



ADAPTATION FUND

**Project: "Integrating floods and drought management and early warning for
climate change adaptation in the Volta Basin"**

(VFDM Project)

**ACTION PLAN FOR THE EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND
VULNERABLE GROUPS IN INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT AND EARLY WARNING OF
FLOODS RISK IN THE VOLTA BASIN**

Draft final report

Executing Partners

May 2023



**WORLD
METEOROLOGICAL
ORGANIZATION**



**Global Water
Partnership**
West Africa

Contents

List of Tables	3
List of Figures	3
List of acronyms and abbreviations	4
Summary	6
1. Context	8
2. The participatory process for the elaboration of the action plan	10
3. A brief overview of the Volta basin and the VBA	11
4. The floods risk profile in the Volta basin	15
5. Global, regional, national frameworks for gender mainstreaming into disaster risk reduction in the Volta Basin	17
5.1. At the International scale	17
5.2. At the Pan-African level, in West Africa and in the Volta Basin	18
5.3. At the scale of the Volta basin	18
5.4. At the level of each of the VBA countries	19
6. Issues for taking gender into account in the floods risk reduction in the Volta Basin	22
7. Best practices og integrating gender into the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta Basin	24
8. Recommendations and challenges for the effective participation of women and vulnerable groups in the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin	25
8.1. Recommendations for effective participation of women and vulnerable groups in the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin	25
8.2. Challenges related to the effective consideration of women and vulnerable groups in the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin	26
9. Action plan	28
9.1. Objectives and strategic axes	28
9.2. Expected results and actions	28
9.3. Implementation of the action plan	32
9.3.1. Institutional framework for implementing the action plan	32
9.3.2. Risks and sustainability	32
9.3.3. Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the action plan	33
9.3.4. The funding strategy	34

List of Tables

Table 1: National Frameworks for Gender Mainstreaming into Disaster Risk Reduction in the Volta Basin Countries _____	19
Table 2: Recommendations for the effective participation of women and vulnerable groups in the IFRM process in the Volta basin _____	25
Table 3: Recommendations for the effective participation of women and vulnerable groups in the E2E-EWS-FF process in the Volta basin _____	26
Tableau 4: Expected results and actions of the action plan _____	29

List of Figures

Figure1: Map of the Volta Basin _____	11
---------------------------------------	----

List of acronyms and abbreviations

AAL	: Average annual losses
AF	: Adaptation Fund
AfDB	: African development bank
ARSDRR	: Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction
AU	: African Union
BCO	: Basic Community Organization
CC	: Climate Change
CEDAW	: Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIMA	: International Center for Environmental Monitoring
CIWA	: Cooperation in International Waters in Africa
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	: Disaster risk reduction
E2E-EWS-FF	: End-to-end Early Warning System for flood forecasting
ECOWAS	: Economic Community of West African States
ED	: Executive Direction
ED-VBA-	: Executive Direction of VBA
GDRE	General Directorate of Water Resources
GEF	: Global Environment Facility
GWP-WA	: Global Water Partnership in West Africa
ICMCF	: Integrated Crisis Management Coordination Framework
ICRC	: Interministerial Crisis Management Center
IFRM	: Integrated Flood Risk Management
IGA	: Income Generating Activities
IUCN	: International Union for the Conservation of Nature
IWRM	: Integrated Water Resources Management
MoFA	: Ministry of Food and Agriculture
MPWDM	: Master Plan for Water Development and Management
NAP	: National Adaptation Planning
NDRRS	: National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy
NFS	: National Focal Structures
NGO	: Non-Governmental Organization
NGP-Mali	: National Gender Policy in Mali
PPBM	Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Monitoring-Evaluation
REC	: Regional Economic Community
SAP	: Strategic Action Program
SDAGE	Master Plan for the Development and Management of Waters

TDA	: Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis
UNEP	: United Nations Environment Program
VBA	: Volta Basin Authority
VFDM	: Volta Flood and Drought Management Project/ Project titled “ Integrating Flood and Drought Management and Early Warning for Climate Change Adaptation in the Volta Basin ”
VSIP	: Volta Basin Strategic Action Program Implementation Project
WAEMU	: West African Economic and Monetary Union
WMO	: World Meteorological Organization

Summary

The Action Plan for the effective participation of women and vulnerable groups in the processes of integrated flood risk management (IFRM) and End to End Early Warning System for Flood Forecasting (E2E-EWS-FF) in the Volta Basin is the result of a participatory process. It is developed as part of the implementation of the Project entitled "Integrating Flood and Drought Management and Early Warning for Climate Change Adaptation in the Volta Basin (VFDM)" funded by the Adaptation Fund (AF) under the supervision of the Global Water Partnership in West Africa (GWP-WA), in collaboration with the Volta Basin Authority (VBA) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). The Action Plan contributes to the response to the critical need of governmental structures and basin practitioners, engaged in gender mainstreaming, including women and vulnerable groups in flood risk reduction, in terms of practical guidelines. and related skills and competencies required.

The process to elaborate the action plan was characterized by the participation of stakeholders involved in flood risk management at the national, decentralized and local levels in the Volta Basin, in particular from: (i) hydrological services; (ii) meteorological services (National Meteorological Agency, Regional Directorates in charge of the Environment and Agriculture); (iii) structures in charge of Civil Protection; (iv) Community Organizations (Local Water Committees, etc.); and (v) Women's and Youth Organizations.

The results from the literature review and data collection allowed to identify four (04) main challenges to be addressed to ensure effective participation of women and other vulnerable groups in the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin that comprise:

- Effective gender mainstreaming into the governance framework of the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin;
- Strengthening women's engagement and leadership in IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin;
- Capacity building of actors for gender mainstreaming into the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes, including planning, budgeting and monitoring-evaluation (PPBS) chain related thereto at all levels in the Volta basin; and
- Consolidating and scaling up of best practices and successful experiences of effective participation of women and vulnerable groups into the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin.

The action plan aims to improve the participation of women and vulnerable groups in the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta Basin. It is structured around four (04) main areas of intervention as follows:

- Area of intervention 1. Improving gender mainstreaming into the governance framework of the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin;
- Area of intervention 2. Capacity building of actors for inclusive and participatory IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin;
- Area of intervention 3. Strengthening engagement and leadership of women in inclusive and participatory IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin;
- Area of intervention 4. Capitalizing and disseminating successful experiences and best practices of IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes integrating concerns related to women and vulnerable groups in the Volta basin.

The action plan is disaggregated through four (4) main results:

- The Volta Basin Authority promotes gender principles in its governance frameworks and in the execution of its projects and programs for better resilience of women and vulnerable groups to the floods risk;
- Capacities of Volta basin stakeholders are strengthened for the development and implementation of initiatives to support women's participation in IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin;
- Women are empowered to play key roles and responsibilities in inclusive and participatory IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin;
- Successful experiences and best practices of participation of women and other vulnerable groups in the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes are documented, shared, consolidated and scaled up.

The implementation of the action plan will be ensured by the Executive Direction of the VBA and its National Focal Structures (SFN) through especially integrating the plan's priorities into their annual work programs at local, national and regional levels in the Volta basin.

