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SPACE APPLICATION TO SUPPORT THE PLAN OF IMPLEMENTATION OF  
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# “Enhancing Participation of Women in Decision-Making on Water Resources Management”

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# Introduction

- **The coinage of the topic of this Panel discussion is most acceptable to me.**
- **Globally, there is inadequate participation by women, in the management of water resources.**
- **Unfortunately, most of these sectors are controlled by men of all ages.**
- **Specific statements have been made for gender equity or particularly, women participation in developmental programmes in past decade at campaigns, fora, symposia, conferences, treatise and declarations**



- **It is also necessary for us all to have a rethink of the actions so far taken which should involve an overhaul, not only of the processes but also the premise on which women participation in resource management has been built**
- **The burden of resource management at the local / community levels lies more heavily on the women**
- **This undue resource management has inadvertently trained our women in the skillful management of resources; a skill that has not been properly integrated into the global resource planning, execution and management arena.**
- **Several commitments to gender equity have been expressed by most governments at different summits**



- **No tangible translation of these into practice**
- **Expression of intentions by governments in gender related issues, without budgetary commitments, training, accountability, planning and evaluation.**
- **As an illustration, of the almost 3,000 water actions in the World Water Council Actions Database only 3 percent (i.e. 68 actions) have an explicit gender component. Of these, only half are community based projects. The table on next slide shows water actions that promote women's involvement in water management**



# Water Actions That Promote Women's Involvement in Water Management

Type of Action	Number
Global gender mainstreaming & networking	10
Research on gender issues	9
Education and awareness raising for women	10
Women's involvement in institution and planning	5
Community-based projects	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>



➤ For effective water resources management through enhanced participation of women in decision-making, the areas listed below should be considered:

(i) Social and Cultural Consideration

Roles and responsibilities of men and women in the management of resources should be pre-determined

The status of women and must men not be seen as conflicting

Equal treatment will not necessarily produce equal outcomes and decision making capabilities.



**The interests and differences of men and women in the management of the resources should be negotiated,**

**ii Gender Mainstreaming of National and Local Policies Related to Water Resource Management**

**Plan of actions including legislation, policies or programme in water resources at all levels should be assessed based on their implications for men and women.**



- **Gender mainstreaming ensures efficiency, effectiveness, commitment to management programmes, protection and sustainability and empowers women, thereby contributing to poverty alleviation.**
- **Institutional changes required to facilitate gender sensitivity to close gap between policy definition and implementation.**
- **Water interventions should integrate gender analysis within the plan of action.**



### iii. Gender Mainstreaming of Projects to provide Water

- The phrase “Community involvement / participation” has been in use for Projects in the water sector, but often without the issue of gender mainstreaming being properly addressed
- For sustainable water resources management, therefore, Gender analysis with proper definition of roles for women and men in project design, planning and implementation must be advocated.



## **C Empowerment and involvement of women in decision making In Water Resources Management.**

- **Women contribute more than 50% of the world's population.**
- **Percentage higher in the developing countries where over 60% of them reside in the rural areas.**
- **More than half of the 1.2 billion people who do not have access to water are women and children especially the girl-child.**
- **“In many communities, women and girls use more than 8hours a day traveling for upward of 5km (at times 10-15km) to transport about 20 and 15 litres of water in each trip” (UNIFEM).**
- **Imposes constraint on their activities such as Education, Income generation, Politics, Leisure and Recreation.**



- **Many governments are beginning to recognize the benefits of women involvement in all aspects of water use**
- **Policies emanating from Africa now address gender concerns. These include New Partnership for Africa Development (NEPAD), African Ministerial Council on Water (AMCOW) and National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS) in Nigeria, all consider gender issues.**



## **iv Gender and Sanitation**

- **The benefits from improved access to water and sanitation are enormous.**
- **Sharp reductions in water-related mortality and morbidity**
- **Substantial increase in productivity, child development and quality of life.**
- **Such benefits are important as Women are saddled with responsibilities of household care and chores.**



## **E. Information Dissemination Among Communities on Local Water Resources**

- For an effective and sustainable water resources management at the local and community levels, proper information should be passed down to the people.
- Such information must be clearly understandable, useable, transferable and in languages understood in the community.
- In many developing countries where social and cultural practices have been ingrained in resource acquisition, control, distribution and management, a gender sensitive way of disseminating information must not be seen to create insecurities among any group.



- **Different groupings according to age, sex and educational level should be identified for training on the importance of water resources management.**
- **Organisation of indigenous art forms as means of communication of resource management is beneficial and removes problems**
- **Ensuring that everyone has some conceptual and possible analytical experience in resource management is important.**
- **Training at various levels to be encouraged and should include gender awareness, social analysis techniques, in areas where women are under – represented.**



## **V. Differences Between Women and Men in:**

### **a) Access to Information**

- **Function of education, exposure, environment and culture**
- **Cultures denying women education deny their access to information. “Hence the less educated, the less access to information”**
- **In many developing countries, Male children are usually given the first option for formal education in the midst of limited family resources.**



## **b) Physical work**

- **Physiologically men are different from women.**
- **“Women (in the men controlled world) are the weaker sex” ?**
- **In most cultures, women take care of day to day chores at home, fetching water, farm work etc.**
- **One therefore wonders who indeed is actually doing more of the physical work?.**



## **c) Contributions in time and cash**

- Women have remained educationally disadvantaged in comparison with their male counterparts**
- This low level of education translates to the type of employment available and the cash at their disposal.**
- By their traditional role at homes and the time spent on managing water resources, it is clearly evident that the women contribute more time in this regard.**



## d) Decision-making

- **The low level of education of women precludes them from contributing towards policy, decision making**
- **Few women with formal education are rarely given opportunity for decision making**
- **Usually they get crowded out and denied such positions of authority not because they are not capable but due to men's feeling of insecurity of dominance by women.**



## **e) Access to and control of resources and benefits**

- Ownership of property is barred by cultural inhibitions**
- Men and boys are usually given more opportunities for high yielding business and enterprises, as they are often regarded as bread winners in the home**
- Business under the sole control of men with few women entrepreneurs.**
- Societal/cultural barriers militate against women's access to control resources and the accruing benefits.**



# Thank You