of Bangladesh. She briefly discussed about some important policies, strategies and plans basically such as National water policy (1999), National water management plan (5 volume), Coastal zone policy (2005), Coastal development strategy (2006), National water management plan: Development strategy (2011), Bangladesh water act (2013), and Participatory water management guidelines and rules (2015). Then, she said that water is a cross cutting issue and it is linked with all the key sectors and sub-sectors. Regarding the situation of Bangladesh she said that these tools are very effective for water development but the lacking is in implementation level. She added that from the gender context, Bangladesh has gender action plan and strategies of climate change under the Ministry of Environment and Forest. It also has Risk Reduction Action Plan that has been developed with the Disaster Management Ministry for the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs. Additionally, there are Disaster Management Act and lots of other plans and legal documents.

After that, Shaila Shahid discussed about Gender and National Water Policy and highlighted the key objectives of National Water Policy of Bangladesh. She also mentioned that in National Water Policy of Bangladesh, gender and water issues are not addressed properly. She said that for building up proper knowledge it is very important that we consider and we value the store of knowledge about how women are managing water in scare situation. We also have to include those to design our project and to design future water resources management. She also focused on the article 18 of the act- "preferential use of water in the water stress area and exemption thereof" and mentioned it as the key achievement of the act that has fully highlighted on the preferential use of water in the water stress areas serving the national interest and interest of the local community. Subsequently, she focused on Gender issues in National Water Management Plan and said that it has recognized women and gave a stress on IWRM. Then she said that IWRM starts from household level by the hand of women because this is women who collect water and take decision about water. Therefore we should be in a coordinated manner with having an equitable approach and create enabling environment for women to hold key role in community organization for management of water resources. She added that National Water Management Plan has a clear direction about equipment in the cyclone shelter and gender specific water and sanitation facilities as well as a direction about gender balanced development and management.

Next, Shaila Shahid highlighted on Gender and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). She focused on the key areas of goal 5- “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” and goal 6: “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”. Connecting goal 5 and 6 she said that when we talk about end of all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere, definitely we need to address all the inequalities in the water sector and recognize women’s unpaid domestic services in the water sector. Along with this discussion, she also mentioned some initiatives of government of Bangladesh which are helping to achieve SDGs such as 7th five year plan and Delta Plan for Bangladesh (100 year perspective). She also mentioned that Gender and Water Alliance (GWA) has already supported the Delta Plan in 14 thematic areas for scenario development-how they are going to address water issues from gender context in the next 100 years. She added that till now Gender and Water Program Bangladesh (GWAPB) worked with around 10 water sector project with different context under the support of Embassy of Kingdom of Netherland (EKN).

Sequentially, Shaila Shahid discussed about how GWAPB addresses gender issues in water sector. She mentioned some key instruments those GWAPB apply to strengthen and improve the situation. These key instruments were Inclusiveness and awareness, capacity building, application of empowerment approach, gender responsive technology, gender budgeting, gender responsive indicators, gender responsive water governance. At the end of her presentation she shared some key approaches of GWA and learning on the bases of gender, SDGs and empowerment in water sector. In short these were capacity building approach, active participation and access to decision making, education and awareness raising and empowering women and girl, appropriate water resources management, recognition of women as central to the provision, management and safeguarding of water, equal distribution of opportunity and benefits between men and women arising from water, empowerment in a holistic manner, and a broaden advocacy at all sectors.

Upon completion of her presentation, a set of recommendations was prepared, and the audience was given time and opportunity to respond and give feedback. Partly this comes back in the discussion, below, and in the written feedback received, also below. In the next section (chapter 3) the revised set of recommendations is included.

2.4 Discussion

Dr. Sujit Kumar Bala, Associate Professor, IWFM, BUET and Md. Sharafat Hossain Khan, Director General, WARPO also spoke in the seminar as discussant. The seminar was presiding over by Dr. Monowar Hossain, Executive Director of IWM. After the main two discussants, from the audience many inputs were received, as reported below.

Sujit Kumar, prof. IWFM:



Participation should be effective and must go from the lowest level to up. We should reach to up knowing how things are done, how power relation is addressed, how women are represented in UP.

Water supplied for use is ground water mostly. It is precious. We may be lagging

behind, but we did a tremendous job in empowerment than neighboring countries.

- Please share findings of your GWAPB study in 10 projects funded by NL grants.
- We should focus our attention on bottom tower of society-Union parishad
- Gender inclusion action at union level- formation of development unit similar as WMG to include gender groups.

Md. Sharafat Hossain Khan, DG, WARPO:

Women need water for housekeeping, child caring etc. So their participation is necessary.

It is a question of availability, not only discrimination. Water resources are for the people living in the area. The question is how it is managed.

We must involve women in every sector. But discrimination is not everywhere. So it should be specified where there is discrimination in water resource practice. Share of Drinking water is another important issue.



