



AMCOW Policy and Strategy

for Mainstreaming Gender in the Water Sector in Africa



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Preface

AMCOW recognition of the importance of mainstreaming gender in Africa's water sector first took root in 2003 at a pan-African water conference in Addis Ababa, where it became clear that women and girls are critical to the management of African water resources, especially in households. Yet at the time, there was insufficient gender promotion in the water sector in Africa.

At the First Africa Water Week in Tunis in 2008, the idea of developing the AMCOW Strategy for Mainstreaming Gender in Africa's Water Sector was born. It was observed that awareness of gender in the water resources and sanitation sector was low. Gender issues therefore needed to be better understood and addressed within AMCOW, by states, development banks and partners. Although good practices were used, knowledge was limited, and there were no gender monitoring tools at a regional level. All agreed that much could be gained through enhanced learning, good practice exchange and better national and regional monitoring of gender impacts in the sector.

The milestones towards the AMCOW Policy and Strategy for Mainstreaming Gender in Africa's Water Sector were:

- Addis Ababa, 2003: PANAFCON meeting, where, with MDG and WSSD targets in mind, it was agreed that gender concerns be acknowledged through an AMCOW consultation process.
- Entebbe, November 2004: AMCOW Chair, Hon. Maria Mutagamba highlighted the need for women to participate in water and sanitation issues as a God given mandate.
- Tunis, 2008: Stakeholders with Hon. Maria Mutagamba form task force to formulate gender mainstreaming strategy under the umbrella of AMCOW.
- Entebbe, October 2008: Ugandan government, NGOs, civil society, UN agencies and Nile Basin Initiative country representatives, meet to draw up a work agenda for the task force.
- Entebbe, June 2009: Task force creates first version of Gender Mainstreaming Strategy.
- Mombasa, September 2009: English speaking African countries review and refine the objectives of the draft Strategy.
- Dakar, September 2009: Francophone speaking countries review and refine the objectives of the draft Strategy.
- Johannesburg, November 2009: AMCOW ministers and the TAC endorse the draft and commission the final Strategy.

Since Tunis, over 40 African countries have endorsed the initiative. We hope that over the next five years the Strategy will impact decisively on the sector, and ultimately on the lives of women, men and children who access and manage water services in Africa.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'M. Mutagamba'.

Hon. Ms. Maria Mutagamba
Minister for Water and Environment
Uganda



Foreword

It gives me great pleasure, as the new President of AMCOW, to oversee the launch of the Policy and Strategy for Mainstreaming Gender in Africa's Water Sector, as a common framework for addressing gender in the sector. We as AMCOW have committed ourselves "to ensure that gender concerns are taken into account in policy formulation in all sectors of water and sanitation, including harmonisation of policies and laws and domestication of international treaties to create equity and equality".

Our commitment is crucial because in spite of the central role played by women on water and sanitation issues in the African family, they still have a very limited role in public and private decision-making when managing water resources, as well as unequal access to water for domestic and productive uses. Equal access can open up major new opportunities for rural and peri-urban women in Africa, like in horticulture, irrigation, livestock, fisheries and small-scale enterprise. Even something as simple as sanitation designs can make a difference to the dignity of schoolgirls who often decide not to attend school during menstrual periods due to lack of privacy. In addition, studies have shown that equal involvement of both genders correlates with improved water sustainability, and improved transparency as well as governance in resources management.

All African countries will be encouraged to adopt and report on the broad seven point Strategy to Mainstream Gender, and tailor objectives to specific needs and country realities. As a first step, countries are urged to ensure the presence of Ministry gender advisors to work in partnership with national multi-stakeholder groups. The national working groups will ensure the creation of an enabling environment, the availability of assessment and capacity building tools, the facilitation of action plans and the provision of feedback on progress in-country, and to AMCOW, at a sub-regional and regional level.

Let us all partner to realise the vision of this Strategy which is "Africa where men, women and vulnerable groups are empowered to access and manage water resources and sanitation in an integrated, equitable and sustainable manner".

Mrs. BEE Molewa, MP.

Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs, Republic of South Africa

President of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW), 2010 - 2011



Acknowledgements

AMCOW would like to thank those who have facilitated the various inputs that have resulted in this Strategy. Firstly, we thank the leadership provided by the Hon. Maria Mutagamba, Minister of Water and Environment in Uganda and AMCOW representative for the Strategy formulation initiative. We also recognize the role played by Hon. Mrs. BEE Molewa, Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs, Republic of South Africa and President of AMCOW (2010 - 2011). Without their unwavering vision, the Strategy would not be where it is today. From within AMCOW, guidance was provided towards securing endorsement of the Strategy, which was given in December 2009. For this thanks are extended to Charles Ngangoue, former President AMCOW TAC.

Working alongside AMCOW officials and the Hon. Mutagamba of Uganda, was an inter-agency task force that provided support in pivotal ways and at different times during the past two years, and was an excellent example of an effective and fruitful cross agency partnership. The task force comprised the Global Water Partnership Eastern Africa, the Water and Sanitation Program Africa, the United Nations Environment Program, the Gender and Water Alliance, and the Nile Basin Initiative.

Representatives from AMCOW's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), government ministries and international agencies gave direct contributions to the content of the Strategy. Strategy formulation workshops were held to ensure its relevance for stakeholders at country level. The Strategy has been peer reviewed by a wide range of individuals and institutions that gave extremely useful comments, suggestions and inputs.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bai Mass Taal'.

Bai Mass Taal
AMCOW Executive Secretary

Executive summary

The AMCOW Policy and Strategy for Mainstreaming Gender in Africa's Water Sector was developed in the context of the African Union's efforts to support gender mainstreaming, within development sectors including the water sector. The policy serves as a guiding framework for AMCOW, AU member states and other stakeholders, to mainstream gender in their sector policies, programs, actions and investments.

The purpose of this Strategy is to provide a reference point whilst recognizing varied levels of progress from country to country. The assumption is that countries will tailor implementation of gender mainstreaming goals based on the realities of local context and existing experience. The Strategy seeks to build on experiences in the sharing of good practices, to enhance accountability and encourage adherence to commitments and minimum standards for gender mainstreaming in the region.

The Gender Strategy has identified seven mutually reinforcing objectives that should be pursued by all member states, partners and water authorities, as summarized below:

Strategy objectives

1. Policy positions on gender in the water sector in Africa supported and strengthened through policy formulation and implementation
2. Adequate human and financial resources allocated to gender mainstreaming through strategic resource mobilization activities
3. Gender approach to implement project interventions at all levels within the water sector, including economic empowerment through equal access to water for productive purposes developed and adopted
4. Strategic research and collection of operational information on gender undertaken, produced, shared and used by stakeholders to inform evidence based responses
5. Human and institutional capacity developed to support gender equality interventions at all levels
6. Mechanisms to promote cooperation and coordination to mainstream gender in the water sector strengthened
7. Monitoring and evaluation system and indicators to support gender equality interventions in the water sector developed and implemented.