The financing strategy for the action plan implementation is based on one or more of the following approaches:

- The contribution of VBA Member States to financing the implementation of the action plan through their national budget;
- The contribution of the decentralized communities to the financing of the activities of the action plan via their budgets for development or through the channel of decentralized cooperation;
- The preparation of regional, national and local projects to support the effective participation of women and vulnerable groups in the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin;
- The contribution of ongoing and forthcoming projects and programs for development in the basin;
- The financing of certain actions by VBA partners according to their flexibility;
- The involvement of technical and financial partners and supporting institutions (NGOs, etc.) through multilateral, bilateral and decentralized cooperations.

1. Context

In the Volta basin, populations, ecosystems and socio-economic activities that are already vulnerable to the impacts of climate change (CC), in particular to the risk of floods, will be more affected according to climate projections (CIMA, WMO, VBA, GWP -WA, 2022). This vulnerability of communities and ecosystems essentially depends on their ability to adapt and their degree of exposure to the hazard, which determine the risk of floods. Furthermore, the vulnerability varies from one target subject to another within the same community, or even the same given family; because some subjects have a greater capacity to face a crisis than others.

In developing countries, including those in the Volta basin (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Ghana and Togo), the inequitable distribution of rights, resources and power, underpinned by norms cultural rules and practices, limits many people's ability to act and adapt in response to flood risks. This statement is particularly true for poor women who are limited because of various constraints, which make them more vulnerable to this risk. These constraints can be explained in particular by the inequalities between men and women in access to resources and their rights as well as in their participation in decision-making bodies for the prevention and management of the risk of floods. Such disparities, which only accentuate existing gender inequalities, justify the need to strengthen gender mainstreaming into floods risk prevention and management processes.

Gender mainstreaming in all phases of floods risk prevention and management process is essential. It guarantees that the specific gender-disaggregated needs of vulnerable communities are taken into account, as well as the capacities and skills of both women and men and girls and boys in the development and implementation of preparedness, emergency management and rehabilitation of units genuinely exposed to this risk. Taking the gender perspective into account in floods risk reduction offers important entry points for building safer and more resilient communities on the one hand, and on the other hand more inclusive and socially just societies. Also, it participates into the fight against stereotypes, existing gender inequalities and discriminations. However, in the Volta basin, governments and practitioners engaged in this gender mainstreaming approach, including women and vulnerable groups in flood risk reduction, are still faced with the lack of practical guidelines, as well as the capacities and skills required in this area. Hence the initiative to elaborate this action plan led by VBA, WMO and GWP-WA; with a view to improving the participation of women and vulnerable groups in a holistic way in the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin. This is part of the implementation of the VFDM project funded by the Adaptation Fund.

This action plan is based on the following points:

- The participatory process for the elaboration of the action plan;
- A brief overview of the Volta basin and the VBA;
- The floods risk profile in the Volta basin;
- Global, regional and national frameworks for gender mainstreaming into disaster risk reduction in the Volta basin;
- Issues for taking gender into account in the floods risk reduction in the Volta basin;
- Best practices of integrating gender into floods risk reduction in the Volta basin;

- Recommendations and challenges for the effective participation of women and vulnerable groups in the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the volta basin;
- The action plan for implementing the recommendations.

2. The participatory process for the elaboration of the action plan

The action plan for the effective participation of women and vulnerable groups in the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin is the result of a participatory process initiated as part of the implementation of the VFDM Project under the supervision of GWP-WA, in collaboration with VBA and WMO.

This process was characterized by the participation of stakeholders involved in floods risk management at the national, decentralized and local levels in the Volta basin, in particular: (i) hydrological services; (ii) meteorological services (National Meteorological Agency, Regional Directorates in charge of the Environment and Agriculture); (iii) structures in charge of Civil Protection; (iv) Community Organizations (Local Water Committees, etc.); and (v) Women's and Youth Organizations.

The technical itinerary for the elaboration of the action plan is structured around the following main points:

- The organization of eight national training workshops on gender mainstreaming into the E2E-EWS-FF and the IFRM processes;
- The establishment of a framework for the periodic documentation of participant feedback on the use and enhancement of knowledge acquired on gender mainstreaming into the E2E-EWS-FF and the IFRM in the Volta basin;
- The recruitment of a team of Consultants at the regional level to lead the process to elaborate the action plan;
- The setting up of a mission's follow-up committee comprised of staffs from GWP-WA, VBA and other resource persons with a good knowledge of the initiatives and practices of E2E-EWS-FF and IFRM in the basin;
- The organization of a methodological framework session which made it possible to: (i) improve the methodological approach for conducting the process to elaborate the action plan proposed by the team of consultants; (ii) harmonize the points of view on the expected results and (iii) agree together on a flexible calendar for the assignment;
- The elaboration of the synthesis of the results of the 8 national training workshops of 2021 according to the centers of interest of the process for the elaboration of the action plan;
- The collection and the documentation of feedback of the trainees on the use and enhancement, at different levels in the Volta basin, of the knowledge acquired as well as the materials made available to them during the national training workshops;
- The collection and the elaboration of the synthesis of trainees' feedback on progress, best practices and constraints in terms of the participation of women and vulnerable groups in the E2E-EWS-FF and the IFRM processes in the Volta basin;
- The design of the action plan for the effective participation of women and vulnerable groups in the E2E-EWS-FF and the IFRM processes in the Volta Basin.

During the process of the elaboration of the action plan, investigations were made through structured individual interviews for the collection of quantitative and qualitative data on a sample targeting all people that attended the training workshops as well as actors and Resource-persons involved at different levels in the E2E-EWS-FF and the IFRM processes in the Volta basin.

The draft versions of the mission deliverables, including the action plan, were analyzed, discussed and improved through two mechanisms:

- Written comments individually provided by the members of the mission's follow up committee set up;
- Technical sessions with the members of the mission's follow up committee which validated the final draft version of the action plan.

This action plan, which is the culmination of the participatory process described above, is also considered as a starting point; since it is now the guidance instrument for improving the participation of women and vulnerable groups in the E2E-EWS-FF and the IFRM processes in the Volta basin.

3. A brief overview of the Volta basin and the VBA

The Volta Basin is the 9th largest transboundary river basin in the Sub-Saharan Africa. It covers an area of approximately 400,000 km². The resources of the basin are shared between its six (6) riparian countries which are Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali and Togo.