At the beginning of this session Professor Dr. M. Monowar Hossain appreciated Shaila Shahid's presentation. After that he proposed Dr. Sujit Kumar Bala to start his discussion. Dr. Sujit Kumar Bala at first emphasized on people's participation in IWRM and said that participation should be effective and efficient. He added that participation should start from the Union Parishad level. Regarding the context of Bangladesh he mentioned that Bangladesh is using ground water and surface water for all purposes. Despite many rivers we withdraw lots of water from underground. On the other hand, our all the waste go to the ocean. Therefore, we are polluting both underground water and surface water.

After Dr. Sujit Kumar Bala's discussion, Dr. M. Monowar Hossain proposed Md. Sarafat Hossain Khan to present his discussion. Md. Sarafat Hossain Khan started his discussion mentioning the close relation of women with water. He said that we can mention it by using two "W"- Women and Water. In every family women are using water for domestic works. Therefore women are closely connected with water. He also mentioned that in Bangladesh, in dry season especially from January to May surface water shortage happen and in that time people greatly depend on ground water. He added that presently whole Asia is in scarcity of water and especially rural and coastal people are mostly suffering. He added that in irrigation project, 30% are women. It is not totally discrimination but still there is a gap. He shared the statistics of Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) and mentioned that according to DPHE, at least 87% area of Bangladesh have access to safe drinking water and only 13%

are in lacking. So this area is under consideration to fulfill the goal 6.1 and 6.2 of Sustainable Development Goals. He also shared that DPHE is preparing water rules and women's issues are with high priority. Besides, rain water harvesting is under consideration.

2.4.1 Open Discussion

The open discussion moderated by the session chair, Dr. Monwar Hossain. The participants actively participated in the discussion. A number of productive recommendations were given by the participants during this session. Some of them-

Dr. Nilufa Islam:

Gender issue- need to include what is there in the women policy of Bangladesh. There are lots of policy and plans. What we really need is to plan for implementation strategy. There should be strategy for implementation (include monitoring and evaluation).

Water sector is huge, alliance with 34 ministries, so coordination is a must. Health issue needs to be addressed in salinity intrusion areas. Climate change issue should be considered.

Chowdhury Islam:

Gender discrimination is severe in coastal areas. In any situation the women must go fetch water. Disable child birth happens due to this. This should be addressed in case of coastal belts.

There is no registered women entrepreneur in the water related business. Women are losing attraction to male in 25-26 due to contaminated water- uterus problem. This should be introduced.

Kitty Bentveldsen:

It is important to have good policy and guidelines. Both men and women use water. But when it comes to speaking, it is always men who do it. So work need to be done to their mind set. It is very much responsibility of men to raise voice against discrimination.

Mahfuz Ahmed, BWDB:

NGOs should involve in more empowerment.

Fahmida Haque, Associate Professor Eden College:

More research is needed in the area of coast and hills. In Union Parishad activity both men and women should be included. Girls and women can be leader.

Moumita:

We have good policies. The problem is in implementation of the policies. There is lack of coordination among sectors.

Rokhsana Begum:

Area specific needs should be addressed. Because different areas may have different problems.

During the meeting, a **feedback form** was provided, giving the opportunity for all present to write down their feedback. This was done, as always the time is limited for all speakers to take their turn. Below is an overview of the response received:

Rafiqul, RUN:

- Monitoring the implementation area where gender relation, activity are gap
- develop Strong linkage among the different involved ministries
- strong monitoring

Dr. Mahfuz, BWDB:

- Importance that men create space for women to speak out and take their opinions seriously
- More equal distribution of domestic workload between husband and wife needed to allow women to play a bigger role in community decision making and in livelihood improvement.

Shahidul Islam, voice of Bangladesh:

- Strengthen advocacy for eliminating all sorts of gender discrimination in water sector
- To recognize unpaid values of women
- To safe adolescent issues and young women health through ensuring fresh water for them.

Khadija Begum, EX Deputy Head, WARPO:

- We need proper policies, adequate budget and particular agenda to work.
- To reach the gender related goals we need strong governing body with different legal ministries and people to achieve the right thing.
- The policies must address gender issues but consideration must be given on the context of different geographical areas like hilly area, coastal area, wetland area, water logged area etc.
- Apart from this work can also be done to establish collaborative mechanism among different relevant institution to address this issue together

Fahmida Hoque, Associate Professor, EDEN collage:

- More research is needed for sufferings and solve- mainly areas based like coastal, hill and plain land.
- In Union parisad men and women should be included in training and awareness programme.

- Women should be included in school/ college managing committee to motivate others about gender issues

Shahidul Islam, Space:

- Develop gender friendly technologies for coastal belt and hilly areas of Bangladesh.
- Encouraging to use rain water and collection, preservation at rural and urban level.
- Encouraging to use ecological sanitation for safe ground water and surface water.