Implementation

The AMCOW Policy and Strategy for Mainstreaming Gender in Africa's Water Sector will be implemented under the auspices of AMCOW. AMCOW is the custodian of the strategy and will leverage progress through its structures in benchmarking, monitoring, lesson exchange, and partnership. At country level, implementation will be under the leadership of the ministry responsible for water, in partnership with water related line ministries, international sector agencies, development partners, research institutions, women's groups, civil society, and sector stakeholders.

Acronyms and abbreviations

ADB	African Development Bank
AMCEN	African Ministerial Council on the Environment
AMCOW	African Ministers' Council on Water
ANEW	African Civil Society Network on Water and Sanitation
ANBO	African Network of Basin Organizations
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CSO	Civil society organization
EAC	East African Community
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EPG	Eminent Persons Group
FEMA	Forum for Energy Ministers of Africa
GMS	Gender Management System
GWA	Gender and Water Alliance
GWP	Global Water Partnership
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IRC	International Resource Centre
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
MAP	Methodology for Participatory Assessment
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NBI	Nile Basin Initiative
NGO	Non-government organization
PANAFCON	Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water
PSO	Private sector organization
REC	Regional Economic Community
RBO	River Basin Organization
SADC	Southern African Development Community

STC	Specialized Technical Committee
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
UN	United Nations
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
WCW	World Conference on Women
WGDD	Women and Gender Development Directorate of the African Union
WHO	World Health Organization
WSP	Water and Sanitation Program
WSS	Water and Sanitation Sector
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development

Chapter One

The AMCOW gender policy

1.1 Background

Ministers responsible for water in 41 African countries met in Abuja, Nigeria in April 2002, and decided to form an African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) to promote cooperation, security, socio-economic development and poverty eradication through better management of water resources and provision of water supply services. AMCOW's mission is to provide political leadership, policy direction and advocacy in the provision, use and management of water resources for sustainable social and economic development and for the maintenance of African ecosystems. AMCOW is actively engaged in keeping the state of Africa's water under review and in promoting actions of common interest to African stakeholders.

At their second Extraordinary Session in 2004, the African Union (AU) Heads of State and Governments declared their support for AMCOW and its role in developing plans and policies related to the management of all water resources in Africa.

AMCOW's major functions are to facilitate regional and international cooperation through the coordination of policies and actions among African countries on water resources issues; to review and mobilize additional financing for the water sector in Africa; and to provide a mechanism for monitoring the implementation progress of major regional and global water resources and water supply and sanitation initiatives. As a Specialized Technical Committee (STC) of the AU, AMCOW does not implement any activities. It provides a forum for dialogue on water issues with UN agencies and other partners, and promotes

government participation in regional studies of climate change and development of observation networks. It also facilitates information exchange and aims to develop policies and strategies to address water issues facing the continent.

1.2 International and regional commitments on gender and water

African member states have made commitments to support equality between women and men and to use a gender perspective in all programs and projects, including those related to water and the environment. Specific commitments include:

1. Follow-up to the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (1981-1990) through consultations in New Delhi in 1990. Although these consultations were limited regarding gender issues, there was a clear call for an increase in women's decision-making and management of water resources.
2. The Dublin Statement (1992), endorsed by over 100 countries, recognizes that women play a central part in the provision, management, and safeguarding of water resources. It acknowledges the pivotal role of women as providers and users of water and guardians of the living environment and advocates for this reality to be reflected in institutional arrangements for the development and management of water resources.



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3. Principle 20 of the Rio Declaration (1992) states that “Women have a vital role in environmental management and development. Their full participation is therefore essential to achieve sustainable development”. Agenda 21 (1992) contains a chapter on women and sustainable development (Chapter 24) and a chapter on water management (Chapter 18).
4. The Beijing Platform for Action (1995) highlighted environmental issues as one critical area of concern: “gender inequalities in the management and safeguarding of natural resources and in the safeguarding of the environment”. Three strategic objectives were agreed: To involve women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels; to integrate gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programs for sustainable development; and to strengthen or establish mechanisms to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women.
5. The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), para 25(a), includes agreement by governments to: “... support capacity building for water and sanitation infrastructure and services development, ensuring that such infrastructure and services meet the needs of the poor and are gender-sensitive.”
6. In December 2003 the General Assembly proclaimed (resolution 58/217), the period 2005 to 2015 as the International Decade for Action, ‘Water for Life’, and called for a focus on the implementation of water-related programs and projects, “whilst striving to ensure women’s participation and involvement in water-related development efforts ”.
7. The Millennium Development Goals, which have the same time frame as the ‘Water for Life’ Decade, include 2015 targets on gender equality and the empowerment of women, as well as on safe water and sanitation.
8. The African Water Vision 2025 calls for an “equitable and sustainable use and management of water resources for poverty alleviation, socio-economic development, regional cooperation, and the environment”¹. Targets to achieve the vision include the mainstreaming of gender in water resources management, with the vision calling on women to take on key positions and functions in decision-making on water issues and for stakeholder involvement in water resources management by, in particular, women and youth.² The vision encourages

¹http://www.netssafutorial.com/fileadmin/DATA_CD/05_Step5/SF28_African_Water_Vision_2025.pdf

²UN Water/Africa (2000). The Africa Water Vision for 2025: Equitable and Sustainable Use of Water for Socioeconomic Development.

30% gender mainstreamed national water policies by the end of 2005 and 100% gender sensitive national water policies by 2015.

9. During the Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water (PANAFCON), held in December 2003, African water ministers committed to ensure that gender concerns are taken into account. This would be done through a recognized process of consultation with AMCOW, in policy formulation in all sectors of water, sanitation, human settlements, agriculture and food security, including harmonization of policies and laws and the domestication of international treaties, to create equity and equality by 2005³. This commitment relates to the target set in the African Water Vision 2025.
10. On 28 July 2010, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on the human right to access clean water and sanitation. In the key provisions of the resolution the General Assembly "Declares the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights."
11. This AMCOW Policy/Strategy to Mainstream Gender in the Water Sector in Africa is based on all the above commitments. The Policy and Strategy are essential not only to support water ministers to implement international gender and water commitments, specifically those made during PANAFCON, but also to achieve gender equality in the water sector.