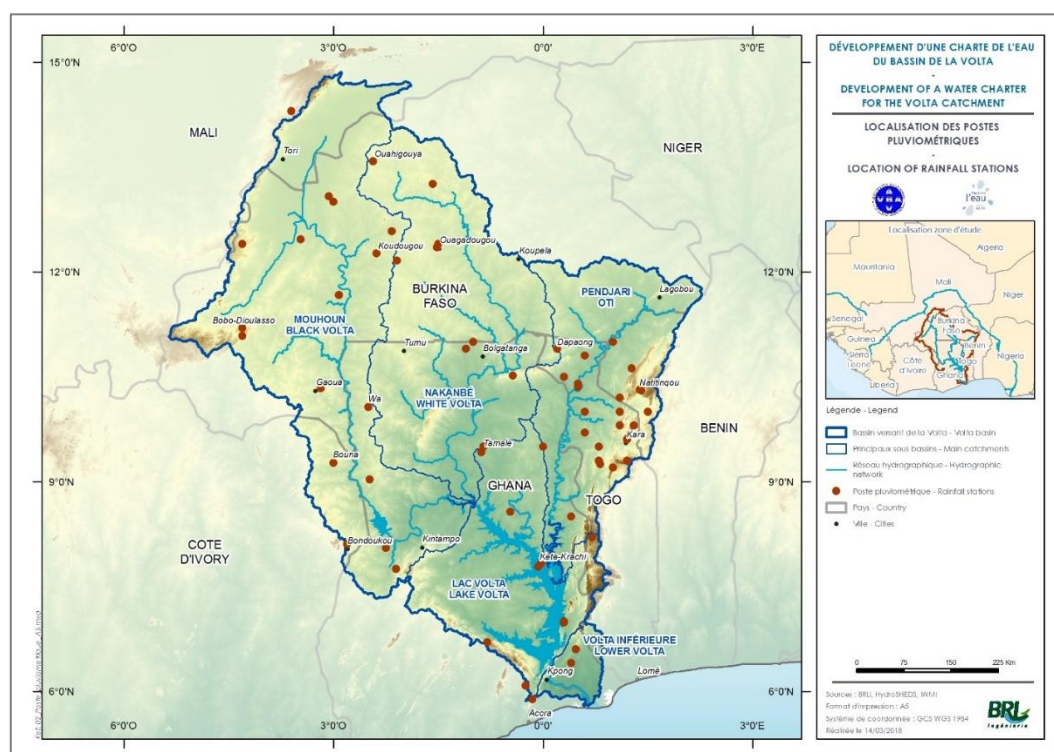


Figure1: Map of the Volta Basin

The Volta Basin Authority (VBA) is an African intergovernmental organization created by the countries that share the Volta basin. This is based on the following conventional instruments:

- The Convention on the status of the Volta River and the creation of the Volta Basin Authority, adopted on January 19, 2007;

- The Statutes of the Volta Basin Authority, adopted on November 16, 2007.

The governing bodies of the VBA are:

- The Conference of Heads of State and Government;
- The Council of Ministers in charge of water resources;
- The Forum of Stakeholders involved in the development of the Volta basin;
- The Committee of Experts;
- The Executive Direction of the VBA.

It should also be noted that the National Focal Structures of the VBA are in place and operational in each of the six (6) riparian countries of the basin.

The VBA's vision is “a basin shared by partners driven by goodwill and a spirit of cooperation, managing water resources in rational and sustainable manners for their overall socio-economic development”. Its mission is to “promote permanent consultation and sustainable development for an equitable sharing of benefits with a view to reducing poverty and improving socio-economic integration. »

The VBA is responsible for ensuring the rational and integrated management of the resources of the Volta basin, the safeguarding of the environment and the ecosystem of the river. Under Title III, Article 6 of the Convention on the status of the Volta River and the creation of the VBA, the Authority has the following mandates:

- To promote permanent consultation tools among stakeholders involved in the development of the basin;
- To promote the implementation of the integrated management of water resources and the equitable sharing of benefits arising from their different uses;
- To authorize the construction of works and projects envisaged by the States Parties and which may have a significant impact on the water resources of the basin;
- To carry out joint projects and works;
- To contribute to poverty reduction, sustainable development of States Parties and better sub-regional socio-economic integration.

To accomplish its mission, the VBA adopted in 2013 a Strategic Action Program (SAP) 2014 – 2024 of the basin which was developed based on the conclusions of the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) of the basin (UNEP-GEF Volta, 2012) and the results of an extensive VBA stakeholder consultation process. The SAP consolidates the measures and investments needed to: (i) ensure water availability; (ii) conserve and restore ecosystem functions; (iii) ensure adequate water quality; and (iv) strengthen governance and information management in the Volta basin. These measures and investments respond to the priority transboundary problems that emerged from the TDA of the basin.

The implementation of the Volta Basin SAP has made it possible, among other things: (i) to elaborate the Volta basin Water Charter which was adopted by the Council of Ministers in charge of water resources in the basin as well as three (3) of its Annexes; (ii) to operationalize the Volta basin Observatory; (iii) to develop the draft VBA Gender Charter; (iv) to implement pilot initiatives for the sustainable management of water resources and associated ecosystems in the basin.

The Volta basin SAP is implemented through completed, ongoing and future projects and programs such as:

- The VSIP project “Volta Basin Strategic Action Program Implementation Project”, funded by the “Cooperation in International Waters in Africa (CIWA)”, the “Global Environment Facility – GEF” through the World Bank and the VBA;
- The project “Integrating Flood and Drought Management and Early Warning for Climate Change Adaptation in the Volta Basin (VFDM)” funded by the Adaptation Fund and executed by VBA, GWP-WA and WMO;
- The project Reversing Ecosystem and Water Degradation Trends in the Volta Basin ([REWard – Volta River Basin](#)) funded by GEF with two Implementing Agencies (UNEP, IUCN) and two Executing Agencies (VBA and GWP-WA);

- The project "Developing knowledge to fight against regional fragilities and strengthen resilience in the Volta Basin", financed by the African Development Bank (AfDB) and executed by VBA. The project started in 2023 and focuses on the development of basic tools for the development of the Master Plan for the Development and Management of Waters (SDAGE) for the basin by 2050.

4. The floods risk profile in the Volta basin

Different types of floods, that affect ecosystems, populations and socio-economic activities in the basin (ECOWAS, 2020), include:

- River floods caused by heavy rainfall that induce the overflow of the main rivers;
- Floods linked to the rise in water tables and due to prolonged periods of rainfall;
- Floods caused by surface runoff in urban areas due to heavy and sudden rains, which exceed the capacity of drainage systems, and aggravated by the lack of maintenance of urban sanitation systems;
- Flash floods caused by excessive rainfall and characterized by a rapid rise in water level, locally, within minutes to hours.

In the Volta basin, these floods are recurrent and occur every year at a transboundary scale and have considerable impacts on the populations of the six basin riparian countries. The problem in the basin as well as in the Sahelian region seems to have worsened since the 1970s and is associated with successive droughts, thus leading to a reduction in the capacity of the soil to retain water and an increase in runoff during heavy rains. This situation results in catastrophic floods such as those of 2009 and 2010 (WMO, 2019). In fact, in 2010, the floods in the basin: (i) caused nearly 45 deaths; (ii) damaged 55,000 houses, 455 establishments and 92 health centers and (iii) left 250,000 people homeless. Moreover, a single rainy event can locally affect several tens of thousands of people, such as the torrential rains of October 2019 associated with the release of water from the Bagré dam in Burkina Faso, which affected 26,000 people in the north-eastern region of Ghana.

According to the Volta Basin Floods Risk Profile (CIMA, WMO, VBA, GWP-WA, 2022), the average number of people affected per year in the basin is nearly thirty thousand (30,000) inhabitants. The situation is more worrying in the northern Ghana and the northern Burkina Faso. These floods also affect the road network and hundreds of thousands of hectares of agricultural and protected lands on average per year. In addition, annual flood-related losses on the built sector reach approximately 25 million US dollars (USD) on average per year.

