

**General Assembly of Partners (AP) of Global Water  
Partnership in West Africa (GWP/WA)**

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## List of acronyms and abbreviations

<b>Acronyms/ Abbreviations</b>	<b>Meaning/Definition</b>
<b>ZIE</b>	International Institute of Engineering, Water And Environment
<b>NBA</b>	Niger Basin Authority
<b>VBA</b>	Volta Basin Authority
<b>AEN</b>	Nakambe Water Agency
<b>ALG</b>	Liptako Gourma Authority
<b>AMCOW</b>	African Ministers' Council on Water
<b>AP</b>	Assembly of Partners
<b>CBF</b>	Budget and Finance Committee
<b>WRCC</b>	Water Resources Coordination Centre
<b>ECA</b>	Economic Commission for Africa of the United Nations
<b>CEDEAO</b>	Economic Community of West African States
<b>CILSS</b>	Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel
<b>SC</b>	Steering Committee
<b>TC</b>	Technical Committee
<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agricultural Development
<b>IWRM</b>	Integrated Water Resource Management
<b>GWP/WA</b>	Global Water Partnership / West Africa
<b>GWPO</b>	Global Water Partnership Organization
<b>MEKROU</b>	Management of the Mekrou basin Water resources
<b>OMVS</b>	Organization for the Development of the Senegal River

<b>OMVG</b>	Organization for the Development of the Gambia River
<b>CWP</b>	Country Water Partnership
<b>PREAO</b>	Regional Water Resources Policy in West Africa
<b>IDMP/WA</b>	Integrated Drought Management Project in West Africa
<b>ANBO</b>	African Network of Basin Organizations
<b>WAEMU</b>	West Africa Economic and Monetary Union
<b>IUCN</b>	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
<b>WACDEP</b>	Water Climate and Development Programme
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SITWA</b>	Strengthening Trans boundary Water Management Institutions in Africa

## Introduction

This summary reports on the discussions and the results achieved as a result of the work done by the participants during the GWP/WA partners General Assembly held on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> May 2015 in Cotonou, Benin.

The meeting was attended by 77 delegates representing GWPO, GWP West Africa partner organizations, a representative of Global Water Partnership in Central Africa, two former Chairs of GWP/WA, West Africa Country Water Partnerships, youth networks, technical and financial partners, networks of basin organizations, integration and development organizations in Africa and networks or organizations involved in preventing and managing crises. (See Annex 1: list of participants).

The objectives of GWP/WA Partners Meeting included:

- Present and approve the moral report of the Chair;
- Present and adopt the 2014 progress and financial reports;
- Present the 2015 work plan, including the core, Mekrou project, IDMP and WACDEP;
- Update GWP/WA bodies through the renewal of their members.

Taking advantage of the presence of all the major stakeholders, and reference to the ongoing process towards the SDGs and global changes:

- Enable some networks including young parliamentarians and CWPs to take stock of their contribution to sustainable development;
- Enable development partners (donors) to present their strategy to support the sustainable development of the water sector in particular;
- Share with the partners the ongoing initiatives in the region and discuss the best strategies for countries to benefit from them;
- Share the experiences of various partners.

(See Annex 2, Note of presentation for the AP)

## Section 1 : Opening Ceremony

Four speeches marked the official ceremony respectively made by the Chair of the Country Water Partnership (CWP) Benin, the Chair of Global Water Partnership West Africa (GWP/WA), the Executive Secretary of Global Water Partnership (GWP) and the opening speech by the Minister of Energy, Oil and Mining Exploration, Water and the Development of Renewable Energy (MERPEMEDER) delivered by his Executive Assistant.

The Chair of Benin CWP, in his address, showed gratitude for selecting Benin to host the 6<sup>th</sup> AP. As for the Chair of GWP/WA, his speech recalled that Africa is the continent most affected by crises and climate change, which will remain challenges. The Executive Secretary of the Global Water Partnership (GWP) stressed the importance of strengthening and/or finding strategic partnerships and reminded the important work already done by GWP in Integrated Management of Water Resources (IWRM) for nearly 20 years. Finally, the representative of the MERPEMEDER delivered his opening speech stressing the importance of the topic in view of major world events and wished success to the works of the Assembly of Partners.