1.3 Rationale for AMCOW gender mainstreaming policy and strategy

A third of all African nations are suffering from water scarcity⁴ and water stress⁵ (between

1000 and 1500 cubic meters per capita). The quantitative and qualitative manifestations of this are emerging as major development challenges for many countries (ECA, 2006)⁶. More specifically, 14 countries in Africa are already experiencing water stress; another 11 countries are expected to join them by 2025, at which time nearly 50 percent of Africa's predicted population of 1.45 billion people will face water stress or scarcity⁷. It is estimated that nearly 51 percent (300 million people) in sub-Saharan countries lack access to a supply of safe water and 41 percent lack adequate sanitation. Nearly 330 million of these people live in rural areas. Consequently, rural populations are burdened to a greater extent by preventable water and sanitation-related diseases and suffer greater deprivation from women and children not attending school or engaging in economic activities due to the time and effort needed to fetch water.⁸ In almost all rural communities in Africa, it is primarily women and girls who collect water, protect water sources, maintain water systems, and store water. Women spend a significant amount of time with these activities and they also determine the use of water. Although women make decisions at the household level that have direct impact on the health of children and other family members, they are denied the same opportunity to do so in the public sphere.

A quick gender analysis of the water sector in Africa shows that women play a key role with regard to the multiple uses of water in and around households, in the use and management of water, in agriculture, and in small-scale activities that allow both men and women to grow more crops, vegetables and to rear livestock. It should be noted that women's water requirements extend beyond domestic needs. Productive uses of water at the household level include a range of small-scale activities that enable poor men and women to grow subsistence food, rear livestock and undertake informal micro-enterprises. Without access to sufficient and reliable water for productive uses in and around the household,

³UN Water/ Africa, (2004) Outcomes and Recommendations of the Pan African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water (PANAFCON), Addis Ababa, December 8-13 2003

⁴Water scarcity describes the relationship between demand for water and its availability, whereby demands for water for domestic, agriculture, and industry purposes exceed its availability.

⁵Water stress is a symptom of scarcity which may manifest itself as a decline in service levels, crop failure, food insecurity, increasing conflict over sectoral usage, etc.

⁶ www.uneca.org/sdd/egm2009/AfricaReviewReport-on-SCP.pdf

⁷ <http://assets.panda.org/downloads/waterinafricaeng.pdf> p. 28

⁸Africa Development Bank Strategic Plan 2003 - 2007

people are excluded from a range of options that would otherwise enable them to secure their sources of food and income. The Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)⁹ approach recognizes that water is an economic, social, and environmental good that should be equally distributed to both men and women. Water supply services and infrastructure are economic activities; women's lack of rights to land and water, as well as on development efforts, often negatively affects their livelihoods.

The global commitment to "water for all" made gender empowerment so crucial that in 1999, over 100 nations endorsed the Dublin principles. Many African countries subscribe to the Dublin principles, and have adopted IWRM as their vision and approach to water resource management (SADC, 2005; World Water Council, 2006). These basic rules affirmed water not only as an "economic good," but also as finite and essential to life. They give priority to privatization, water pricing, and cost recovery. Both the Dublin principles and the Environmental Summit in Rio reinforced the role of women as central to the provision, management, and safeguarding of water. However, the gap between these economic goals and the challenges of water distribution as it relates to gender inequality are yet to be fully addressed. Though women are defined as essential providers and users of water, the social and cultural roles of women have not been adequately analyzed, while their ability to pay for water is often assumed but seldom validated.

Women's control over natural resources is limited because of societal values and practices that determine men as the 'guardians' of property, the 'heads' of the household and the decision-makers in the public sphere. Control over resources further depends on factors such as ethnicity and socio-economic class, despite realizing that control over natural resources is limited for women, particularly in Africa. As a result of women's limited participation in decision-making, valuable knowledge and expertise is lost

and decision-making processes are likely to result in the failure of policies and programs.

In order to increase efficiency, impact and sustainability overall in the water sector, women need to take part in all levels of decision-making and make use of their knowledge. Women play a central role in the provision, management and safeguarding of water resources and they make great contributions in the water sector, yet "women are absent from the mainstream of decision-making processes that relate to water management" (Agrawal 1991; Fortmann and Nabane 1992)¹⁰.

During the first Africa Water Week in Tunis in March 2005, AMCOW noted that it had become increasingly clear that awareness of, and capacity in Africa to detect and respond to gender issues in the water sector was low, resulting in inadequate action. It was also agreed that gender issues need to be better understood, articulated and addressed within AMCOW, by individual member states and by development banks and partners. Although there is a wealth of good practice implemented by governments and various sector agencies, existing knowledge and information is disparate and insufficiently shared. This is further compounded by an absence of tools and mechanisms to enable AMCOW to monitor gender actions at a regional level. As such, this policy seeks to facilitate a process where women, men and their communities are empowered to determine their destiny within the context of water resources management to:

- Address specific gender issues in integrated water resource management, trans-boundary waters, and water and sanitation
- Determine gender differentiated access to, use of, and control over water resources
- Address perceptions on the effectiveness of existing institutional arrangements to enhance equitable access, use and management of water resources by and for women and men, while recognizing that in most communities, water is treated as

⁹IWRM is a process that promotes coordinated development and management of water, land and related resources in order to maximize the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of the vital ecosystems.

¹⁰Agrawal, B. 1991. 'Engendering the environment debate: Lessons from the Indian subcontinent', Discussion Paper 8, (CASID) Centre for Advanced Study of International Development Distinguished Lecture Series, Michigan, Michigan State University.

Fortmann, L. and N. Nabane. 1992. 'The Fruits of their labour: gender, property and trees in Mhondoro district', Occasional Paper Series – NRM 6/1992, Harare, Centre for Applied Social Sciences Publications, University of Zimbabwe.

an economic good only when it is being controlled by men, but as a social one when it is used and managed by women (Agrawal 1991).

By addressing these issues, this policy is intended to assist governments and water ministries and integrate a gender perspective in the design, development and implementation of national strategies and programs that are aimed at the sustainable management of water resources (IUCN 2005)¹¹.

1.4 Purpose of the AMCOW gender policy

The AMCOW gender policy is developed in the context of the AU's efforts to support gender mainstreaming within its organs and in Africa's development sectors, including water and sanitation. The policy serves as a framework for AMCOW, AU member states and other stakeholders on mainstreaming gender in sector policies, programs, actions and investments. It provides stakeholders with support on actions and approaches that incorporate the diverse needs and concerns of women and men, and thereby lead to equitable access, use and management of water resources in Africa. The gender policy is based on international and continental commitments to achieve gender equality in the water sector and seeks to assist member states to meet these commitments. The policy addresses the following aspects:

- Institutional strengthening for gender mainstreaming in the Africa Water Sector at the continental, national and sub-national levels
- Actions for implementation and achievement of the AMCOW gender commitments
- Partnership strengthening for an AMCOW action plan of mainstreaming gender issues in water sector plans
- Enhanced sensitization on the importance of mainstreaming gender in water management at all levels (regional, basin, national, local).