Md. Rokunuzzaman

- it is a matter of sorrow that most people specially women do not know how to purify contaminated water. During the flood situation many people suffers from water borne diseases.

After Md. Sarafat Hossain Khan's discussion the floor was open. Then Dr. M. Monowar Hossain encouraged every participant to take part in discussion and deliver their own messages. Then Dr. Nilufer Islam from Bangladesh Water Partnership (BWP) said that BWP is thinking about water policy. She also shared that before 1999 there was no water policy but BWP did lots of development in the water sector of Bangladesh. She argued that in early sixties Bangladesh has been prepared participatory water management policy, it also prepared environment policy in 1992. Beside these, there are lots of policies and activity plans but the implementation of these policies and plans is very less. Therefore we should prepare the implementation policy and monitoring and evaluation policy. She also said that not only policy but also fund for implementation, monitoring and evaluation should have.

After Dr. Nilufer Islam's discussion Md. Shahidul Islam shared some information from his study on gender and poverty in Bagerhat. He shared that women are poorer than men because of gender discrimination and because of their poverty women suffer most in water related problems. He also shared that in Bagerhat district because of drinking saline water by pregnant women, children with disability are born, and women are losing their uterus because of using contaminated water. He also said that he met with the Union Parishad chairman of his study area, discussed about his findings, proposed him to give rain water reservoir to the people and the chairman agreed with him. Then he made some recommendations. These were:

- Gender issues should include in every policies and plans.
- Women's unpaid works should be recognized.
- Women's safety and security should ensure everywhere.

After Md. Shahidul Islam's discussion, Kitty Bentvelsen discussed from her experience in the Blue Gold project. She said that to include gender issues in policies and plans and for flood control, it is needed to have good guideline and participatory program. Without equal participation of women it is not possible to address gender issues. She added that women are member in papers but it is found that speaking in the public place is men's duty. She shared that in Water Management Group (WVG) meeting of Blue Gold project, women talk and men listen women's opinion. Therefore, it helps to create linkage between men and women.

After Kitty Bentvelsen's discussion, Mahfuj Ahmed shared that Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) has about 13000 women member. So Nongovernmental Organizations can share their experiences.

After Mahfuj Ahmed, Fahmida Haque said that for women's empowerment in water sector more research are needed in different fields. Additionally, these researches should be leaded by women.

After Fahmida Haque, Mumita Tanjeela claimed that we have many good policies and acts such as National Policy for Women's Development-2011, National Action Plan, Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act-2010, Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act-2012, Hindu Marriage Registration Act-2012, Child Marriage Restraint Act-2014, and many other. We also have a separate ministry for women and children affair. However, we have lack of coordination among the ministries and proper implementation of those policies. Therefore, proper initiative and activities is needed not only for water, land or other sectors but relevant ministries should work with collaboration.

After Mumita Tanjeela, Roksana Begum suggested that all programs should be area specific. For instance, plans and programs should not be same for coastal, plain, hill or riverine area's people.

After Roksana Begum, ---- said that water level is going down gradually. So sufferings of women are increasing day by day. Therefore, responsible authority should try for alternatives so that women's burden will reduce.

Some responses were anonymous. Points mentioned were:

- Empowerment of women
- Women in decision making process
- Gender issues should be introduced from the bottom layer of the society
- Women contribution to family society & nation should be acknowledged
- Water act, 2013 as well as NWRP (proposed) should be implementing as early as possible. Because then has addressed some gender issues in management properly
- Develop proper coordination mechanism between all relevant ministries and sector to implement policies and plans related to water management. Here GO/NGO's coordination and trust worthy relation needed to ensured
- Preparation of any water plan should have fund for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of any small or big project.
- Coordination and implementation should have any project of plan
- Coordination between the ministry as well as between development partners also vary important for the sustainable development of any project and plan
- Talk with women and children especially with girls separately to bring their issues in the water resources planning.
- Participation of underprivileged group of the society has to be practiced.

- Awareness raising and motivation is very important
- Need to share the responsibility of men and women and extend cooperation related to use of water
- **Participation in all family members, even neighbors' and relatives for water purposes.**
- **Preserve natural water especially rain water. Ponds and canal's should be clean for use in various purposes and even for drinking**
- **Gender inclusive water technologies need to adopt to reduce burdens**
- **Participation should not be defragmented rather mechanisms needs to adopt to make this meaningful as much as possible.**

2.4.2 Closure by Dr. Monowar, Executive Director, IWM:

“We have different mindset. Our social rules and regulations are not strong enough to safe guard women. So we need to find a better approach, which will be a collaborative one, to go ahead. With time things will change”.

In his closing remarks, Prof. Dr. M. Monowar Hossain, emphasized the importance of the discussion and of this kind of seminars in general. He thanked all the presenters, designated discussants and participants for their cooperation and kind presence in the event.



