



ADOPTING
GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACH
TO IWRM AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE
IN THE GWP

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WHAT IS GENDER?

QUICK TOP KEY POINTS

- **Gender** refers to the characteristics of women, men, girls and boys that are socially constructed.
- This includes norms, behaviours and roles associated with being a woman, man, girl or boy, as well as relationships with each other.
- As **a social construct**, gender varies from society to society and can change over time.

- Gender interacts with but is ***different from sex***, which refers to the different biological and physiological characteristics of females, males and intersex persons, such as chromosomes, hormones and reproductive organs.
- Gender is hierarchical and produces inequalities that intersect with other social and economic inequalities.

- ***Gender-based discrimination*** intersects with other factors of discrimination, such as ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, age, geographic location, gender identity and sexual orientation, among others.
- This is referred to as ***intersectionality***.

Gender equality and inclusion in water resources management: why it matters

29 years since the Dublin principles were established we are behind when it comes to principle number 3, which states that:

Women play a central part in the provision, management and safeguarding of water

How does the world water crisis affect women and girls?

- For women, the water crisis is personal. They are responsible for finding a resource their families need to survive - for drinking, cooking, sanitation and hygiene. They may stand in line and wait for water, they may walk long distances to collect water...
- Women and children spend 200 million hours every day collecting water
- Women and girls spend 266 million hours every day finding a toilet/a place to go

- Climate change will affect different people in different ways.
- Women and men do not experience climate change equally.
- Most often, those living through its most adverse effects will have contributed least to the problem and have fewer resources to adapt to its impacts.

- The fact that women and girls are often responsible for most of the unpaid care tasks around the household also means their lives are directly affected by the changes brought about by climate change.
- They often walk further to find increasingly scarce food, fuel and water, as well as caring for family members who are susceptible to the health risks linked to climate change.
- As a result, women and girls find themselves with less time for education, income-generating activities or participation in community decision-making processes, further cementing unequal gender relations.

- Men are also negatively affected by climate change, particularly when they are poor.
- For example, men may experience deep anxiety and stress when their rural livelihoods are undermined as a result of climate change and they are no longer able to fulfil their socially expected roles as providers.
- Research also indicates that men may feel pressured into taking „heroic“ actions, which places them at a higher risk than women and children.
- For example, after Hurricane Mitch hit Central America in October 2000, a higher proportion of men than women were killed due to risk-taking behaviour.

WE ACT

CHANGE AND IMPACT >

ANCHOR AREAS/ACROSS ANCHOR AREAS

Water Solutions for the Sustainable Development Goals >

Climate Resilience Through Water >

Transboundary Cooperation

Engaging the Private Sector

Contributing to Gender Equality

Mobilising Youth for Water Resources Management

CAMPAIGNS >



Contributing to Gender Equality

For GWP, inclusiveness and gender sensitivity has always been a core value. GWP supports the Dublin Principle that women play a central role in providing, managing, and safeguarding water resources. The growing interconnectedness of gender, water, and sustainable development demand that we do more to ensure greater gender equity in all our efforts to properly safeguard and manage water resources for future generations.

GWP's *Gender Strategy* was developed under the 2014-2019 Strategy *Towards 2020: A Water Secure World*, and it remains pertinent to the 2020-2025 Strategy, *Mobilising for a Water Secure World*, which states that GWP's work to promote gender equality will focus on:

- Institutional leadership and commitment;
- Gender inclusion and analysis that drives change;
- Meaningful and inclusive participation in decision-making and partnerships; and
- Equal access to and control of resources.

The Gender Strategy addresses diversity and inclusion, social equity, and women's role in the integrated and sustainable management of water resources. It draws attention to gender differences so that men and women can benefit and contribute equally to our longstanding challenge of improving water security.

Achieving water security means adopting inclusive and participatory approaches. In treating gender equality as a global priority, GWP has taken a comprehensive approach that addresses the structural drivers as well as the complexity of gender inequalities. GWP recognises the need for a balanced representation of women and men in

GWP GENDER STRATEGY



En español

En portugais

GWP GENDER ACTION PIECE



En français

En español

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Global Water Partnership

GWP Gender Strategy



Global Water Partnership

ACTION PIECE



Gender equality and inclusion in water resources management

POLICY BRIEF 3

Gender mainstreaming: An essential component of sustainable water management

Evidence shows that the meaningful involvement of women in water resources development and management can help make projects more sustainable, ensure that infrastructure development yields the maximum social and economic returns, and advance progress on Millennium Development Goals.

National Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and water efficiency strategies and plans are an opportunity to enhance the equal participation, representation, and rights of women in the water sector. This includes creating policies and laws that institutionalize the equitable participation of men and women, fostering the development of institutions and organizations that are gender-sensitive and that have sufficient expertise in gender analysis and mainstreaming, and establishing budgeting processes that ensure steady and secure resources to support the necessary structures and programs.

Policy makers and practitioners increasingly recognize that women and men have different interests in, and derive different benefits from, the availability, use and management of water; and that women and girls are hardest hit by poor water and sanitation services. Although the water community has made significant strides in designing programs and policies that take into account the differing roles and responsibilities of women and men, most of the progress has been in the area of domestic water supply and sanitation. Much remains to be done on the broader questions of water resource management, development and protection.

Indeed, women and their concerns remain mostly invisible in decision-making and governance structures, planning, policy-making, and infrastructure and technology development as well as in the institutions that control and manage water across the world. For example, women produce 60 percent to 80 percent of the food in developing countries, yet women's role as farmers is frequently overlooked by policy makers and irrigation managers. As a consequence, women farmers often lack access to water supplies (when, for example, land titles are required for irrigation systems in areas where women cannot own land).

Why does this matter? The chief reason is effectiveness: involving the people who are directly engaged in using, managing and developing water resources in decision-making around water leads to better policies and projects. At least half of those people are women—women managing domestic water supply, women farmers and entrepreneurs using water resources for production, women acting in their socio-cultural roles as community natural resource managers and guardians of traditional knowledge.

TECHNICAL BRIEF 5

Mainstreaming gender in integrated water resources management strategies and plans: practical steps for practitioners

The water sector has been a pioneer in putting gender mainstreaming approaches into place at the program level in the area of domestic water supply and sanitation. Water professionals were among the first to realize that community development projects that failed to take into consideration the reality of women's lives—their roles, responsibilities, sources of power, needs and aspirations—were themselves doomed to failure. Now is the time to expand this understanding beyond community water supply and sanitation and to move it "upstream" to the development of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) plans and strategies as called for by the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and reinforced by the 2005 World Summit.

This brief is designed to provide water professionals with an overview of how to mainstream gender in the development of integrated water resources management strategies and plans. A companion brief for policy makers is also available.

Most water professionals recognize that women and men have different interests in, and derive different benefits from, the availability, use and management of water, and ample evidence supports the need to involve women in the design and management of water supply and sanitation plans and programs if they are to succeed. To date, gender mainstreaming efforts in the water sector have focused primarily on increasing the number of female project staff, providing gender training to staff members, ensuring that women are among project beneficiaries, including women as participants and service providers at the grassroots level, and supporting women's role in domestic water management.

Although the water community has made significant strides in designing programs and policies that take into account the differing roles and responsibilities of men and women, most of the progress has been in the area of domestic water supply and sanitation. Much remains to be done on the broader questions of water resource management, development and protection. Evidence from other development fields as well as a substantial body of experience in water supply and sanitation has shown conclusively over the last decade that involving women in development initiatives:

- leads to effective new solutions to problems,
- helps governments avoid poor investments and expensive mistakes, and
- maximizes the social and economic returns of investment in infrastructure.

Gender mainstreaming is not rocket science. Nevertheless, applying the approach in water resource development and management is more difficult than in water and sanitation for several reasons. One is that while water and sanitation services are delivered through discrete projects, integrated water resources management is a process of change involving multiple stakeholders and areas of intervention. Incorporating women into the

GENDER IN GWP 2020-2025 STRATEGY



- Through GWP's Gender Strategy we are implementing a 'never without them when about them' approach. As part of all programmes developed under GWP's Anchor Areas, our work to promote gender equality
- We commit our portfolio of action to promoting gender equality beyond statements of intent: Across our entire portfolio, we will unlock barriers to progress on gender equality and inclusion in water resources management, ultimately expanding benefits for women, vulnerable and excluded groups, and the environment through a dedicated global programme.