1.4.1 Policy vision

The vision of the AMCOW Policy and Strategy for Mainstreaming Gender in Africa's Water Sector (the Strategy) as adopted by AMCOW from Africa Water Vision 2025, is "an Africa where there is equitable and sustainable use and management of water resources for poverty reduction, socio-economic development, regional cooperation, and the environment".

1.4.2 Policy goals

- To achieve gender equality and equity as an integral part of AMCOW's socio-economic development and environmental sustainability goals
- To enhance efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability in water resources management, trans-boundary and sanitation management in Africa.

1.4.3 Strategic objectives of the policy

- To promote implementation of the African Ministerial Commitments on gender and water (PANAFCON 2003)¹²
- To initiate policy dialogue aimed at developing concrete action plans for mainstreaming gender in all activities developed in national water sector plans

¹¹IUCN 2005. *Gender mainstreaming in wetlands ecosystems and natural resource management: Bridging the gap: Gender and Conservation in Zimbabwean Projects*. Harare: IUCN

¹²Pan African Conference in Addis Ababa, to discuss how to meet Africa's water goals.

- To create awareness of the importance of mainstreaming gender in water management to improve women's lives and create sustainable development
- To guide member states on the development and implementation of a national Gender Management System (GMS) that is relevant to the water sector.
- Water development and management should be based on a participatory approach, involving users, planners and policy-makers at all levels
- Women play a central role in the provision, management and safeguarding of water
- Water has an economic value in all its competing uses and should be recognized as an economic good, taking into account affordability and equity criteria.

1.4.4 Policy principles

The following are principles of IWRM adopted by AMCOW in the development of this Strategy:

- Freshwater is a finite and vulnerable resource, essential to sustain life, development and the environment

Chapter Two

Conceptual framework

2.1 The historical framework of gender

Women and gender approaches in development have evolved over the past decades. Until the early 1970s, development policies addressed the needs of poor women entirely in the context of their role as wives and mothers. Known as the 'welfare' approach, the focus was on mother and child health, childcare, and nutrition. It was assumed that the benefits of macro-economic strategies oriented towards modernization and growth would trickle down to the poor, and that poor women would benefit as the economic position of their husbands improved. Women were passive recipients of benefits. Water and sanitation services were defined in the context of health care and hygiene, which were seen as women's responsibilities.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the Women in Development (WID) approach aimed to integrate women into the existing development process by targeting them, often in women-specific activities. Women were usually passive recipients in WID projects, which often emphasized making women more efficient producers and increasing their income. Although many WID projects improved health, income, or resources in the short term, they did not transform unequal relationships, and a significant number were not sustainable. A shortcoming of WID projects was that they did not consider women's multiple roles.

From the late 1980s on, the Gender and Development (GAD) approach was developed with the objective of removing disparities in

social, economic, and political balances between women and men as a pre-condition for achieving people-centered development. Much of the work in the water sector today is informed by this approach. However, there are many perspectives in this approach but no single blueprint for enabling equality and equity in water resources management. Both WID and GAD approaches are still in use. In recent years, a gender and empowerment approach has attempted to transform existing gender relations by stressing women's self-empowerment.

2.2 The gender management system

In the 1990s, the United Nations agreed on gender mainstreaming as the approach that the development community should use to achieve gender equality. Accordingly, member states are expected to implement this strategy, building on their national policies and strategic plans, where applicable. The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) has identified gender mainstreaming as being relevant in three linked spheres: in structures, policies and procedures of member states; in their programs; and in the impact of their work towards increased gender equality in the respective countries (Shalkwyk et al. 1996. p 3)¹³. The implementation of this strategy should be informed by all the steps (identified in the spheres) and incorporate



findings from the gender analysis into policy and program decisions, so as to contribute to equality of outcome for men and women in member countries. In addition advocacy, networking and knowledge management will remain central cross-cutting approaches.

The gender mainstreaming approach focuses on the fact that women and men have different life courses and that development policies affect them differently. It addresses these differences by integrating gender considerations into development planning at all levels and in all sectors; it focuses less on providing equal treatment for men and women (since equal treatment does not necessarily result in equal outcomes), and more on taking whatever steps

are necessary to ensure equal outcomes. It recognizes that the empowerment of women can only be achieved by taking into account the relationships between women and men (GMS Handbook, p 18)¹⁴. Ideally, member states should have in place a conceptual framework to guide, plan, monitor and evaluate the process of mainstreaming gender into all areas of their work, to achieve greater gender equality and equity within the context of sustainable development.

To achieve gender equality and effectively institutionalize gender mainstreaming in regional and national development, the AU's Gender Policy encourages the establishment of a working Gender Management System (GMS)¹⁵. The GMS is an integrated network of structures, mechanisms

¹³Schalkwyk J, Thomas B, and Woroniuk J, 1996, *Mainstreaming: A strategy for achieving equality between women and men*. SIDA: Stockholm.