3. Recommendations on gender issues in the National Water Resources Plan

Based on the points raised during the seminar, the following set of recommendations was formulated.

To increase the impact and efficiency of water projects it helps when water managers understand gender relations and power inequalities. Water users' choices and behavior can be predicted and explained by taking gender differences into account. In all sub-sectors of water action is required, and indicators are needed to monitor progress. From the discussion by the participants the key recommendations are summarized as follows:

1. **Participation:** Women's participation in decision making related to water in all sectors and at all levels needs to be strengthened. For example, in Water Management Groups and WASH Committees under the rules for Participatory Water Management Groups at local level. Ensure representation of women in the management bodies in executive positions related to water in the government (MoWR, MoA, MoLG etc).
2. **Gender Analysis:** All policies should include gender aspects and issues, analysed from an empowerment perspective: socio-cultural, economic, political and physical empowerment.
3. **Gender Action Plans:** Based on the Gender Analysis action needs to be planned ensuring active involvement of both women and men at all levels.
4. **Empowerment** of women and men will ensure more effective and efficient and sustainable water management.
5. **Agriculture:** Women's work in and large contribution to agriculture should be acknowledged by recognition by the Government of women as farmers, to begin with by the MoA, to access Farmers' Cards, agricultural inputs, irrigation water, credits and land.
6. **Education** on water and sustainable delta and water management should be gender responsive and a diverse representation of the society should be ensured both in teaching and research, the education material, as well as among the student population.
7. **Climate change and development** have an important influence on water management (changing patterns of droughts, floods, rains, erosion, cyclones, salinity). Women should be part of decision making regarding actions addressing climate change, mitigation, adaptation and development.
8. **Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM):** Integrate Menstrual Hygiene Management into a wider hygiene promotion approach of WASH and also further inclusion in the curriculum of primary and secondary schools. Teachers should be taught how to deal with the sensitive subject without embarrassment.
10. **Sanitation facilities:** Ensure separate safe water and sanitation facilities for the female staff in every organization, especially in government organizations including the local government tiers with proper budget allocation for such facilities.
11. **SDGs:** Implement all SDGs considering the gender targets of each of them, with a focus on SDG 6: Access to WASH for all, which includes hard-to-reach areas, gender friendly technology and facilities for minorities, very poor women and men.
12. **Monitoring:** Proper monitoring and documentation of sex disaggregated data in all water sector interventions as well as in professional representations, combined with gender responsive indicators and budget allocation at all levels.
13. **Local Level Government Authorities:** Develop a comprehensive Union Parishad level 'Women's Development Action Plan' where natural resource management particularly water resources will be incorporated as one of the prioritized sectors of Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation. This local action plan should be prepared through a participatory process including representation and feedback from all segments of the society.
14. **Gender strategies:** All government institutes should have a gender policy or Gender and Equality Strategy and doable gender action plans that can be monitored.
15. **Gender Mainstreaming:** Review the relevant water policies, national guideline, Act and Orders of the government to identify the gap and challenges of mainstreaming gender in IWRM and thus provide recommendations for inclusion of Gender and Equity aspects in those documents and further directions of proper enforcement.

4. Conclusion:

In the series of “Let’s Talk Water”, a discussion was held on Gender Issues in National Water Resources Planning. Presentations were given and feedback was provided to facilitate the review of NWMP with regard to gender issues. The meeting provided 15 clear suggestions in this regard (see page 24-25 annex 2)

These suggestions will be shared in the ‘Scenario development in IWRM’ - Facebook side by WARPO and feedback is solicited. Also GWA will follow up on the points, and share with their members.

Further, WARPO will follow up, and place the points for discussion at ministerial level to assist the formulation of the update of the NWMP and ensure gender sensitive policy making.

Annex 1: Invitation card & Schedule



LET'S TALK WATER

“Let’s Talk Water” briefings are a series of seminars, arranged through a collaborative support between WARPO and Delta Alliance Bangladesh Wing, coordinated by IWM. This activity is a part of the dissemination strategy of the ongoing project Nuffic 155 on scenario development in IWRM in Bangladesh. The purpose is to bring about awareness and create an informed group who would play a role or influence in decision making in water sector one way or others. For the 2nd seminar we have a plan to discuss the issues on Gender in connection with National Water Resources Planning. ‘Let’s Talk Water’ is scheduling its 2nd Seminar on 05th October, 2016, and the topic is ‘Gender issues in National Water Resources Planning’ at 02:30 PM in the Conference Room of WARPO, 72, Green Road, Dhaka. The GWA Executive Director, Joke Muylwijk and Team Leader of GWAPB, Shaila Shahid will speak in the programme.

The Talk will be presided over by Prof. Dr. M. Monowar Hossain, Executive Director, IWM & Coordinator, Delta Alliance Bangladesh Wing (DABW).

You are cordially invited to attend the seminar.