The climate projection results indicate an exacerbation of current trends, particularly in the basin. In 2100, nearly three times as many people as today will be affected by floods in the Volta basin, or probably nearly 80,000 people per year. A flood with a return period of 50 years could then affect up to 165,000 people. The average annual losses (AAL) on the built sector could exceed 4 million USD in Ghana; and agricultural losses could worsen by almost 40%. On the other hand, an increase in water availability and hydroelectric potential is expected for the period 2017-2100, particularly in the north of the basin, due to the increase in the intensity and frequency of both rainfall and floods. .

Considering the current and projected situation related to the impacts of floods risk in the Volta basin, the Basin Floods Risk Profile issued from the implementation of the VFDM is accompanied with recommendations, targeting the stakeholders, that emphasize on:

- Improving knowledge on the floods risk in the Volta basin;
- Mainstreaming integrated floods risk management and reduction into development planning processes at local, regional, sectoral, national and transboundary levels in the Volta basin;
- The elaboration and the implementation of the SDAGE of the Volta basin as well as the annexes for the implementation of the Water Charter of the basin; while ensuring that potential investments to reduce the floods risk in the basin are taken into account;
- Planning and implementing the necessary investments to strengthen the resilience of communities and ecosystems as well as the various socio-economic production systems; while taking into account cross-cutting aspects related to gender equality, youth and the empowerment of women and girls;
- Ensuring the operational and sustainable functioning of Early Warning Systems to floods at the scale of the Volta basin, supported with the development and the implementation of a technical, institutional and material capacity building program for targeted institutions;
- The development and the operationalization, together with the Member States of the VBA, of a regional fund for the preparation and management of floods and drought risks in the basin;
- Promoting and adopting climate-smart agricultural practices and efficient water management at all levels in the Volta basin.

5. Global, regional, national frameworks for gender mainstreaming into disaster risk reduction in the Volta Basin

Global, regional and national frameworks and mechanisms for gender mainstreaming into disaster risk reduction commit States and all actors to effective consideration of the gender perspective in planning and implementation of the prevention and the management of that risks at all levels. They oblige to ensure, among other things: (i) the continued mobilization of political will and the support of political decision-makers for effective action; (ii) building the required capacities in this area of actors at all levels; and (iii) compliance with the national and international commitments of the States relating thereto.

Frameworks requesting gender equality and women's empowerment are mostly conventions and declarations put in place to address inequalities between men, women and various social strata.

5.1. At the International scale

The international community is increasingly interested in disaster risk reduction measures, which at the same time contribute to the reduction or even the elimination of gender inequalities through particularly the empowerment of all women and girls. Global commitments made, by the international community to achieve this, include:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 which affirms the equality of rights between men and women;
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) adopted in December 1978, the primary objective of which is the prohibition of all forms of discrimination against women. It emphasizes on the respect, the protection, the promotion and the realization of women's human rights in all circumstances;
- The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction which states that gender should be integrated into all DRR policies, plans and decision-making processes. This document argues that women and persons with disabilities should be included in decision-making processes during the response and reconstruction phases;
- The Beijing Platform for Action (on gender) which aims to improve women's access to places of power and to build their capacities so that they can actively participate in political decision-making. The program projects for a world where every woman or every girl can exercise her freedoms and choices and know and understand all of her rights, including the right to live free from violence, the right to education, the right to participate in decision-making and the right to receive equal pay for equal work. It devotes one of its twelve priority areas specifically to women and the environment;
- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goal 5 that focuses on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.

5.2. At the Pan-African level, in West Africa and in the Volta Basin

At the Pan-African and the West African levels as well as at the scale of the Volta Basin, the global frameworks have been adopted and adapted to the local context. Continent-specific policies and strategies such as the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (SRARRC) and the African Union (AU) Strategy for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women 2018-2027 enable Regional Economic Communities (RECs) including the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) as well as Member States to translate their commitments into activities and concrete programs on the ground.

All Member States of the African Union are also committed to ensuring gender equality through, particularly:

- The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights that is the main instrument for the promotion and protection of the socio-economic rights of women on the continent, which is binding;
- The Maputo Protocol adopted on July 11, 2003 by the Heads of State of the AU in order to guarantee the rights of women, including the right to participate in the political process, social and political equality with men, improved autonomy in their health decisions and the end of female genital mutilation;
- The Gender Policy of the African Development Bank (AfDB), its subsequent strategies and action plans through which the pan-African banking institution plans to "transform the continent's key sectors into accessible lands of opportunity, where women, girls, men and boys, regardless of background, enjoy equal access and control over productive resources and benefit from infrastructure and support services to thrive"; and
- The AU Agenda 2063 which Aspiration 6 advocates for "An Africa that development is people-driven, which relies on the potential of its people, especially those of women and young people, who care about the good to be children.

At the West African level, ECOWAS considers gender equality as a driver of regional integration and a development objective in itself. This recognition is reflected in Articles 61 and 63 of the Revised ECOWAS Treaty which calls on "Member States [...] to develop, harmonize, coordinate and define appropriate policies and mechanisms to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of women". Member States have also made commitments to gender equality through: (i) the ECOWAS Supplementary Act on Equal Rights between Women and Men (2015); (ii) the ECOWAS gender policy as well as (iii) the ECOWAS gender strategy and action plan for disaster risk reduction.

5.3. At the scale of the Volta basin

At the level of the Volta basin, there is in place:

- The Convention on the status of the Volta River and the creation of the VBA adopted on January 19, 2007;
- The Statutes of the VBA adopted on November 16, 2007;
- The Volta Basin Water Charter;
- The Volta Basin Gender Strategy;
- The Volta Basin Strategic Action Program;
- The VBA Gender Charter.

The VBA Gender Charter is based on eight (8) principles as follows:

- To fully integrate the fight for gender equality into the overall mission to fight against poverty and inequality;
- To promote a balanced representativity of women and men in its decision-making and governance bodies (Board and other bodies) by having at least a representativity of 1/3 of people of the same sex in these bodies;
- To develop a dual approach: gender mainstreaming and gender specificities in all aspects;
- To define a general gender action plan, with objectively verifiable monitoring and evaluation measures and a dedicated budget;
- To explicitly integrate gender equity and equality into human resources policy;
- To explicitly integrate the dimension of gender equality in the code of conduct;
- To ensure in all of its activities, communications, a non-stereotyped and balanced representativity of men and women as well as specific attention to sexual diversity; and
- To contribute to the empowerment of women and discriminated social groups.

5.4. At the level of each of the VBA countries

Table 1 below summarizes the frameworks put in place in each of the VBA countries, which engage States as well as communities to integrate gender into disaster risk reduction.