## Section 2 : Panel Session

In total four (4) panels punctuated the first day of the AP. These panels were intended to review the experiences, analyze the roles of the various stakeholders and make suggestions. They respectively focused on:

- i. The role of networks in post-crisis reconstruction;
- ii. The role of networks in the global dialogue;
- iii. The role of the youth networks in development;
- iv. The role of networks for the sustainable management of natural resources.

### 1. Panel 1 : The Role Of Networks In Post-Crisis Reconstruction

Panel 1 enabled to share experiences from Mali and Liberia among others, in post-crisis reconstruction. It came out that crises always bring about significant regression and result in a change in the country. The rulers then have to quickly adapt and make unusual decisions because each institution has its own organizational culture. Likewise, several stakeholders generally intervene without proper coordination and without very often focusing on crisis prevention and/or possible new crises.

The answers to the consequences of natural or human created disasters have always been the prerogative of several institutions; hence the need to identify the real beneficiaries,

relevant stakeholder groups likely to thus enable immediate and organized responses to be brought to victims.

The panel emphasized the fact that all categories of stakeholders have a role to play, which means that no stakeholder can effectively work in isolation; hence the need to establish a solid strategic partnership after any disaster.

(Details in Annex 3, synthesis from the panel moderator 1)

## 2. The Role of Networks in the Global Dialogue

The panel highlighted the importance for each stakeholder to make sure the post-2015 development agenda is "proposed by the South, for the South, with the South". In other words, the priorities set by developing countries should effectively be reflected in the SDGs, the recommendations of the **Committee on World Food Security (CFS)**, and the decisions made from the Conference of Parties on Climate among others. Thus, greater emphasis on adaptation in comparison to mitigation, and a water dedicated goal in the SDGs with specific targets and relevant indicators should be sustained.

Discussions during this panel highlighted the importance of data and the provision of information. Unfortunately, the countries do not have enough reliable data. This would require networks to be involved in data collection and especially engage stakeholders to work in partnership for data collection and processing. The skills of all stakeholders, network members are important; hence the need to work both vertically and horizontally.

The panel drew the attention of the audience on the fact that the post 2015 Agenda must not only be a communications objective, hence the need to work with country delegates to ensure that each country does vote for a water dedicated component."

Recommendations were made to set up a civil society group to make concrete suggestions for the COP 21. It was also noted the need for all water stakeholders to work together and also stay open to other actors outside the waterbox.

The role of networks would also be to support and supply the global discussion in order to enable the relevant countries and authorities to take ownership of the real issues to influence the national and international agenda.

(Details in Annex 4, synthesis from panel moderator 2)

### **3. The role of youth networks in development**

The presentation of the main speaker of the panel focused on the fact that young people are tomorrow's stakeholders who will be most affected by development problems and they should not be forgotten in any actions that will affect them in the future.

Discussions thereafter highlighted the fact that development activities have always considered youth though youth networks were not directly involved in these actions. Social media networks are powerful tools to engage youth mobilization and involvement in actions. Thus, partnerships with youth networks should not comply with only harnessing the young intellectuals but also integrate young artists, farmers, other backgrounds and women. These networks could also advocate integrating existing large development programs instead of often ambitious new programs.

Finally, it was reminded that the young people have always been included in the GWP strategy and actions by these networks should therefore not be forgotten.

(Details in Annex 5, synthesis from panel 3 moderator)

### **4. The role of networks for a sustainable management of natural resources**

Panel 4 served to remind people that partnerships exist in all areas, but they need a self-funding capacity to be effectively active. There is also a problem of a rotation of leaders who do not have time to understand the real development issues before the end of their terms. Partnerships should maintain good working relationships with Ministries of Finance to prioritize the protection of the environment through the establishment of dialogue. Technicians also need to learn how to address citizens so that they understand the issues. There should a dialogue with this group of people for the next decade too.