Prof. Dr. M. Monowar Hossain
Executive Director, IWM
& Coordinator, DABW

Md. Sarafat Hossain Khan
Director General, WARPO

Venue: WARPO Conference Hall, 72, Green Road, Dhaka.

RSVP: 9842105-6, 01552352814, 01841930081

Registration: *Participation to this seminar is free of charge.*

Please Register your interest by sending an email to M. Samiun Nabi <mdn@iwmbd.org>

Programme Schedule

Gender issues in National Water Resources Planning	
2:30 - 2:50 pm	Arrival and Participants Registration
2:50 - 3:00 pm	Opening and Welcome
3:00 - 3:30 pm	Presentation of GWA Programme in Bangladesh by Joke Muylwijk, Executive Director Gender and Water Alliance
3:30 - 4:00 pm	Gender issues in National Water Resources Planning by Shaila Shahid, Team Leader GWAPB
4:00 - 4:45 pm	Open discussion
4:45 - 5:00 pm	Closing with refreshment

Annex 2: 15 Key recommendations, resulting from this Session:

Recommendations from the Seminar on Gender Issues in National Water Resources Planning

Water management in Bangladesh is governed by a number of policies, plans and acts. The most recent general law is the Bangladesh Water Act of 2013, which is in the process of elaboration of the rules and procedures which will lead to the National Water Resources Planning. In the meantime the National Water Management Plan (approved in 2004) is still the valid plan and policy.

The Government of Bangladesh is outspoken in the intention to include gender issues and gender equity in the NWRP, and whilst this process is ongoing, it needs feedback from the ground.

Overall in Bangladesh on the one hand women are responsible for water in the households, especially in the many regions where there is no reliable piped water system, this is heavy and daily work. On the other hand decisions at all levels are mostly made by men, who themselves do not have any duty related to water. Obviously, the decisions would be more relevant and better if the knowledge of those people who have more experience and expertise regarding use, quality and quantities of water, would be tapped: women.

The seminar on Gender and Water in the series 'Let's Talk Water' discussed this matter. To increase the impact and efficiency of projects it helps when water managers understand gender relations and power inequalities. Water users' choices and behaviour can be predicted and explained by taking gender differences into account. In all sub-sectors of water action is required, and indicators are needed to monitor progress.

From the discussion by the participants the **key recommendations** are summarised as follows:

- **Participation:** Women's participation in decision making related to water in all sectors and at all levels needs to be strengthened. For example, in Water Management Groups and WASH Committees under the rules for Participatory Water Management Groups at local level. Ensure representation of women in the management bodies in executive positions related to water in the government (MoWR, MoA, MoLG etc).
- **Gender Analysis:** All policies should include gender aspects and issues, analysed from an empowerment perspective: socio-cultural, economic, political and physical empowerment.
- **Gender Action Plans:** Based on the Gender Analysis action needs to be planned ensuring active involvement of both women and men at all levels.
- **Empowerment** of women and men will ensure more effective and efficient and sustainable water management.
- **Agriculture:** Women's work in and large contribution to agriculture should be acknowledged by recognition by the Government of women as farmers, to begin with by the MoA, to access Farmers' Cards, agricultural inputs, irrigation water, credits and land.
- **Education** on water and sustainable delta and water management should be gender responsive and a diverse representation of the society should be ensured both in teaching and research, the education material, as well as among the student population.
- **Climate change** and development have an important influence on water management (changing patterns of droughts, floods, rains, erosion, cyclones, salinity). Women should be part of decision making regarding actions addressing climate change, mitigation, adaptation and development.
- **MHM:** Integrate Menstrual Hygiene Management into a wider hygiene promotion approach of WASH and also further inclusion in the curriculum of primary and secondary schools. Teachers should be taught how to deal with the sensitive subject without embarrassment.

- Sanitation facilities: Ensure separate safe water and sanitation facilities for the female staff in every organization, especially in government organizations including the local government tiers with proper budget allocation for such facilities.
- SDGs: Implement all SDGs considering the gender targets of each of them, with a focus on SDG 6: Access to WASH for all, which includes hard to reach areas, gender friendly technology and facilities for minorities, very poor women and men.
- Monitoring: Proper monitoring and documentation of sex disaggregated data in all water sector interventions as well as in professional representations, combined with gender responsive indicators and budget allocation at all levels.
- Local Level Government Authorities: Develop a comprehensive Union Parishad level 'Women's Development Action Plan' where natural resource management particularly water resources will be incorporated as one of the prioritized sectors of Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation. This local action plan should be prepared through a participatory process including representation and feedback from all segments of the society.
- Gender strategy: All government institutes should have a gender policy or Gender and Equality Strategy and doable gender action plans that can be monitored.
- Gender Mainstreaming: Review the relevant water policies, national guideline, Act and Orders of the government to identify the gap and challenges of mainstreaming gender in IWRM and thus provide recommendations for inclusion of Gender and Equity aspects in those documents and further directions of proper enforcement.