Table 1: National Frameworks for Gender Mainstreaming into Disaster Risk Reduction in the Volta Basin Countries

Country	National Frameworks for Gender Mainstreaming into Disaster Risk Reduction
Benin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Law No. 1990-32 of December 11, 1990 on the Constitution of the Republic of Benin amended with the Law No. 2019-40 of 07 November 2019 as revised; • The Law No. 2002-07 on the People and Family Code in the Republic of Benin; • The Law No. 2010-44 of October 21, 2010 on the water management in the Republic of Benin; • The Law No. 2018-18 of August 6, 2018 on climate change in the Republic of Benin; • The National Gender Promotion Policy in Benin: program and action plan for the implementation of the national gender promotion policy in Benin 2010-2015; • The decree on the creation, composition, attributions and functioning of the National Committee for Civil Protection; • The decree on the organization of relief in the event of a disaster in Benin; • The decree setting the conditions for the development of the environmental audit in the Republic of Benin; • The decree establishing the creation of environmental cells in the Republic of Benin; • The decree organizing the Department of the Prevention and the Civil Protection;

Country	National Frameworks for Gender Mainstreaming into Disaster Risk Reduction
Burkina Faso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Constitution of June 11, 1991 in its article 1 which stipulates that men and women are equal; • The Law on the revised penal code; • The Law 061-2015 CNT of September 06, 2015 on the prevention, repression and reparation of violence against women and girls and care for victims; • The Law No. 12-2014-AN of 22 April 2014 on the orientation law relating to the prevention and management of risks, humanitarian crises and disasters; • The Persons and Family Code of 1984 currently being revised; • The Law No. 12-2010 of April 1, 2010 on the protection and the promotion of people with disabilities, the texts establishing the certificate of indigence; • The National Gender Strategy 2020-2025 and its action plan 2020-2022;
Cote d'Ivoire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Law No. 2016-886 of November 8, 2016 on the Constitution of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire; • The National Policy on Equal Opportunities, Equity and Gender which aims to ensure fair and equitable development allowing women and men to participate with equal opportunities in development and decision-making processes; • The Solemn Declaration of Côte d'Ivoire on equal opportunities, equity and gender signed by the President of the Republic in February 2007; • The Program of the President of the Republic which places "enhancement of the role of women" and "parity in decision-making bodies" at the center of its intervention strategy to ensure equitable development"; • The National Strategy to Combat Gender-Based Violence 2014-2016; • The National Population Policy;
Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The passage of the Domestic Violence Act in 2007 and the Affirmative Action Bill (which is yet to be passed) • The 1992 Constitution which promotes the rights of all gender groups, including Article 12 cl. 2 - (human rights 21 without distinction of gender among others), Article 17 (2) prohibits discrimination based on gender among other characteristics, Article 22 (property rights of spouses) and Article 27 (women's rights); • The National Policy on Gender and Children (2004); • The creation of the portfolio of Gender Officers within the local government structure; • The Agriculture and Gender Development Strategy of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA); • The passage of the Domestic Violence Act in 2007 and the Affirmative Action Bill (which has not yet been passed);
Mali	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Constitution of Mali; • The National Gender Policy in Mali (PNG-Mali); • The Mali's Gender Policy Action Plan 2011-2013; • The National Gender Sensitive Planning and Budgeting Strategy 2011-2013 (PBSG); • The Law No. 02-006 of January 31, 2002 on the Water Code of Mali; • The Agricultural Orientation Law No. 06-045 of September 5, 2006; • The ordinance creating the General Directorate of Civil Protection; • The Decree No. 2016-0974 / P-RM of December 27, 2016 on the creation, organization and definition of the operating procedures of the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Mali; • The Decree No. 2015-0889-P-RM of 31 December 2015 adopting the relief plan in Mali: Relief Organization Plan (ORSEC);

Country	National Frameworks for Gender Mainstreaming into Disaster Risk Reduction
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Decree No. 2016-0346 / P-RM approving the National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (SNRR); • The Gender Equality Policy of the Ministry of Justice; • The Action Plan for the Fight against Trafficking in Women and Girls; • The 2011-2013 National Program to Combat Violence against Women and Girls; • The National Policy for the Fight against the Practice of Excision; • The Multidisciplinary Working Group for Agro-Hydro-Meteorological Assistance; • The National Network of Women Leaders on Early Warning, Prevention and Management of Risks and Disasters;
Togo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Constitution of Togo; • The People and Family Code; • The National Policy for Gender Equity and Equality in Togo (2019); • The new, more egalitarian Penal Code; • The new Land Code sweeping away customary and modern texts that penalized women; • The National Gender Mainstreaming Strategy into development policies and programs; • The strategy to combat gender-based violence; • The sectoral strategies for gender mainstreaming; • The National Climate Change Adaptation Plan (PNACC, 2016); • The National Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change in the Health sector in Togo; • The guidelines for taking gender into account in the national planning process for adaptation to climate change (PNA) in Togo.

6. Issues for taking gender into account in the floods risk reduction in the Volta Basin

Floods are at the origin of a situation of great vulnerability of the populations in several zones of the Volta basin where the means of fight or resilience vary according to the capacities of the men and women affected. From the point of view of the stakeholders, issues for taking gender into account in the floods risk reduction are important and are conceived at the health, environmental, socio-economic, security, political and institutional levels.

Health issues: in the Volta Basin, women, children, young people and vulnerable people (disabled, elderly, etc.) represent the vulnerable groups most affected by the floods risk. Indeed, the living environment of the communities concerned is often quickly affected during floods, which exposes the victims to falls and drowning, physical injuries, diarrheal diseases and malaria, sometimes leading to cases of loss of life, especially children. It is also noted that pregnant women and children are very vulnerable people, whose needs and concerns are often not taken into account during community displacements, which increases the risk of diseases and genital infections in particular.

Women being responsible for domestic hygiene, water supply, food and management of household health problems; the floods risk management cannot be done without their contributions. Women, girls, the elderly and the disabled are the most affected.

Economic and social issues: in all the countries of the Volta Basin, floods severely affect the social and financial conditions of women and young people whose livelihoods are already precarious and very weak. Despite government efforts to facilitate women's access to land; it is always noted in the communities that women and young people have difficult access to agricultural land. As a result, they are forced to carry out their agricultural activities in areas with high exposure to floods; because they do not have the economic means, or the social attributes necessary to access fertile and productive land. These people or groups of people often occupy unproductive marginalized lands and suffer the loss of their crops during floods, which exposes them more to food and nutritional crises, to a drop in their income, to poverty, and weaken them further.

Moreover, the balance of power (physical and financial) between the different social strata, reproductive activities and the low level of education of women are not likely to facilitate the good participation of women, girls and other vulnerable groups, to debates on the development of society and the management of floods in communities. Safeguarding property and lives by reducing exposure to floods as well as organizing and implementing an appropriate response for impact reduction once the event occurs is imperative. It is the same for the effective participation of women in the various actions of the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes, as major actors in reducing the community's vulnerability to the impacts of floods.

Security issues: in the Volta basin, we note that the people who are victims in the event of floods are for the most part the weakest (women, children, young people, the disabled, vulnerable groups), the marginalized who live in uncomfortable, unhealthy areas, areas at risk and with few means for their subsistence. The disorganization of social services, infrastructures, and goods leads to social tensions, promiscuity, with sometimes the deterioration of morals, and even leading to the dislocation of families, to the increase in thefts, physical attacks, and more generally to the increase in gender-based violence. This situation militates for the taking into account of gender in the reduction of the floods risk at the local level,

Environmental issues: in the Volta basin, the floods induce, among other things, the modification of the living environment, the proliferation of waste, the difficulties related to sanitation, pollution and soil degradation. The management of this situation requires anticipation through, among other things, the strengthening of women's resilience (in terms of economic and financial capacities, information and skills) and appropriate responses.