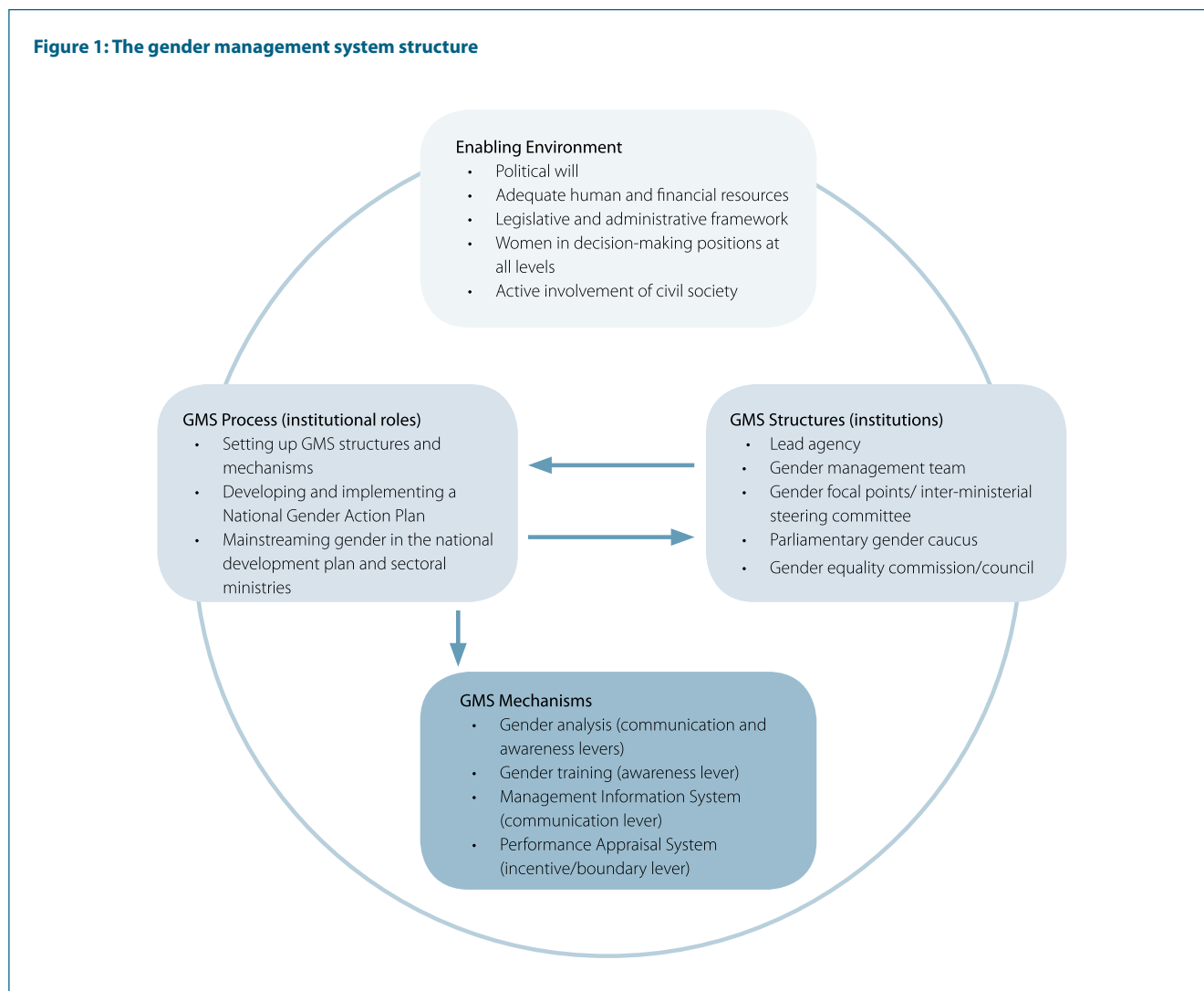
¹⁴The.commonwealth.org/gender

¹⁵The Gender Management System was developed by the Commonwealth Secretariat to guide Commonwealth governments to implement the 1995 Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender and Development. It is aimed at ensuring that nation states establish national structures

and processes designed to make governments more gender-aware, increase the number of women in decision-making roles within and outside government, facilitate the formulation of gender-sensitive policies, plans and programs, and promote the advancement of gender equality in the broader civil society. The function of a GMS is to advance gender equality and equity, by promoting political will, forging a partnership

of stakeholders including government, private sector and civil society, building capacity and sharing good practice.

As of February 2009, 70 percent of member states had developed gender policies, yet few of them had been implemented. Some states are in the process of implementing declarations and have developed action plans, and strategic plans to



implement their commitments. A few of them have established Gender Management Systems, (AU Gender Policy, 2010. p. 21)¹⁶. To effectively mainstream gender in regional and national development, the AU Gender Policy, under its objective 4, seeks to develop a GMS within the AU and promote its adoption within other AU organs, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and member states (AU Gender Policy, 2010. p. 17)¹⁷. The GMS adopts a stakeholder approach

to gender mainstreaming and is based on the recognition that the state is not the only player trying to achieve gender equality and equity, and must work in partnership with other social partners and stakeholders. As such, the GMS is based on three broad principles: empowerment, integration and accountability, all of which apply to the four pillars of gender mainstreaming, as shown in figure 1.

and processes that support gender equity at national level across sectors.

¹⁶<http://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:7BiNt5TsXpwJ:www.africa-union.org/root/au/auc/departments/ge/>



By adopting the GMS, this Strategy will contribute to the 2025 water vision for Africa. It will:

1. Create a consensus on common strategies and standards for achieving MDGs in a gender responsive way
2. Support an enhanced capacity of member states to guide the quality and impact of regional and national implementation towards the MDGs and the WSSD Plan on Implementation
3. Support international, continental and national political commitments for achieving AMCOW goals on gender
4. Support member states to establish the mechanisms for mainstreaming gender in pursuit of the MDG targets relating to water, sanitation and the WSSD Plan on Implementation.

Chapter Three

The AMCOW gender mainstreaming strategy

Gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels (global, national, institutional, community, household). It is a Strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences integral to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality by transforming the mainstream.

This Strategy sets out the guiding parameters for stakeholders within the water sector in Africa. It allows stakeholders to design their own gender priorities based on existing strategies and action plans, to meet the Strategy's overall objective. It is expected that this Strategy will catalyze improved gender responsive water governance through: strengthened and more gender sensitive government policy, planning systems and financial frameworks, including social delivery in the water sector; strengthened capacities of women and men to participate in policy planning, reporting, monitoring and evaluation of water sector programmes and projects; and lastly, promoting greater availability and use of gender relevant data to achieve the above.

3.1 Strategy objectives

The Gender Strategy has identified seven objectives that are mutually reinforcing and should be pursued concomitantly by member states and water authorities:

1. Policy positions on gender in the water sector in Africa supported and strengthened through policy formulation and implementation
2. Adequate human and financial resources allocated to gender mainstreaming through strategic resource mobilisation activities
3. Gender approach to implement project interventions at all levels within the water sector, including economic empowerment through equal access to water for productive purposes developed and adopted
4. Strategic research and collection of operational information on gender undertaken, produced, shared and used by stakeholders to inform evidence based responses
5. Human and institutional capacity developed to support gender equality interventions at all levels
6. Mechanisms to promote cooperation and coordination to mainstream gender in the water sector strengthened
7. Monitoring and Evaluation system and indicators to support gender equality interventions in the water sector developed and implemented.