Annex 3: Picture





Annex 4: List of Participants

S.L	NAME	Designation & Organization	EMAIL	CONTACT NO	SIGNATURE
1	PROF. DR. M. MONOWAR HOSSAIN	Executive Director, Institute of Water Modelling (IWM);	mmh@iwmbd.org	+8801841930000, +8801755574250	
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7	M. H. ANUPAM MAHMUD	Program Assistant, Human Resources Development, IWM	anu@iwmbd.org	01841 930041	

LET'S TALK WATER

Venue: WARPO Conference Hall, 72, Green Road, Dhaka, Date: 05 October 2016
Dissemination SEMINAR on "Gender Issues in National Water Resources Planning"



LET'S TALK WATER


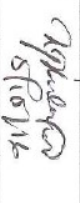
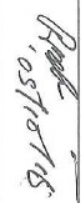




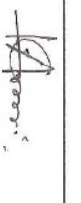
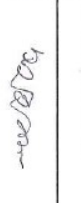

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LET'S TALK WATER






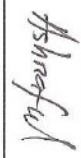




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21	Dr. Anisul Hossain	PSO, WARPO	anisul05@yahoo.com	01818172149	



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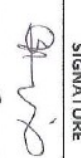


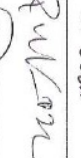

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28	Dr. Nazminul Hossain Sarker	DEO, CEGLI	nsarker@cegl.gov.bd	01819006981	
29	A.B.M. Tahmidul Haq Saikat	Research Assistant, Nafhe Neta 155 Project	saikat.aj10@gmail.com	01766799602	
30	Kousik Ahmed	Technical Assistant, IWR-POP, IWM	kwa@iwmkd.org	01748543063	
31	Engn. Md. Anif Ullah	Scientific Officer (MSE), WARPO.	aaname@warpo.gov.bd	01558035755	



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34	Saba Dipak Kerman	Manager, Advocacy & Information NZO Foreign In-Building	dipak_vic@ngdf.org	01719013573	
35	Dr. Md. Rakunnes Aman	Poverty eradication program	rakunnes21@gmail.com	01729643816	
36	Mahfuzul Kabir	Equity & Rights Specialist WaterAid Bangladesh	mahfuzulmahfuzul@wateraid.org	01711601460	
37					
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Annex 5: Presentations

4.1 Presentation of Shaila Shahid, Team Leader GWAPB

Gender issues in Water Resources Planning



Shaila Shahid (GWA)
Gender and Water Alliance
Shaila.shahid@gwapb.org

Multiple use of Water in Bangladesh

Bangladesh

Category	Percentage
Agriculture	96.1%
Domestic	3.2%
Industry	0.7%

Bangladesh Scenario

65.4% people lacks safe drinking water

Only 42.26 M people have access to Improved Sanitation (JMP)

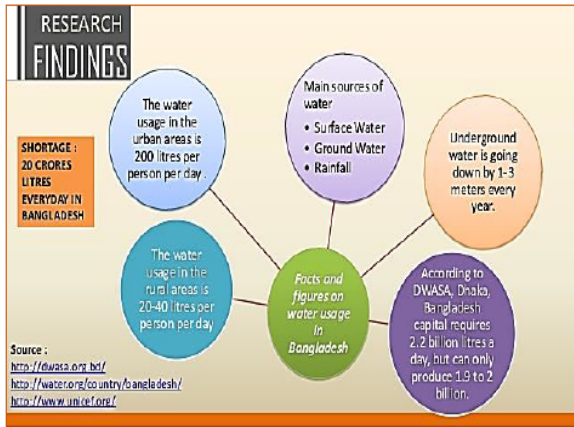
Coverage in H2R areas much below than minimum level

21% population with extreme poverty, received little attention due to geo-physical, socio-economic and political reason.

Total 1,144 Unions under 50 districts like coastal belt, *char* areas live with poor WASH infrastructures and services, less gender equality, less financing on WASH

Source: BBS, MICS Survey, 2015

Water Usage in Bangladesh



Indiscriminate water pollution contaminating rivers and water bodies where about 80 metric tonnes of faecal sludge is generated every day and 24 metric tonnes in urban areas

The issues of industrial, domestic and medical waste management remains unsolved



Shaila Shahid
 shaila.shahid@gwapb.org

Gender Issues in Water Resources Management

- Why are gender and water issues not solved?
- Why gender and empowerment matters in IWRM?

- In developing countries, including Bangladesh, 71 percent of the water collection burden falls on women and girls.