GWP has to watch other related sectors and not exclusively focus on water only. Staying confined cannot provide sustainable solutions. Each sector is a challenge and the overall budget of an entire country is not sufficient to cover the needs of the country. Subsequently any fund that can be raised should not be overlooked, but rather be wisely used.

(Details in Annex 6, synthesis of panel 4 moderator)



## Section 3 : Partners' presentations

Three partners presented some of their ongoing initiatives, details of which are in Annex 7.

### 1. Presentation of the Dutch Cooperation

Mr. George Gooijer, First Secretary of the Embassy of the Netherlands, leader of the Technical and Financial Partners of the Water Sector in Benin, shared his experience in the development process of the water sector in the country. Actually in 2002, as a consultant he had already supported CWP Benin and GWP/WA in initial meetings. He presented:

- The history of the creation of the National Institute of Water, an initiative from Benin led by the Abomey Calavy University with the support from the Netherlands on the condition of getting together the faculties to form a pole of expertise capable of meeting the needs of National institutions, other stakeholders and financial Partners with quality technical studies. The aim was to mobilize all the students and researchers.
- The National System of Water Information (SNIEAU) which is a useful tool that provides good ability of observation, reflection / modeling, and a space for exchange with experts from elsewhere.

Regarding the CWP Benin, Mr. George Gooijer noted that since 2002, the network has supported the state, providing a number of tasks contributing to IWRM building in Benin. But increasingly the institutional framework is in place for this, and especially with the National IWRM Plan and the National Water Council. Now we must define the niche for the CWP to avoid conflicts of jurisdiction.

For Mr. De Gooijer, there is still room for the CWP tha should work to influence the development agenda in the country, to generate credible information to inform the ongoing process, and work towards the fight against corruption and fraud, which are two evils that undermine the efforts of the populations.

The challenges for the CWP therefore include to identify and convince financial partners, and stakeholders that can (or are willing to) pay for this type of service, and to assume his new role that should no longer be as before "very close to the government" but more and more in terms of constructive "confrontation " sometimes.

## **2. Introduction of the African Network of Basin Organizations (ANBO) and SITWA Project**

In her presentation, Ms. Henriette NDOMBE, SITWA Project Manager, presented the ANBO approach, its achievements and the way forwards for partnership building, particularly in the implementation of its projects:

- The African Water Documentation and Information System (AWIS)
- The African Basins' Key Performance Indicators Development Project - KPI:
- The ongoing SITWA Project.

ANBO aims to "promote the Integrated Management of Water Resources (IWRM) at river basin level, lakes and transboundary aquifers as an essential tool for sustainable development".

The way forwards for the ANBO are contained in the 2015-2025 Strategy and the 2015-2019 Action Plan of ANBO, describing its vision, mission and strategic areas.

To conclude, the ANBO has always opted for a Partnership approach and partnership will be further strengthened for the implementation of its new strategy and five-year Action Plan 2015-2019.

## **3. Presentation by the International Union for Conservation of Nature**

IUCN represented by Pr. Awais Aboubacar made a presentation on the BRIDGE (Building River Dialogue and Governance) project. The BRIDGE is intended to strengthen water governance capacity through learning, demonstration, leadership and particularly building consensus across 9 trans-boundary basins. BRIDGE help countries sharing a river or lake basin apply efficient and equitable management arrangements of the shared water resource.

Its objectives include improving cooperation between the countries by applying water diplomacy at multiple action levels and ensuring sustainable water resource management for poverty reduction, a nature conservation, economic growth and international cooperation through effective water governance.

Finally, the presenter dealt with the implementation strategy and presented the countries involved in the BRIDGE project focusing on the basin of Lake Chad and the Mano River.