Institutional issues: they relate to the effective application of the principles of equality, equity, inclusion (non-discrimination) in the adaptation or response measures to the floods risk, which jeopardize the implementation of the fundamental principles of the human rights-based approach and even the effectiveness of the response. The low consideration of gender is remarkable in reality; even if in the various strategies, programs and plans the principle is repeated. In reality, the stated ambition often does not go far enough, being limited to the accounting of attendance, or simply to the non-application of the texts. We note with satisfaction the initiative of the VBA to adopt a Gender Charter to oversee and promote the participation of all stakeholders in the management of the basin. The Gender Charter under development should be able to stimulate with its implementation the consideration of the gender transformative approach according in the floods risk reduction in the basin. The low capacity of women (intrinsic, but also relatively low positioning in decision-making positions) are among the reasons. There is a need to involve all the stakeholders at the institutional and programmatic levels, and at the level of the execution frameworks. but also relatively weak positioning in decision-making positions) are part of the reasons. There is a need to involve all the stakeholders at the institutional and programmatic levels, and at the level of the execution frameworks. but also, relatively weak positioning in decision-making positions) are part of the reasons. There is a need to involve all the stakeholders at the institutional and programmatic levels, and at the level of the execution frameworks. Reducing the floods risk must therefore be of interest to all stakeholders without any discrimination based on sex, class or regarding situations of disability, and the institutional framework must mark out these mechanisms in place for this purpose. It is imperative to prepare to limit these negative effects and impacts, while maximizing the benefits in the overall flood management process.

7. Best practices of integrating gender into the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta Basin

Overall, a certain number of best practices for taking gender into account or even gender equality in the IFRM and/or E2E-EWS-FF processes are to the credit of actors intervening at the national and regional levels in the Volta Basin. However, progress remains very slow at the level of certain stages of the said processes as well as the dimensions of empowerment and representation of women and young people in decision-making bodies.

Best practices of taking gender into account in the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes capitalized by actors in the Volta Basin include, among others:

- The granting of training scholarships targeting women in Burkina Faso; which has made it possible to have a significant number of professional women in hydrology and meteorology, who are participating in the processes of the E2E-EWS-FF and the IFRM. The person in charge of the Department of Water Studies and Information (DEIE) at the General Directorate of Water Resources (DGRE) is one of the women that benefited from such an initiative in Burkina Faso;
- The establishment of a Women's Network for Disaster Risk Management (RFGC) in Mali. The network works to train regional actors on themes relating to the prevention and management of climate and water-related disaster risks;
- The establishment of a National Network of Women Leaders on Early Warning, Prevention and Management of Risks and Disasters, which is operational in Mali;
- The appointment of a woman as the Head of the service in charge of weather forecasting in Mali;
- The continuous improvement, noted in Togo in recent years, of the participation of women in environmental activities as well as their positioning in positions of responsibility. As such, a woman holds the position of Head of the Weather Watch and Forecast Division at the General Directorate of National Meteorology;
- The participation of women, together with men, in the activities of the national consultation platform for the prevention of natural disaster risks in Togo;
- The participation of women in the various activities of the Integrated Crisis Management Coordination Framework (CCGICCI) as well as those of the Inter- ministerial Crisis Management Center (CGIC) in Côte d'Ivoire;
- The participation of women in the activities of disaster risk management (DRM) and disaster risk reduction (DRR) platforms in Benin;
- Women occupying positions of responsibility that allow them to play very important roles in the process of DRR and DRM in the countries of the Volta Basin. The person in charge of the departmental DRM-DRR platform of Atacora is a Lady in Benin;
- Women, youth and vulnerable people are prioritized as the first people to be displaced and evacuated in the event of floods within communities in the Volta Basin.

8. Recommendations and challenges for the effective participation of women and vulnerable groups in the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin

8.1. Recommendations for effective participation of women and vulnerable groups in the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin

Tables 2 and 3 below highlight the recommendations for the effective participation of women and vulnerable groups in the respective IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta Basin. The recommendations are presented per step or component of each of both processes.

Table 2: Recommendations for the effective participation of women and vulnerable groups in the IFRM process in the Volta basin

Steps	Recommendations
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To carry out analysis studies along with the profile of vulnerability of men and women to the floods risk; • To assess the specific gender-disaggregated needs for building the resilience capacities of communities vulnerable to the floods risk; • To ensure the consistency of the IFRM plan with the legal, political and strategic frameworks of both the water sector and gender; • To ensure the participation of at least 30 to 50% of women in all training on knowledge and assessment of vulnerability and floods risk as well as the elaboration of responses; • To ensure the participation of women and vulnerable groups in the elaboration and the implementation of IFRM plans as well as emergency plans; • To ensure the effective participation of women and vulnerable groups in the processes and decision-making bodies related to the IFRM.
Emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To rely, among other things, on the valuation and analysis of gender-differentiated and disaggregated vulnerability data for the rapid updating and implementation of emergency plans and measures; • To prioritize the use of inclusive response instruments including focus groups for women and men for the deployment of emergency operations; • To ensure the good representativity and effective participation of women and vulnerable groups in the various committees/emergency management bodies as well as in training in first aid and humanitarian strategies; • To make a more inclusive targeting of beneficiaries of emergency actions coupled with positive discrimination measures against the disadvantaged (women, girls, children and other vulnerable groups).
Rehabilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deploy measures to correct the consequences and impacts according to their magnitude, differentiated according to gender and the recovery cycle required for each socio-professional category; • To develop appropriate post-emergency measures to sustainably address social fractures and aggravation of the inequality gap, related to behaviors, practices and shortcomings of the instruments developed during floods (emergency); • To consolidate and capitalize on the achievements and progress made with the inclusive adaptation strategies elaborated and implemented as well as resources, knowledge, skills and strengths developed among women and men to deal with the floods risk of.