- It is estimated that women spend more than 2/3 hours per day collecting/fetching water from a far ways place. (field survey)

- Understanding gender roles, relations, and inequalities can help explain the choices people make and their different options which can increase project effectiveness and efficiency. ? But *How?*



Shaila Shahid
 shaila.shahid@gwapb.org

Existing Policies in Water Management

- a. National Water Policy (1999);
- b. National Water Management Plan (NWMP), 5 Volume
- c. Coastal Zone Policy (2005);
- d. Coastal Development Strategy (2006);
- e. National Water Management Plan: Development Strategy (2011);
- f. Bangladesh Water Act 2013.
- g. Participatory Water Management Guidelines and Rules 2015

There are number of sub-sectors in water and water issues are linked with 36 Ministries



Shaila Shahid
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Gender and National Water Policy

- ❑ To ensure the availability of water to all elements of the society including the poor and the underprivileged, and to take into account the particular needs of women and children
- ❑ To bring institutional changes that will help decentralise the management of water resources and enhance the role of women in water management
- ❑ To develop a state of knowledge and capability that will enable the country to design future water resources management plans with economic efficiency, gender equity, social justice and environmental awareness through broad public participation

*Key Features of
Water Act: Article 18
Preferential use of
water in the Water
Stress areas serving
the national interest
& interest of local
communities*



Shaila Shahid
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Gender issues in NWMP

- ❑ Recognised women have a particular stake in IWRM as they are the principal providers and carriers of water, main caretaker of the family's health, and active participants of pre and post harvest activities.
- ❑ Creating enabling environment for women to hold key role in local community organisations for management of water resources.
- ❑ Ensure interests of low-income water users, and that of women, are adequately protected in IWRM
- ❑ Under the programme outline it is linked with Gender requirements and Audit
- ❑ Address the gender, audit and landlessness in evaluation or audit of NWMP
- ❑ Equip cyclone shelter and killas with gender specific WASH facilities,
- ❑ Approaches for a gender-balanced development and management



Shaila Shahid
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Gender and SDGs

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

- End all forms of discrimination
- Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through public services, infrastructure and social protection policies
- Ensure women's full and effective participation, equal opportunities for leadership

Goal 6: Ensure safe and equitable access to water and sanitation for all

- Universal and equitable access to safe and affordable WASH for all, special attention to the needs of women and girls
- Substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater
- Implement IWRM at all levels
- Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving IWRM including women.



Shaila Shahid
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How to address Gender issues in Water Resources Planning



Inclusiveness and Awareness

Participation of women in WASH committees, in WMGs group (30%), representation in the management bodies under local govt.



Capacity Building

Understanding Gender, Identifies the social relations between men and women and how these relationships are socially constructed. Encourage leadership role.

- Apply an empowerment approach with 4 interacting elements (physical, socio-cultural, economic & political)

Women's empowerment in Water



Gender responsive Technology

Design & availability of water points, toilet, access to new technology and innovation, infrastructure should focus on the use, preferences and needs of different group including disable like Rainwater harvesting etc. Access to information, CCA & DRR measure properly



Gender Budgeting

Gender responsive resource allocation, involve a gender analysis of programme & budget priorities, allocation and distribution pattern and equity issues on WASH. Women's representation at local government level.

Women's empowerment in Water



Gender Responsive Indicators

Both quantitative targets and qualitative interpretation with gender responsive indicators to be developed, tools and methods to ensure gender responsive M&E



Gender Responsive Water Governance

An ownership, transparency and accountability mechanism with affect of the use, development and management of water resources ensuring delivery of water services at different levels such as urban water supply, agriculture, industry and energy etc.

Gender, SDGs and Empowerment in Water Sector

GWA Approach and Learning:

- A learning and capacity building approach.
- Active participation and women's access to decision making should be encouraged and practiced.
- Education, and awareness raising empower girls with factual information about their bodies and how to look after it.
- Water resources should be managed at the lowest appropriate level.
- Women should be recognised as central to the provision, management and safeguarding of water
- It requires to ensure opportunity and benefits arising from water will be equally available to women and men
- Empowerment should be targeted in a holistic manner without isolating women from the social context rather creating an enabling environment. Always involve men as shared responsibilities.
- A broader advocacy at all sectors.

Gender Responsive Indicators:

Both quantitative targets and qualitative interpretation.

- ❑ Number and type of positions held, level of involvement by men and women within water users group, management committees, hygiene promotion, planning meetings and construction activities; representation in the management bodies of water institutions at policy and operational level
- ❑ Percentage of time, income spent by women and men in accessing WASH services in different geographic location (e.g. Hard to Reach Areas); Women's economic benefits from improved access to WASH facilities;
- ❑ Number of WASH facilities, addressing needs of women and girls separately in terms of suitability, distance, technologies and infrastructures. The dimensions, safety of accessibility, availability and quality of WASH should be measured;
- ❑ Availability of separate toilet block and safe sanitation in schools, cabin for girls which includes basin, running water, toilet, towel, mirror, waste bin, electricity and hygiene messages.
- ❑ Sex disaggregated data in all Water interventions and facilities combined nationally with gender responsive budget allocation at LGIs, UPs;



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Annex 6: Presentation Joke Muylwijk

Let's Talk Water 5 October 2016

Joke Muylwijk

Agricultural Engineer, Agrarian Sociologist, Gender Studies in Agriculture Associate Professor in Wageningen Agriculture University, the Netherlands.