## Section 4 : Statutory General Assembly of GWP/WA

### 1. Presentation of the state of implementation of the recommendations from the 2013 AP

In total 11 recommendations were made in 2013: this includes in summary 1) continued close collaboration with WSA, the former host institution; 2) the continuation of the self-hosting process; 3) the implementation of more initiatives; 4) the approval of the report plan; 5) assumption of duties of the chair Afouda; 6) the reappointment of the Executive Secretary; 7) the renewal of the members of the Steering Committee; 8) the new membership of the Technical Committee; 9) further accountability of CWPs in project implementation; 10) the collaboration to be developed by CWPs with member organizations and 11) the finalization and dissemination of the General Report of the AP.

All recommendations have been implemented apart from the renewal of a member of the Steering Committee namely AGRHYMET for CILSS, and the difficulty to revitalize CWPs. However, SC members were requested to accompany the CWPs in their respective countries and at the location and CWPs were urged to responsiveness in discussions with the regional and global levels.

(Details are in Annex 8)

### 2. Presentaton of the Assessment Report of the Chair

As a whole, this report focused on contact building, upon his election, with the predecessor and follow-up on the recommendations of the Steering Committee. Support was also given among others to monitor GWP/WA self\_hosting process for the development of new initiatives within GWP/WA and the revitalization of poorly operational CWPs. There is also participation in various regional and international meetings. Emphasis was also placed on visibility through TV broadcasts and various article insertion in newspapers.

Finally, the chair noted that the actions left by late Arba Diallo, the Steering Committee and the Budget and Finance Committee were a great asset towards achieving the results.

### 3. Presentation of the Report of the Chair of the Technical Committee

After the very short presentation of the actions of the hair of TC, some difficulties were raised. They were mainly financial difficulties preventing TC members to perfectly accomplish their mission. The recommendations focused on the need for TC members to physically meet at least once a year and be more strongly involved in the projects as from the design phase. It should be noted that the GWP regulations provide the TC to meet whenever needed. Furthermore, the involvement of paid members of the TC is only possible when budgeted upstream.

#### **4. Presentation of the narrative report**

It came out from the presentation of the narrative report that GWP-WA fully assumes its management autonomy despite difficulties. A budget control strategy was developed. 2014 was the first year of implementation of the GWP new strategy by 2020 and the 2014-2016 regional plan.

#### **5. Synthesis of the Financial and audit statement for 2014**

The overall performance rate was reportedly 88%, including for the various projects recording 93% for Core; 97% for PROGIS/WA and 88% for WACDEP Burkina; 77% for WACDEP Ghana and 94% for WACDEP Region.

It was also mentioned that in its first year of implementation, the Mekrou project achieved an implementation rate of 57%, which can be considered satisfactory given the delay in certain activities.

As for the 2014 audit, the audience concluded that the financial statements provide a fair picture of the financial statement and resources and allocations in GWP/WA as of 31/12/2014. In addition, the factual findings of Mekrou project shows that the management procedures were followed in implementing the various operations.

However, some recommendations were made for better accounting and financial management namely in the Country Water Partnerships.

#### **6. Presentation of the activities of Mekrou, IDMP / WA and WACDEP projects**

As a result of the synthesis of the main results of Mekrou, IDMP/WA and WACDEP projects, the main difficulties were identified and recommendations were made.

##### **Difficulties:**

- Bureaucracy in the implementation of partnership system projects not taking into account the cost of this constraint in their design;
- Undermining of certain budget lines during the project design (Secretariat staff and various bodies of GWP/WA);
- Downwards review of some project budgets after the planning and implementation of activities;
- Lack of a Activities Monitoring/Evaluation/Operational Planning Manual before the start of projects;
- Too much optimism in designing projects scoping timelines: start-up time.

### Recommendations:

- Take the following into account in project design:
  - The costs and constraints in implementing projects under a partnership system [reasonable timeline for the start-up period for projects, etc. ;
  - Adequate budget lines for administrative costs;
  - The implementation of demonstration pilot projects;
  - Planning for a Manual of Monitoring/Evaluation/Operational Planning;
  - The actual way of budgeting staff costs in GWP-WA Secretariat and GWP-WA bodies (TEC, CTE, project Monitoring Committee, PELS, etc. ...) to enable normal operation all network elements and especially maintain their dynamism and vitality;
- Develop new initiatives especially on the theme "climate change related risk and natural disaster management in West Africa ";
- Keep involving CWP's when developing project ideas, during the phase of finalizing of all project designs to ensure their consistency with public projects and programs;
- Appropriate budgeting when designing projects, planning for funds that reflect the real costs of the various project services/activities to be implemented;
- Continue to share and give visibility to the results of the activities by more intensive communications.