As the custodian of the Strategy, AMCOW will provide the political direction and leverage for implementing and coordinating the intervention efforts of various partners (as described further in section 3.2.3 'Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders', below). Actions identified for each strategy objective are elaborated as follows:

Strategic objective 1: Policy positions on gender in the water sector in Africa supported and strengthened through policy formulation and implementation

Actions for achieving this objective:

- (a) Secure high level commitments to gender equality and water at all levels by:
 - Building the capacity of stakeholders, including governments and media around gender and water issues
 - Raising awareness of and advocate for gender responsive water management
 - Advocating for inclusion of gender in high level natural resource management institutions' curricula.
- (b) Support a gender responsive policy, and a legislative and administrative framework for the water sector by:
 - Reviewing policies, and legal and institutional frameworks in the water sector and ensuring gender perspectives are incorporated therein
 - Establishing mechanisms that enable vulnerable people to have a voice in policy formulation
 - Strengthening the human and financial resources of the executive secretariat and the member countries of AMCOW to ensure better advocacy and monitoring of actions through policy makers.
- (c) Promote the participation of women in decision-making positions in the water sector by:
 - Developing and supporting leadership training programs for women
 - Developing and supporting technical training programs for women.
- (d) Actively engage and coordinate with all stakeholders in the water sector by:
 - Organizing study and familiarization tours to provide relevant stakeholders with exposure on good practices in gender and water issues
 - Organizing stakeholder and consultative forums on water management
 - Undertaking networking initiatives.

Strategic objective 2: Adequate human and financial resources allocated to gender mainstreaming through strategic resource mobilization activities

Actions for achieving this objective:

- Develop country-specific gender mainstreaming requirements at levels that will enable the development of initial or zero-budgets, to act as a basis for resource mobilization
- Undertake participatory and gender inclusive resources mobilization
- Ensure the technical capacity of stakeholders engaged in gender mainstreaming
- Train on gender responsive budgeting.

Strategic objective 3: Gender approach to implement project interventions at all levels within the water sector developed and adopted;

Actions for achieving this objective:

- (a) Undertake gender analysis as an integral part of planning, design and implementation activities (communication and awareness lever) by:
 - Conducting gender assessments and analyses
 - Conducting baseline surveys.
- (b) Conduct gender training (awareness lever) by:
 - Organizing study and familiarization tours to provide relevant stakeholders with exposure on good practices in gender and water issues
 - Providing relevant stakeholders with training on business skills in the water sector
 - Training civil society, media, AMCOW organs and other stakeholders on their role in gender mainstreaming in the water sector
 - Engaging children in educational gender activities in the sector.
- (c) Promote economic empowerment interventions (communication and awareness levers) by:
 - Developing and supporting programs for equal access to water for productive purposes
 - Developing pilot projects aimed at equal access to water for productive purposes
 - Documenting lessons learnt and good practices in economic empowerment of women in water sector programs
 - Replicating, scaling-up and institutionalizing good gender practice at all levels
 - Developing guidelines for integration of gender in water for production.

- (d) Develop and implement Gender and Water Action Plans that:
- Undertake gender responsive community action plans on water projects
 - Mainstream gender in the national and lower level water sector plans
 - Design water programs and interventions that are gender responsive
 - Establish country-specific guidelines for mainstreaming gender in the water sector.

Strategic objective 4: Strategic research and collection of operational information on gender undertaken, produced, shared and used by stakeholders to inform evidence based responses;

Actions for achieving this objective:

- Develop and promote adoption of a research framework to guide water sector stakeholders on generating sex-disaggregated data
- Allocate adequate financial and human resources to gender and water research
- Coordinate joint research activities within Africa
- Develop tools and methodologies to support strategy implementation of similar activities in trans-boundary or regional blocks
- Conduct research to create new knowledge on gender and water
- Disseminate and share knowledge on mainstreaming gender in the water sector.

Strategic objective 5: Human and institutional capacity developed to support gender equality interventions at all levels;

Actions for achieving this objective:

- (a) Support lead agency, gender management team, gender focal points/ inter-ministerial steering committee, parliamentary gender caucus and gender equality commission or council to:
- Advocate for the establishment of structures and mechanisms that will coordinate, monitor and report on progress of implementation of the Gender Strategy
 - Recruit male and female eminent persons to advance the Gender Strategy.
- (b) Set up GMS structures and mechanisms to implement gender actions in national water plans (as per the structures noted in Figure1 and described further in section 3.2 'Institutional framework and mechanisms for implementation', below).

Strategic objective 6: Mechanisms to promote cooperation and coordination to mainstream gender in the water sector strengthened;

Actions for achieving this objective:

- Establish strategic partnerships for gender strategy implementation
- Develop gender mainstreaming learning platforms at regional and national levels
- Establish twinning programmes at regional and national levels
- Organize study and familiarization tours to provide relevant stakeholders with exposure on good practices in gender and water issues.

Strategic objective 7: Monitoring and evaluation system and indicators to support gender equality interventions in the water sector developed and implemented.

- (a) Establish or strengthen a Gender Management Information System (communication lever) by:
- Improving existing databases
 - Developing an effective communication system at all levels.
- (b) Establish or Strengthen Performance Appraisal System (incentive/boundary lever) by:
- Developing a checklist of tools
 - Developing an M&E system for gender that provides input into the AMCOW reporting framework
 - Identifying key indicators and developing minimum standards for gender mainstreaming in the water sector
 - Providing training on M&E and report writing.



3.2 Institutional framework and mechanisms for implementation of the strategy

3.2.1 Proposed Structure of Implementation

The AMCOW Policy and Strategy for Mainstreaming Gender in Africa's Water Sector has adopted the broad guidelines outlined in the AU Gender Policy for the institutional framework to be used to implement this Strategy. The AU Gender Policy recommends that AU organs, Regional Economic Commissions (RECs) and member states consider establishing a GMS to suit the operational practices of member states. Recommended structures include executive management level for political leadership, gender management teams, a water sector lead agency, a gender lead agency, departmental or sector focal points, extra-mural focal points, public sector training and research institutions, gender technical commissions or expert committees, working groups and task forces.

In this regard, the implementation of the AMCOW Gender Mainstreaming Strategy calls for close collaboration with the Women and Gender Development Directorate (WGDD) of the African

Union Commission. The WGDD will provide technical support to assess progress and evaluate the performance of gender mainstreaming in the water sector. In addition, AMCOW, as the relevant specialized technical committee of the African Union and the ministerial body responsible for preparing action plans and reports on the water sector, will provide overall policy guidance for gender mainstreaming in liaison with other specialised technical committees, such as the African Ministerial Council on Environment (AMCEN), the Forum for Energy Ministers of Africa (FEMA) and the Ministerial Forum on Agriculture.