Here in Bangladesh off and on since 1967. In 1975 we started the Early Implementation Projects. Currently the ED of the Gender and Water Alliance.

Looking at water in this planet, from the moon, I see lots of water, beautiful and blue.

This is our planet, we are lucky to have been born here, all of us. That was not an achievement.

When I come closer I see not only beauty but also problems: pollution of these huge oceans, for example, and flooded land. Also whole huge areas where there is hardly water, these are deserts.

The closer I come, I start to see habitation and then people, different people.

And all need water every day, clean fresh, sweet water.

But there is a problem.

Such water is available in limited quantities, and not increasing, but decreasing, whilst the people and their demands are increasing.

I see rich people, with plenty, and well able to look after themselves.

I see poor people who have to struggle for their livelihoods and also for their drinking water.

Then I see gender: women who carry water all over this globe, heavy water, and they carry it up, against the natural flow of water, which is only down.

I see men, in offices with desks and computers, and these are the men that make the decisions, the plans, the policies:

“who gets what and when?”, and “under which conditions?”.

I look at these women again, they try to say something to these men, who decide where the water will go to.

But many of these men don't listen, they don't even see these women, and don't understand their link with these women, they don't understand that they need these women, because these women know all about water, they find it every day, all over the world, even where there hardly is fresh water. They know the behaviour of water. All over this world and also over time, in the different seasons.

These women need appropriate and sustainable technology.

Here is the mandate of GWA and for GWAPB here in Bangladesh:

On the one hand we try to give the rural women a louder voice so that it can be heard by the decision making men.

On the other hand we try to teach the decision making men the language of these women, try to make them understood that it is in their own benefit to listen to these far away voices of water carrying people.

The Gender and Water Alliance is a network of people and we all want to make water management more efficient, more effective, more sustainable and of course more equal.

On request by the Dutch Embassy we have also done this in Bangladesh, with a focus on the water projects financed by the Dutch Embassy.

Worldwide, and certainly also in Bangladesh, a lot of money is invested in hardware for water supply, for river management, for coastal management, for irrigation, for flood control, for mitigation against the changing climate, for sanitation, all these water subsectors. Many billions are invested and spent.

Ever so often we hear that the people for whom these investments were meant, cannot use them, or are even worse off than before.

That the expectations are not met.

Still, these investments are meant for people, not for anything else than people. Many of them are meant for these poor women that carry water all the time, or that grow crops without irrigation. But they have not been asked for their opinion, their need and their knowledge.

In our work we try to explain to water managers, engineers, water professionals, water politicians, why it is important for themselves, for their work, to include the water users, and the differences between water users.

And from the water users we try to find out why their situation is at it is, what they can do, what they need, etc. And these two sides we link together.

The social and the technical. Both are important. The one cannot do without the other, but people working in the social side of development, often don't understand the technical people, and the other way around also.

Efficiency: to do more with fewer resources:

- include all available knowledge, capacity, human resources
- involve those who do certain tasks, which others don't do or know about
- give training to those who will apply it.

Effectiveness for more Impact:

- focus at the relevant stakeholders
- train the right stakeholders
- involve those who have an interest in your project and activities
- raise awareness of all

Equality or equitability:

- Involve men and women of different ethnic groups, socio-economic position, age, etc.
- Give each category the same rights, the same say in decision-making, etc.
- Value the contributions of men and women according to the same standards

Sustainability:

1. for technical improvements to be more durable, lasting and strong:

- Make sure those who work with it feel that they own it
- Train those who use it also to maintain it

2. for attitudinal change to remain:

- Make sure that training has been adequate and appropriate
- People need to be convinced that it is in their own benefit

3. for water management to be economically sustainable:

- Those who have to pay for water and for maintenance should be able to count on the services: reliability
- Payments should come from men and women, not just from women.

All this in the framework of IWRM. 1992: women are necessary for water management, women are at the core of it.

A lot has been done in Bangladesh since I first came here in 1967. An enormous lot, the country is not the same anymore at all, different agriculture, lots of bridges, lots of technology. That is fantastic.

And there is also a great Bangladesh Water Act 2013.

It gives space to be operationalised and elaborated with detailed and gender sensitive rules.

Empowerment is the solution of problems in this world: if all people are empowered, men and women, and elderly and children, to control their own lives, our planet will also be a winner.

Empowerment needs to be the outcome of the implementation of the new water policy. If we can manage that, I should say if you can manage that, we are all winners.

Shaila will tell you about the gender aspects of the National water policies.

And how we can make these the best water policies in the world. By including the diversity of people, all with different needs and different knowledge that the water managers need.

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