## 7. Synthesis of the discussions of the Statutory Assembly

During the statutory meeting discussions focused on:

- The GWP/WA system: consideration should be made of the actions implementation timelines when in a partnership system that is totally different from the executive system where deadlines are met because they are governed by line management orders. It was also mentioned that it is necessary to take account of the projects starting time;
- A monitoring and evaluation manual must be systematically developed to support the implementation of any project;
- Gender aspects have been revised through the specific actions to be undertaken under the projects to make sure that these actions are oriented towards girls, young girls, young boys, and the disadvantaged. Part of the budget may be specifically devoted to gender but while planning the "gender sensitive budget", attention is paid to the particularities in the actions;

- It was suggested to share statutory documents available within the GWP/WA to the various CWPs;
- GWP/WA has limited local resources and mostly relies on the global GWP resources. Financial resources can be mobilized, particularly through the groundwater resource management project of and the operation of existing IWRM training modules with training institutions;
- Funding for the knowledge chain and improving TECs should not be neglected concerning support for knowledge managements;
- CWPs are forced to move towards the project implementation, with staffing as a consequence;
- The new operationalization odes of TC members must be effectively addressed, taking into account available resources;
- Some weaknesses faced by GWP/WA were mentioned:
  - Inadequate/lack of funding for bodies;
  - The project design quality: Possible insight from good projects designed within governments;
  - Accreditation of CWPs and lethargy;
  - The niche of CWPs in a context where there are other bodies such as Country Water Boards, Research Institutes, etc. ;
  - The need to clarify the links between the strategy of GWP/WA and regional policies;
  - The Regional TC should be based on national TCs and not just hanging as the global TEC;
  - The difficulties to remain relevant and useful.

## Section 5 : Session on CWPs

In summary the various CWP stressed the following points:

- The weakness of resources to develop the network at the national level and especially the difficulties to mobilize all stakeholders to be really active on the network since each member has its individual agenda. CWPs must work to create synergy, complementarity across all stakeholders especially with the public administration whose reports should not bear any ambiguity. There is therefore need for strong national partnerships with government and other stakeholders with the support of the organizations already in place for the implementation of IWRM.
- Fundraising through project concept notes development should be systematically undertaken to seek attract new funding to retain the staff of soon ending projects because they are part of the CWP staff. Advocacy meetings could be done with some financial institutions to turn CWPs into institutions.

Finally, five key points came out of the discussions:

1. For the way forwards, issues of South-South networks must be considered;
2. The relationship between the CWP and policy makers should be studied;
3. The problem of accreditation for the remaining CWPS, especially Nigeria CWP should be addressed as soon as possible. To do so, the guidelines and the process for accreditation will be forwarded to CWPs who are not yet accredited;
4. The relations between the CWP and grassroots communities must be clearly defined in order to better operate on this scale;
5. Local Water Partnerships in correlation with grassroots communities should be revitalized.

## Section 6 : Presentation of the strategy

The strategy presented focused on three strategic objectives, the vision and the mission of GWP with the thematic areas.

This presentation was the opportunity to introduce to all members and partner organizations of GWP/WA the general guidelines of the GWP strategy by 2020 and the 2014-2016 triennial program for West Africa.

It enabled to once again share information on:

- The Global Water Partnership's vision is for a water secure world.
- The mission of GWP is to advance governance and management of water resources for sustainable and equitable development.
- Reminding the fundamental values of GWP including neutrality, inclusiveness, transparency, compliance, gender sensitivity and solidarity.