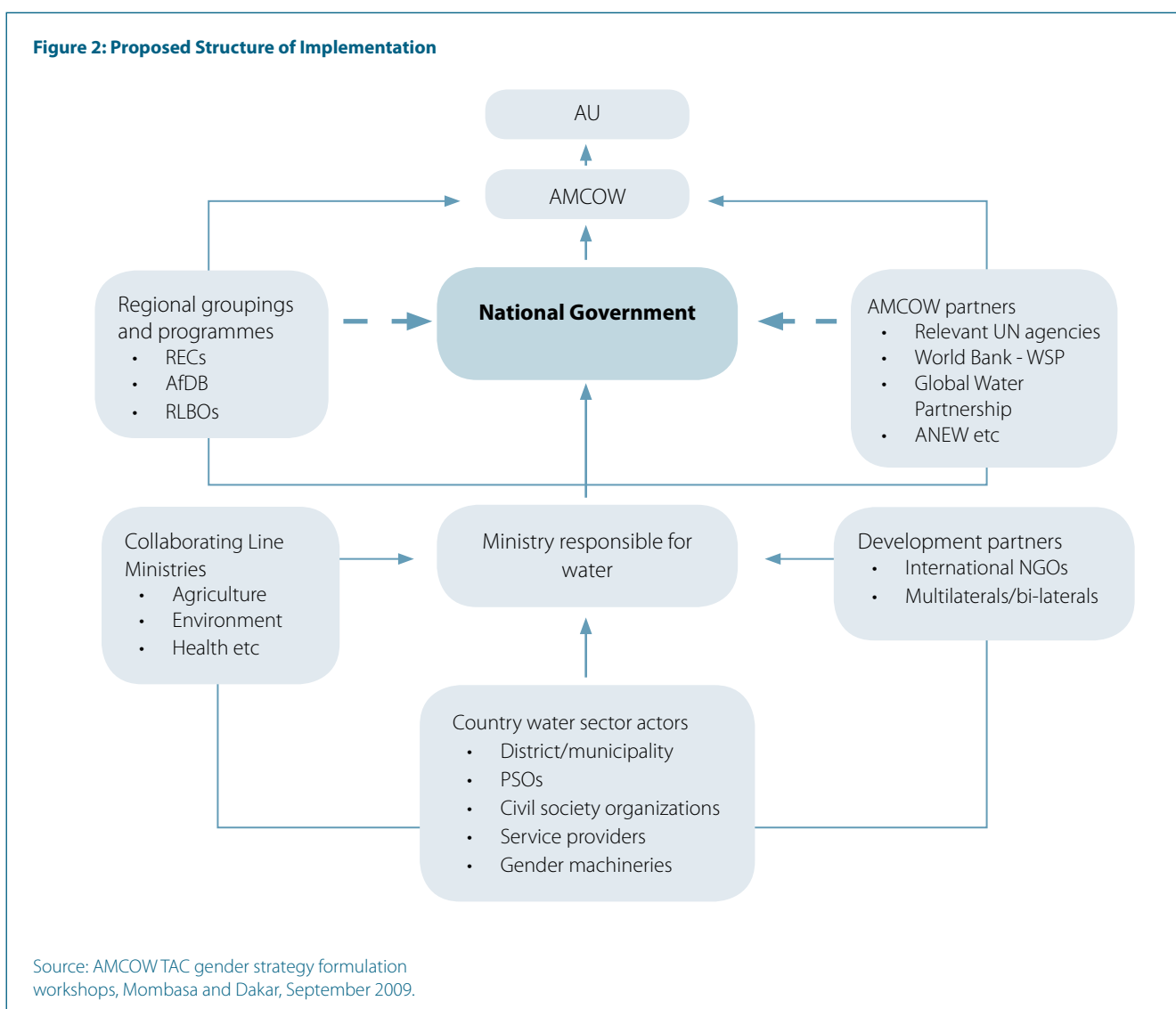
3.2.2 AMCOW institutional structure

The AMCOW Policy and Strategy for Mainstreaming Gender in Africa's Water Sector will take advantage of the existing AMCOW structures to enhance coherence and coordination and promote knowledge and learning on gender issues in the water sector in Africa. The institutional structure of AMCOW is made up of several political and technical entities at the regional and sub-regional levels, working together to achieve the objectives of AMCOW. The Governing Council serves as the principal inter-governmental body on water issues and is composed of all 53 African Ministers responsible for water affairs on the continent. The Executive Committee (EXCO) comprises the

President of the Council and 15 other members—three members elected from each of the five sub-regions of Africa on a rotational basis. The members are selected by the sub-regions.

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) comprises 25 technical experts, five each from the five sub-regions of Africa, who serve on a rotational basis. The sub-regions decide which countries and experts are to become members of the committee. The sub-regional committees consist of a ministerial committee and technical experts responsible for ensuring that arrangements

are in place for sub-regional coordination on AMCOW matters as well as providing inputs for the deliberations of the TAC. The secretariat is responsible for the day-to-day running and follow-up actions on the decisions of the council. The strategy unit provides the knowledge base for informed deliberations and decision-making of the council. The implementation framework provides an innovative means of leveraging existing resources while improving coordination of gender mainstreaming interventions in the sector as outlined in Figure 2:



The structure provides vertical and horizontal linkages between regional, national and sub-national levels. A gender focal point system should be established or strengthened to support the implementation of initiatives identified in this Strategy. Gender focal points will be identified by national governments to work at sub-regional and

regional levels, responsible for tracking gender actions and providing guidance and coordinating the interventions of various stakeholders and development actors committed to gender responsiveness in water policies and practices. A network organization that works on water and sanitation issues will be identified and tasked to

coordinate gender actions, working with the focal points and gender working groups in member states, as required.

This Strategy will support horizontal linkages at the regional level by promoting opportunities for joint activities and cross learning between RECs. It will also promote the involvement and collaboration of other stakeholders such as the private sector, civil society organizations and development partners. Gender focal points at the sub-regional level will track progress towards implementing the Strategy, consolidate the information and report back to the regional level. At the national level, the gender focal points will be responsible for the implementation of interventions highlighted in this Strategy. They will collaborate closely with multi-sectoral gender working groups (GWG), which include sub-national actors in the water sector.

3.2.3 Monitoring and evaluating institutional arrangements

The Strategy will use AMCOW's current institutional arrangements for reporting water actions to report also on gender actions¹⁸. AMCOW's monitoring framework is based on the use of national, sub-regional and regional structures and resources to implement interventions. Institutions, programs and initiatives at the local, national, sub-regional and regional levels are required to provide a single report to inform the report that AMCOW submits to the AU. Those undertaking gender actions highlighted in this Strategy will use the same format and frequency of reporting that addresses the requirements of AMCOW.

At the country and sub-regional levels, ministries and units responsible for water already exist in RECs and River Basin Organizations (RBOs), and these should be the hubs around which gender mainstreaming issues are handled. Reporting on gender actions will be submitted to the secretariat using AMCOW's reporting mechanism. Figure 3 shows the institutional arrangements for reporting water actions.

