

GENDER DIMENSIONS OF TRANSBOUNDARY COOPERATION: EQUALITY AND EQUITY

LESHA WITMER, WOMEN FOR WATER PARTNERSHIP AND WWF
(AND A FEW OTHER “HATS”)

GENDER OR WOMEN ISSUE?

- o GENDER =

A SOCIAL STATUS BASED ON CONVINCING PERFORMANCE OF FEMININITY OR MASCULINITY - CAN BE WOMEN OR GIRLS, BOYS OR MEN, OR TRANSGENDERED

SOCIALLY ASCRIBED ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND OPPORTUNITIES ASSOCIATED WITH (WO)MEN, INCL. HIDDEN POWER STRUCTURES THAT GOVERN RELATIONSHIPS

USED TO EMPHASIZE SEX INEQUALITY; NOT CAUSED BY THE ANATOMIC AND PHYSIOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES, BUT BY UNEQUAL AND INEQUITABLE TREATMENT. ALLUDES TO THE CULTURAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL CONDITIONS AS BASIS OF CERTAIN STANDARDS, VALUES AND BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS

- o EQUITY =

EQUAL FOOTING, FAIRNESS OF TREATMENT FOR WOMEN AND MEN, RICH AND POOR, ACCORDING TO THEIR RESPECTIVE NEEDS.

- **Mainstreaming** = a process (not a goal) bringing what is marginal into the core business and main decision making process of an organization (UNESCO)
- Gender mainstreaming = a question of but not only not only of social justice and human rights, necessary for ensuring equitable and sustainable human development by effective and efficient means
- GM approach: not women in isolation, assesses situation of women and men –as **actors** in the development process, and **beneficiaries**

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- 💧 WHO IS ACTUALLY MANAGING THE WATER?
- 💧 IS THERE A DIFFERENCE IN USAGES? PRIORITY FOR ALLOCATION?
- 💧 WHY DO PEOPLE E.G. SAY THEY ARE NOT INTERESTED?
- 💧 WHAT HAPPENED TO ALL THE WOMEN THAT STUDIED HYDROLOGY?
- 💧 NUMBERS COUNT; BUT WHAT ROLE DO (WO)MEN PLAY?
- 💧 WHY ARE FORESTRY, SOIL IMPROVEMENT ETC. BY WOMEN NOT SEEN AS CONTRIBUTIONS TO IWARM?

WHY IS IT A WOMEN'S ISSUE?

“FUNNY”: WATER IS WOMEN'S BUSINESS UNTIL TECHNOLOGY COMES IN...

- 💧 MORE AND MORE HAVE PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION IN THE FIELD
- 💧 ARE EXPERTS / PROFESSIONALS – BUT RARELY IN DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS
- 💧 HOLD POSITIONS WHERE THEY CAN INFLUENCE WATER USE: WORK AS HEALTH CARE WORKERS, FACILITY MANAGEMENT, EDUCATORS, FARMERS, ETC.
- 💧 MANAGE AND OWN (SMALL) BUSINESSES

WHY A WOMEN'S ISSUE: ECONOMIC

- 💧 MAJORITY OF THE USERS: DOMESTIC, FOOD PROCESSING, SMALLER BUSINESS, (HEALTH) CARE, AGRICULTURE (70% CONTROLS 70%)
- 💧 HOWEVER: MAINLY UNPAID; ONLY 17% PAID TECHNICAL AND MANAGERIAL JOBS BY WOMEN
- 💧 MAIN CONSUMERS > INFLUENCE QUALITY, REGULATIONS (TAP; BOTTLE); BUT NOT ENOUGH CONTROL OVER FAMILY INCOME TO PAY FOR WATER
- 💧 MAIN SUPPLIERS IN MANY PARTS OF THE WORLD: TIME LOST TO COLLECT WATER, TIME LOST TO WAIT FOR WATER (A TAP AND A PIPE IS NOT THE WHOLE ISSUE)

WHY A WOMEN'S ISSUE: DIPLOMACY

(BIT OVER THE TOP, GRANTED... , BUT)

- 💧 WOMEN SEE AND FOCUS ON THE IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS FIRST*
- 💧 MEN ARE INTERESTED IN AND TEND TO SEE THE TECHNOLOGY FIRST*
- 💧 WOMEN TEND TO SEE THE “MERIT” ; MEN TEND TO SEE THE “MARKET“*
- 💧 WOMEN TEND TO INTEGRATE/ LOOK FOR “HORIZONTAL” COORDINATION/ COHESION; MEN TEND TO FOCUS ON THE “SILO”*

DUBLIN PRINCIPLES

3. Women play a **central role** in the supply, management and safeguarding of water.



- 💧 key role in water management
- 💧 a place at the decision-making table

LEGAL ASPECTS AND RIGHTS

- POWER OF STEREOTYPES, STIGMAS, TABOOS AND GENDER ASSIGNED ROLES IS SUCH THAT PERSONS SOMETIMES DO NOT CLAIM THEIR LEGAL RIGHTS DUE TO FEAR OR PRESSURE ON THEM TO CONFORM TO SOCIETAL EXPECTATIONS. THESE DEEPLY ENTRENCHED SOCIETAL ISSUES CALL FOR APPROACHES THAT GO BEYOND FORMAL PROTECTION IN (NATIONAL) LAWS
- COMBINE GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND HUMAN RIGHTS APPROACH(ES)
- EQUITABLE AND REASONABLE USE – FRESH WATER TREATIES
- ADVOCATE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RIO 1992 PRINCIPLES (10 AND 20) AND CEDAW/ BEIJING 1992 (CHAPTER K)

IDEAS

- (SEX-) DISAGGREGATED DATA
- ACKNOWLEDGE CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN GROUPS
- QUOTA AND DIVISION OF ROLES
- GUIDANCE ON EQUALITY AND EQUITABLE
- SEE E.G. REPORT OF THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON HRWS: [HTTPS://DOCUMENTS-DDS-NY.UN.ORG/DOC/UNDOC/GEN/G16/166/97/PDF/G1616697.PDF?OPENELEMENT](https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/g16/166/97/pdf/g1616697.pdf?openelement)

QUESTIONS

- HOW CAN WE ENABLE MORE ACTIVE, MEANINGFUL WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN TRANSBOUNDARY COOPERATION?
- HOW CAN WE MAKE SURE THAT INGRAINED STEREOTYPES ARE ADDRESSED?