Table 3: Recommendations for the effective participation of women and vulnerable groups in the E2E-EWS-FF process in the Volta basin

Steps	Recommendations
Data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To collect data disaggregated per sex and age on the assessment of the vulnerability of communities to floods as well as the associated impacts; To ensure that male and female beneficiaries are consulted and asked specific gender questions; To ensure the effective presence and participation of women and other vulnerable groups in the collection of relevant information on climate and water that are decisive for responses (preventive and reactive).
Modeling and forecasting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To prioritize models to produce risk scenarios and projections with a highlighting of the associated impacts disaggregated per gender within communities; To present data and information in an understandable way for all sections of society (illiterate, children, disabled, etc.); To encourage by offering scholarships and local supervision to young people enabling them to study in the fields of meteorology, hydrology and disaster risk management.
Dissemination of the alert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To make known and own by all members of the community the channels of communication and dissemination of early warning (markets, hospitals, schools; etc.) available and accessible to them; To identify and prioritize the use of channels easily accessible to both women and men; etc During the exchanges, special emphasis should be placed on raising awareness at the level of places where women gather, such as markets, wells, places of worship, etc. To effectively take into account the local language and the times indicated for the dissemination of information to allow women to have access to it.
Decision Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure the inclusion of women and vulnerable groups in any consultation to identify solutions and best practices of decision-making gender sensitive; To develop collaborations with NGO women groups and ministry/department working on GEWE
Response to the alert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that response plans are communicated to the populations that will be affected, while highlighting the gender-disaggregated responses expected from them; To consider gender relations and dynamics in formulating and updating response plans

8.2. Challenges related to the effective consideration of women and vulnerable groups in the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin

Based on the synthesis and analysis of the data collected and the information from the documentary review, the main challenges to be met for an increase the participation of women and other vulnerable groups in the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta Basin relate to:

- Effective gender mainstreaming into the governance framework of the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin;

- Strengthening women's engagement and leadership in IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin;
- Capacity building of actors for gender mainstreaming into the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes, including planning, budgeting and monitoring-evaluation (PPBS) chain related thereto at all levels in the Volta basin; and
- Consolidating and scaling up of best practices and successful experiences of effective participation of women and vulnerable groups into the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin.

9. Action plan

9.1. Objectives and strategic axes

The overall objective of the action plan is to improve the participation of women and vulnerable groups in the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin.

The specific objectives of the action plan are as follows:

- Improve the governance framework of the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes integrating gender in the Volta basin;
- Strengthen the capacities of actors for gender mainstreaming into the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes including the related PPBS chain at all levels in the Volta basin;
- Increase women's engagement and leadership in the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin;
- Document and promote best practices and successful experiences of effective gender mainstreaming, including women and vulnerable groups, in the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin.

The Action Plan is organized around the four (04) areas of intervention below:

- Area of intervention 1. Improving gender mainstreaming into the governance framework of the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin;
- Area of intervention 2. Capacity building of actors for inclusive and participatory IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin;
- Area of intervention 3. Strengthening engagement and leadership of women in inclusive and participatory IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin;
- Area of intervention 4. Capitalizing and disseminating successful experiences and best practices of IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes integrating concerns related to women and vulnerable groups in the Volta basin.

9.2. Expected results and actions

The results and actions of the action plan are consolidated in the Table 4 below.

Tableau 4: Expected results and actions of the action plan

Objectives	Areas of interventions / Expected results / lines of action / actions	
Overall objective. Improve the participation of women and vulnerable groups in the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin	<u>Area of intervention 1. Improving gender mainstreaming into the governance framework of the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin;</u>	
improve the governance framework of the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes integrating gender in the Volta basin	Expected result 1: the Volta Basin Authority promotes gender principles in its governance frameworks and in the execution of its projects and programs for better resilience of women and vulnerable groups to the floods risk;	
	Line of action 1.1. The VBA's Gender Charter is finalized, adopted by the authorized bodies and disseminated	1.1.1. To review and revise the draft VBA Gender Charter in integrating concerns related to the participation of women and vulnerable groups in floods risk reduction
		1.1.2. To submit the draft updated VBA Gender Charter for adoption by the Council of Ministers in accordance with the rules of procedure of the VBA
		1.1.3. To disseminate the adopted VBA Gender Charter to partner institutions intervening in the basin
		1.1.4. To support the organization of capacity building sessions for actors for the implementation of the adopted VBA Gender Charter
	Line of action 1.2. The policies, strategies, projects and programs supported by the VBA related to floods risk reduction are gender sensitive	1.2.1. To put in place tools, sensitive to gender, respectively for the rapid and in-depth assessments of the vulnerability to the risk of floods as well as the associated impacts and response options required in the Volta Basin
		1.2.2. To build the capacity of managers for project implemented by the VBA on the use of gender-sensitive evaluation tools put in place
		1.2.3. To promote the continued mobilization of political will and support from development partners for effective consideration of gender in the development and implementation of flood reduction policies, strategies, projects and programs in the basin of the Volta
		1.2.4. To organize preliminary awareness campaigns on the added values of effective gender mainstreaming in the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin
	Line of action 1.3. A mechanism for monitoring the participation of women and vulnerable groups in the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes is set up and operational in the Volta basin	1.3.1. To develop a guide for the monitoring the participation of women and other vulnerable groups in the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes in the basin
		1.3.2. To periodically conduct campaigns to monitor the participation of women and other vulnerable groups in the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes in the basin
		1.3.3. To periodically reward actors and partners working to effectively take gender into account in the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes in the basin

Objectives	Areas of interventions / Expected results / lines of action / actions	
Strengthen the capacities of actors for gender mainstreaming into the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes including the related PPBS chain at all levels in the Volta basin;	<u>Area of intervention 2.</u> Capacity building of actors for inclusive and participatory IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin	
	Expected Result 2: Capacities of Volta basin stakeholders are strengthened for the development and implementation of initiatives to support women's participation in IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin;	
	Line of action 2.1. Capacities of basin actors on the inclusive and participatory PPBS&E chain have reinforced	2.1.1. To develop and implement a training program for Volta Basin stakeholders on the gender sensitive PPBS&E chain
		2.1.2. To support the production and use of gender-sensitive indicators in the monitoring and the evaluation of IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF initiatives in the Volta basin
	Line of action 2.2. The capacities of the actors of the basin in terms of preparation on and implementation of gender-sensitive IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF Initiatives are strengthened	2.2.1. To identify the root causes of gender inequalities that impede the reduction of floods risk as well as actions required (strategic, institutional and operational) to address them in the basin
		2.2.2. To organize training sessions on the implementation of the gender transformational approach in the deployment of IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the basin
		2.2.3. To conduct public awareness and advocacy campaigns for the involvement of women and other vulnerable groups in the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin;
		2.2.4. To support Volta basin actors in the development and the implementation of inclusive and participatory IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF projects and programs
	<u>Area of intervention 3.</u> Strengthening engagement and leadership of women in inclusive and participatory IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin;	
	Expected Result 3: Women are empowered to play key roles and responsibilities in inclusive and participatory IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin;	
Increase women's engagement and leadership in the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin	Line of action 3.1. The capacities of women and young girls in terms of their engagement and leadership in E2E-EWS-FF and IFRM processes in the Volta basin.	3.1.1. To organize training sessions for women and young girls on leadership and commitment in IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF process
		3.1.2. To organize discussion and awareness sessions for women and young girls on topics related to IFRM, E2E-EWS-FF and gender equality
		3.1.3. To support the vocational training of women, young girls and other vulnerable groups in areas of floods risk reduction (Hydro, weather, civil protection, etc.)
		3.1.4. To promote the appointment and retention of competent women in leadership positions in floods risk reduction processes
		3.1.5. To establish/ revitalize associations of women, girls, youth and vulnerable groups while facilitating their quality and active participation in IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin
		3.2.1. To strengthen the capacities of women producers' cooperatives for access to subsidies and other financing as well as their efficient management

