

Date 4 November 2014		
	<h1>Session 4</h1> <p>Women for Water – Agents of Change: How to implement the Human Rights to Water and Sanitation</p> <p>Conveners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women for Water Partnership (WfWP); - UN Women; - UN Water for Life Decade Programme on Advocacy and Communication (UNW-DPAC) <p>Concept note and case descriptions have been distributed, the materials are available at www.womenforwater.org</p>	
	Rapporteur name: Ms Kathy Kelly	
	Session chair: Drs. Alice M. Bouman-Dentener, Honorary Founding President, Women for Water Partnership	
1	<p>Presentation: <i>Gender-Water-Development.</i> Dr. Auxilia Ponga, representative UN Women multi-country office, South Africa</p>	
Please capture & summarise the 5 most important points (consult with Chair & Vice chair)		
1	In order to prevent that policies are built on gender stereotypes, we have to work with women's civil society organizations that know the reality on the ground.	
2	Women have been named as a crucial stakeholder group since the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace (1976 – 1985). Despite this the potential of women to contribute to development remains largely untapped to date .	
3	Linking Gender-Water-Development to the SDG framework: UN Women strives for a transformative Agenda for equitable development in which the underlying causes of gender inequality are structurally addressed and women are empowered to contribute fully.	
4	<p>The Gender –Water –Development nexus is a most powerful driver for sustainable and equitable development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - access to safe and sufficient water for all uses and adequate sanitation improves the living conditions of the poor; - taking a leading role in water provision and managements empowers women and strengthens their position in the community; - women empowered through water address other development issues in their communities and countries; 	
5	Institutional arrangements for the development and management of water resources should ensure the voice, leadership and participation of women.	
2	<p>Presentation: <i>The added value of Women Leadership in Water</i> A conversation with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms. Eliza Mngale, Tegemeo Women Group of Mweteni, Tanzania: a success 	

	<p>story of women leadership at community level;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Prof. Lenah Nakone, Nakuru Club of Soroptimist International Union of Kenya: the role of national women's organisations in empowering the grassroots.</i> 	
	The success stories demonstrate that:	
1	Women leadership in local water projects ensures that the community is engaged and takes ownership and responsibility; consequently, access is equitable, corruption is curbed/prevented, services are maintained and the resource is managed sustainably.	
2	Women meet many challenges in becoming leaders in their community that they cannot overcome on their own; the support and coaching of their national and international Peers makes local leaders emerge and perform strongly.	
3	The fact that water provision is a women's task in many societies makes that women leadership in water is more readily accepted than in other spheres of (public) life → ensuring women's meaningful participation in water provision and management is an effective empowerment tool.	
4	Having access to sufficient and safe water and adequate sanitation has a spin off on other spheres of life, notably improved health and nutrition, and more hours of education; it also sparks off economic activities of all kinds. Women and men take an active stand in their communities and participate in decision-making at community and district level.	
5	Empowerment is a process that takes several years in which women's civil society plays an important role.	
3	<p>Panel discussion:</p> <p><i>How to create an enabling environment for women's empowerment and women leadership in water</i></p>	
1	Capacity to participate in decision-making needs to be built early on, before the project design phase. Peer learning is an effective and cost-efficient way to develop grassroots capacity and to overcome traditional practices of gender inequality in decision-making.	
2	National water budgets are generally not gender sensitive; nor do they include adequate provisions to make participatory water governance a reality → gender responsive budgeting in the water sector should include a strong provision for women's meaningful participation.	
3	Many water and sanitation projects do not reach the intended beneficiaries (see for instance EU audit of WASH projects in sub-Saharan Africa, 2012: > 50% has not reached the beneficiaries). Participation of women is considered key to ensure that the needs of beneficiaries are met and that services are managed sustainably.	
4	Women's civil society networks have the ability to work at international, national and local level and therewith provide an effective institutional mechanism to link government policies to implementation on the ground. This potential is largely untapped to date.	
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4	Discussion with the audience:	
1	<i>There is a perceived risk that women's empowerment and women claiming their</i>	

	<p><i>rights leads to men leaving their responsibilities.</i></p> <p>Women Leadership is about including women in decision-making and implementation, not about women taking over from the men. Together we achieve better results. In the examples presented a new equilibrium is developing as part of the process of cooperation, in which both sexes assume their responsibilities together.</p>	
2	<p><i>Does confronting existing male dominated power relations create conflict in the communities?</i></p> <p>There is initial resistance, which is overcome by the women not seeking confrontation but cooperation with other community members. The WfWP women leadership approach creates an enabling environment for women to claim their role in participatory water governance. By making women leadership in water a gradual community process and staying within the cultural boundaries, the women work WITH their men and the leadership of their villages, not AGAINST them.</p>	
3	<p><i>What catalyzes change? Is this always an external party/NGO?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changes always come from within, otherwise they are not sustainable. WfWP believes that one does not develop people, people develop themselves; - External factors can trigger or accelerate the process, provide stepping stones, but ultimately the change is made from within; - The support from external parties, in particular national women's organizations and the international WfWP helps local women to address the challenges and to become strong community leaders for change. 	
4	<p><i>Linking local success stories to the SDG framework</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the MDG targets, emphasis was on delivering basic services to the poor. The underlying causes of social inequity and gender inequality have not been addressed; - Women's civil society organisations united in the Women for Water Partnership put emphasis on the Right to Participate. Women are not just vulnerable groups and a target group for development interventions of others; if properly empowered, they are strong actors in their own right bringing changes from within; - The SDG proposal that the United Nations Working Group has presented to the UN General Assembly contains both a universal goal for gender equality and women's empowerment (goal # 5) and a universal water goal (# 6). 	
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5	Conclusions:	
1	The Gender-Water-Development nexus provides a strong entry point for reaching the SDGs	
2	Women's civil society (Major Group Women of UNCED Agenda 21) has the potential to provide an institutional mechanism to link national to grassroots level. If adequately strengthened and supported, women's civil society is a valuable partner for government to raise awareness and mobilize communities; to monitor the development and implementation of water projects, and to spark social and economic development at community level.	
3	In order to bring about change, we have to work at 3 levels simultaneously: 1. Influence international agenda setting: the success stories presented here	

	<p>need to reach the decision makers so that they inform their decisions → WfWP unites women so that our voice is heard at the international level where the framework for the future development agenda is decided. If our local needs are not included there, implementation of agreed targets will not make a real difference for people on the ground.</p> <p>2. Shape national policies and plans of implementation, and hold our national governments accountable: The international policy frameworks that UN members states have committed to are developed into national policy, legislation and action plans back home. The way forward primarily depends on how the preconditions for women's participation are included here → a strong women's civil society pillar at national level is crucial to inform the decisions of national governments; to mobilize women in the country, to raise awareness in communities; to jointly develop action plans, to forge partnerships with local authorities and the water sector, to monitor progress, and to scale up successful pilots.</p> <p>3. Empower the grassroots so that they have the ability to participate in the development and implementation of projects/programmes in their regions and communities.</p>	
4	Partnerships between different stakeholders (governments, local authorities, business community, water sector and civil society) are key. In achieving sustainable and equitable development, we have common but differentiated responsibilities. All different roles are equally important and we have to work together to achieve the Human Rights to Water and Sanitation for all.	
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