The GWP Strategy by 2020 that guides the action of the network includes 3 strategic objectives:

1. Catalysing Change in policy and practice;
2. Generating and communicating knowledge;
3. Strengthening partnerships.

The priority thematic areas for GWP in connection to those defined by GWP/WA in the 2013 Accra Assembly of Partners include:

- Adaptation to climate change and sWP
- Adaptation to climate change
- Adaptation to climate change
- Urbanization and water security

Gender and youth cut across any actions and scales.

Therefore at global, regional, national and local levels, GWP actions must be aligned to this framework, like the regional 2014-2016 three-year program and the 2015 work presented.



## Section 7 : Presentation of the report of the steering committee

The report of the steering committee highlights 12 recommendations, 11 of which were implemented as opposed to the one related to the accreditation. It came from the moral report of the Chair Afouda that several activities were carried out on all fronts, with strong involvement of the chair in their implementation. Regarding the members of the TEC, budget constraints have prevented a proper implementation of their activities. As for the 2014 GWP/WA report all CWP initiatives were not implemented because of financial constraints. Budget execution is good despite some weaknesses noticed on Mekrou. The contracts of the Chair and the Executive Secretary wre renewed by the Assembly of Partners.

The Steering Committee made 11 recommendations to the AP that approved them all (see annex ...). The recommendations related respectively to:

- The approval of the moral report of the Chair
- Aligning the Chair's report format to the objectives set at the start of his term to a better appreciate the results;
- Making the best use of the Technical Committee in implementing the actions of GWP/WA consistently with the budget;
- The development of new initiatives involving maximum of CWP for their revitalization;
- The principle of reflecting on a fundraising strategy and further building budget execution control;
- Strict implementation of all recommendations;
- The need to support CWPs to gather adequate resources and have a good control of the autonomous management of the Executive Secretariat;
- The new autonomous management agenda to stick to the general meetings of GWP;
- The orientation of the ToRs by the Steering committee and approval of these ToRs by the Assembly of Partners;
- The proposed renewal of bodies;
- Approval of the following documents submitted: (narrative reports, financial report, audit report, Annual Work Plan and Budget for 2015).

Report of the Steering Committee in Annex 9

## Section 8 : Closing ceremony

The partners meeting ended with the thanks of the two former Chairs, Mr Athanase Compaoré and Dr. Madiodio NIASSE who expressed their satisfaction and readiness to support GWP-WA. The ES of GWP global office also expressed his satisfaction and asserted that GWP is ready to welcome the water dedicated SDG and support the stakeholders. The chair of GWP/WA also showed gratitude to all participants and invited the new and former SC and TC members to remain available for the network.

## Conclusion/Analysis

The Assembly held by West African Region Water Partners held on 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> May helped introduce and approve the moral report of the Chair; to introduce and adopt the narrative and financial reports for 2014; to present the 2015 work plan, including the core programme, Mekrou project, WACDEP project and IDMP project. It also enabled to update the bodies of GWP/WA through the renewal of their members.

Based on the various discussions and proceedings, it can be argued that the results were actually achieved because the meeting enabled some networks including CWPs and WYPW to assess their contribution to sustainable development; share with partners the ongoing initiatives in the region and discuss the best strategies in order to derive the maximum benefit for countries. Some partners have shared their experiences and their strategies and all participants noted their satisfaction after the two (2) days of the AP.

The challenge is to take advantage of the mass of ideas and recommendations to impact the GWP Action Plan in the region and in countries.

## Annexes

1. List of participants
2. Note of Presentation of the AP
3. Synthesis of the moderator of the panel 1
4. Synthesis of the moderator of the panel 2
5. Synthesis of the moderator of the panel 3
6. Synthesis of the moderator of the panel 4
7. Submission of technical and financial partners (IUCN-Netherlands-ANBO Cooperation)
8. Presentation of the state of implementation of the recommendations of the 2013 AP
9. Steering Committee Report
10. The Appeal of Cotonou
11. Draft Final Communiqué
12. Few pictures

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The Global Water Partnership's vision is for a water secure world. Our mission is to advance governance and management of water resources for sustainable and equitable development.