Objectives	Areas of interventions / Expected results / lines of action / actions	
Document and promote best practices and successful experiences of effective gender mainstreaming, including women and vulnerable groups, in the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin	Line of action 3.2. Initiatives to empower women and other vulnerable groups (access to resources, land, etc.) are supported	3.2.2. To support the construction and/or rehabilitation of gender-sensitive sanitation facilities in the sites hosting floods risk victims
		3.2.3. To promote women's access to productive resources (land, technology, equipment, training, information and financing, services and climate information)
		3.2.4. To put in place investment schemes for the benefit of women and vulnerable groups to increase their resilience to the floods risk
		3.2.5. To support the capacity building of basin stakeholders in mobilizing financial resources for the development of income-generating activities for the benefit of women and groups vulnerable to floods risk
	Area of intervention 4. Capitalizing and disseminating successful experiences and best practices of IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes integrating concerns related to women and vulnerable groups in the Volta basin	
	Expected result 4: Successful experiences and best practices of participation of women and other vulnerable groups in the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes are documented, shared, consolidated and scaled up	
	Line of action 4.1. Initiatives in favor of the participation of women, young people, and other vulnerable people in IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF process in the Volta Basin are documented and shared	4.1.1. To identify and document experiences and good practices for the effective participation of women and other vulnerable groups in the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin
		4.1.2. To establish a database of successful experiences of leadership and engagement of women, girls and other vulnerable groups in IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes to advocate for gender-responsive resilience building in the Volta basin
		4.1.3. To hold a consultation meeting between actors from the Volta basin countries for the development of gender-responsive standardized information channels in the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta Basin
	Line of action 4.2. The general public, development partners and decision-makers are mobilized for a better participation of women and other vulnerable groups in the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta Basin	4.2.1. To develop communication and awareness tools on the issue as well as the best practices and successful experiences documented in terms of the effective participation of women and other vulnerable groups in the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin
		4.2.2. To organize information, awareness and advocacy sessions for the benefit of the general public, development partners, decision-makers and opinion leaders
		4.2.3. To organize gender-sensitive (regional) information campaigns on floods risk and climate change at regional, national and local levels
		4.2.3. To build strategic alliances and partnerships at all levels for consolidating and scaling up of best practices and successful experiences of effective participation of women and other vulnerable groups in the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin.

9.3. Implementation of the action plan

The action plan for the effective participation of women and vulnerable groups in the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes at local, national and regional levels in the Volta basin will be implemented over the period 2024-2030 in the manner described below.

9.3.1. Institutional framework for implementing the action plan

The VBA is the institution responsible for the implementation of certain actions and also for monitoring the implementation of the action plan. Through its Executive Direction (ED) and the National Focal Structures (SFN), the VBA will ensure the integration of the priorities of the action plan in its annual work programs at the local, national and regional levels in the Volta basin. Also, it will coordinate with all the partners intervening in the basin at various levels for an effective consideration of the activities of the action plan in their respective programs, plans and projects.

The VBA will act under the political leadership of its Council of Ministers which, for the purpose of implementing this action plan, will be extended to all Ministers in charge of water and the environment in the Volta basin. Gender Focal Points will be set up at VBA-ED and SFN levels to monitor the implementation of the action plan.

9.3.2. Risks and sustainability

The main foreseeable risk relating to the implementation of the action plan is the effectiveness of having an institutional and organizational mechanism for understanding and reducing floods risk in the Volta basin, which is not sufficiently operational to enable the implementation of the activities of the action plan.

It is also noted that the activities of the action plan are not integrated into projects, programs, policies and activities at various levels in the basin.

Other potentials risks are:

- **The lack or insufficiency of political will:** decision makers at various levels in the Volta Basin can demonstrate a commitment reduced or limited for effective participation of women and vulnerable groups in integrated management and early warning of floods, due to the persistence of certain socio-cultural practices and norms in place;
- **The insufficient funds for the implementation of the action plan:** the financial partners of the VBA may not honor their financial commitments or not get involved in the financing of the activities of the action plan as expected. The current global economic crisis may also make it difficult for countries to honor their co-financing commitments;
- **The political instability:** Coups, elections, insecurity in the Sahel where other socio-economic unrest can lead to conflicts that can constitute a hindrance to the implementation of the action plan;
- **The non-existing or limited capacities:** the VBA DE and most of the Volta basin countries have the human resources as well as the technical capacities management skills in integrated management and early warning of floods.

To mitigate these risks, the capacities of local, national and regional institutions could be strengthened, and the participation of stakeholders could be developed; in addition, it will be necessary to ensure political support, to ensure the establishment of financial mechanisms as well as a mechanism for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the action plan throughout the basin.

9.3.3. Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the action plan

The action plan includes a set of action coordinated and controlled, to be implemented to achieve the expected results. Monitoring and evaluation is an essential step to ensure that the achievements are in line with what is planned and with the requirements of the stakeholders. Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the action plan are a crucial element of overall coordination. They will be provided by the VBA as part of its overall work plan and guided by the obtained results.

Monitoring will be done through:

- Daily monitoring of the implementation of the action plan;
- Periodic monitoring of the progress of the implementation of the action plan.

The setting action plan implementation will also undergo at least two assessments as follows:

- The independent mid-term evaluation will be done at the end of the 3rd year of the implementation of the action plan. This evaluation will determine the progress made towards the achievement of the results and will identify any corrective measures along the way. It will focus on the success, effectiveness and timeliness of the implementation of the action plan. It will also highlight issues requiring decisions and actions; and will present the first lessons learned in terms of designing, implementing and managing the action plan. The findings of this review will be included as recommendations for the enhanced implementation of the action plan;
- The final independent evaluation will take place three months before the end of the implementation of the action plan. It will also study the impacts and the sustainability of the results, including the realization of the action plan. The final evaluation will make further recommendations for consolidating and scaling up the results and achievements resulting from the implementation of the action plan.

Monitoring and evaluation activities include, among others:

- Data collection and analysis;
- Field visits;
- Dissemination and sharing of information;
- Capacity building of stakeholders in monitoring and evaluation;
- Setting up a learning and accountability mechanism.

All monitoring and evaluation activities will be carried out in close collaboration with technical and financial partners at country and transboundary levels of the Volta basin.

9.3.4. The funding strategy

It is expected that the implementation of the action plan we will lead to a substantial improvement in the effective participation of women and vulnerable groups in the IFRM and the E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin.

The funding strategy will be based on one or more of the following approaches:

- The contribution of VBA Member States to financing the implementation of the action plan through their national budget;
- The contribution of the decentralized communities to the financing of the activities of the action plan via their budgets for development or through the channel of decentralized cooperation;
- The preparation of regional, national and local projects to support the effective participation of women and vulnerable groups in the IFRM and E2E-EWS-FF processes in the Volta basin;
- The contribution of ongoing and forthcoming projects and programs for development in the basin;
- The financing of certain actions by VBA partners according to their flexibility;
- The involvement of technical and financial partners and supporting institutions (NGOs, etc.) through multilateral, bilateral and decentralized cooperations.

In this context, it would be necessary to: (i) identify the various sources of funding (internal, external, etc.) and the conditions and methods to access these sources, and (ii) formulate the strategic directions and actions for mobilizing financial resources for the implementation of the action plan.