Action area 1: Institutional leadership and commitment

Make gender equality and inclusion a core business goal

Action area 2: Gender and inclusion analysis that drives change

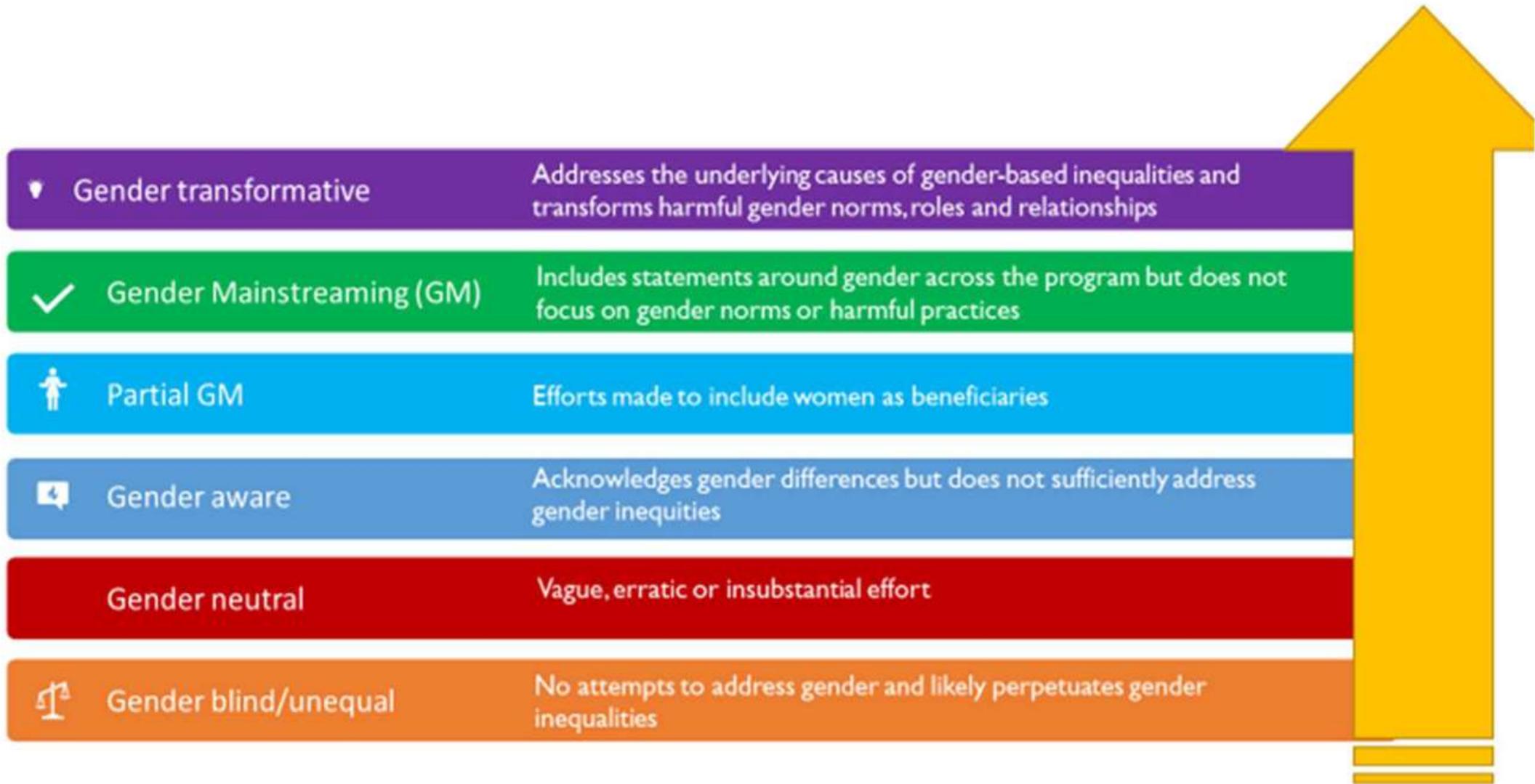
Conduct gender and inclusion analysis at all levels

Action area 3: Meaningful and inclusive participation in decision-making and partnerships

Adopt a ‘nothing about them without them’ approach’

Action area 4: Equal access to and control of resources

Create a level playing field with respect to access to and control of resources



The five principles of gender mainstreaming

- **Gender-sensitive language.** Texts referring to or addressing both women and men must make women and men equally visible.
- **Gender-specific data collection and analysis.**
- Equal access to and utilisation of services.
- Women and men are equally involved in decision making.
- Equal treatment is integrated into steering processes

Gender-transformative approach

- Considers gender norms, roles and relations for people of all genders and that these affect access to and control over resources
- Considers the specific needs of people of all genders
- Addresses the causes of gender-based inequities in access to and governance of water resources
- Includes ways to transform harmful gender norms, roles and relations
- Aims to promote gender equality
- Includes strategies to foster progressive changes in power relationships between people of all genders

National IWRM and CLIMATE RESILIENCE strategies and plans present an opportunity to enhance the equal participation, representation, and rights of women in the water and climate sector.

This includes:

- creating policies and laws that institutionalize the equitable participation of men and women
- fostering the development of institutions and organizations that mainstream gender and that have sufficient expertise in the field of gender
- establishing budgeting processes that ensure steady and secure resources to support the necessary structures and program

THANK YOU

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