Figure 3: AMCOW's Institutional Arrangements for Reporting Water Actions¹⁹

	Country Level	Sub-regional Level	Regional Level	International Level
Outputs from reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports on Country actions • Updates on emerging issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sub-region overviews • Trans-boundary gender and water actions • Regional projects • Regional financing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Region overviews • Financing [portfolios, requirements] • Progress on gender mainstreaming strategy • Update on emerging issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global updates • Tracking of MDGs • Global financing for gender
Responsibility	Ministries responsible for water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sub-regional AMCOW • Regional Economic Commissions • River and Lake Basin Organizations • Sub-regional initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AMCOW Secretariat • AfDB • WSP Africa • UN Water Africa • GWP • ANEW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU • AMCOW Secretariat • AfDB • UN-Water • G8, OECD • EU Water Initiative
	AMCOW	AMCOW	AMCOW	AMCOW

Adapted from AMCOW Action Plan and Framework for Reporting to the African Union (2009)

¹⁷<http://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:7BiNt5TsXpwj:www.africa-union.org/root/au/auc/departments/ge/>

¹⁸<http://www.africanwaterfacility.org/fileadmin/uploads/awf/governing-council/Executive%20Summary%20-20AMCOW%20Framework%20for%20Reporting%20Water%20Actions%20Nov%202009.pdf>

¹⁹ Ibid

To support the functioning of the gender monitoring, reporting and evaluation system, the following steps are recommended:

1. Establish a Gender Management Information System (GMIS) to ensure proper knowledge management of gender mainstreaming actions in Africa
2. Develop an implementation plan that spells out specific activities for the period of the Strategy and assigns priorities for gender mainstreaming actions based on available resources
3. Develop a monitoring and evaluation plan, and tools and methodologies that can be generally applied across member states. The M&E plan should also include performance indicators to track progress towards results
4. Establish consensus on the content of reports and reporting arrangements
5. Continue knowledge management, periodic reviews, and information reviews generated for use in decision-making, to translate the underlying principles into a culture of practice.

3.2.4 Key institutions and stakeholders in the water sector

The Strategy shall be implemented in partnership with key institutions and stakeholders according to their specific institutional and social mandates. A brief overview of the key institutions is provided as follows:

- African Union Commission: represents Africa's political leadership, committed to accelerating progress towards Africa's water security. The Commission ensures the annual water sector reports are submitted to the Heads of State and Governments at their summits.
- AMCOW: coordinates the regional water agenda and reports annually to the AU on the implementation of the actions.
- AMCOW Member Countries: design national strategies and action plans, implement the actions and report to AMCOW on achievement on an annual basis.



- National Civil Society Organizations: provide both water and sanitation delivery facilities and serve as advocacy groups to promote the agenda for the sector.
- Regional Economic Commissions: provide knowledge on economic problems and advise countries and regional organizations on economic and technological development (an example is the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa [ECA]).
- Regional Economic Communities: foster greater cooperation in the development of trans-boundary water infrastructure and report on achievement in their regions to AMCOW for regional consolidation.
- Development Partners: mobilize resources for the implementation of actions and report on achievements. Provide support to countries and regional organizations to prepare strategies and action plans to support resource mobilization efforts.
- River Basin Organizations: put trans-boundary cooperation commitments into operation, implement development projects and programs and ensure sustainable benefits are generated. Provide

reports of activities in pursuit of the agenda of regional cooperation in trans-boundary water infrastructure development.

- Other Active Actors: these include multilateral and bilateral financing institutions as well as regional civil society organizations such as ANEW and ANBO.

3.2.5 Roles and responsibilities of key institutions and stakeholders

Implementation of strategy actions will be based on three levels of activity – country, sub-regional and regional. A brief overview of the roles and responsibilities of the identified stakeholders and partners is as follows:

Roles and responsibilities at continental level

The following stakeholders will directly support the implementation of this Strategy in their respective capacities:

1. The minister responsible for water will champion gender mainstreaming and will liaise with the AU Commission. AMCOW-TAC will localize AUC policy and guidelines on gender for national application.
2. The Regional Working Group (comprising GWP, WSP, UNICEF, UNEP, UN-Habitat and GWA) will support TAC to prepare succinct performance reports for AMCOW and the AUC, which will in turn endorse the water sector gender performance indicators, track progress and take note of challenges.
3. TAC, with support from the Regional Working Group will prepare reports and mobilize counterpart funding; TAC/Regional Working Group, will prepare performance reports for AMCOW; Regional Economic Commissions will undertake assessments, peer reviews, case studies, and document good practices.
4. The AMCOW Region's Executive Committee Chair, TAC Chair, and REC secretariat departments are responsible for promoting gender mainstreaming and coordination with partner organizations.
5. All the RECs (ECOWAS, SADC, EAC, IGAD, ECCAS, Arab Water Council) and NEPAD will implement the Strategy as part of their existing partnerships with AMCOW.

Roles and responsibilities at national level

- The minister responsible for water will drive policy implementation and lead resource mobilization.
- TAC will form multi-agency national working groups, prepare the Gender Action Plan, maintain a list of stakeholders, and prepare and disseminate progress reports.
- TAC and working groups at the national level will organize learning platforms and leverage funds.
- National governments and ministers of water will institutionalize the GMS structures and mechanisms for implementing gender actions in the water sector.

Roles and responsibilities at sub-national level

1. TAC will support preparation and implementation of gender action plans and programs with the appropriate organs. For example, district councils, technical officers, water utilities and catchment committees.
2. ANEW, a regional networking body of African civil society organizations (CSO) with over 150 members is actively involved in the field of sustainable water management, water supply and sanitation. ANEW has a membership of more than 200 WSS CSOs from all over Africa and is officially recognized by AMCOW and its partners as representing African CSOs working on water and sanitation issues.
3. AMCOW, Global Water Partnership (GWP) and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) have created structures at sub-regional levels to consolidate outputs from their collaboration in water issues.

Roles and responsibilities at the local level

1. TAC & working groups at the national level will prepare indicators and criteria for selection of pilot interventions at the local level.
2. The minister will publicize gender accountability and recognize water management authorities or other organizations at the local level, by awarding them a trophy for best performance.
3. District council(s) will support and review gender performance for lower level project implementation.

The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa

We the Heads of State and Government of Member States of the African Union, meeting in the Third Ordinary Session of Our Assembly in Addis Ababa Ethiopia, from July 6-8, 2004: Reaffirm our commitment to the principle of gender equality as enshrined in Article 4(1) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, as well as other existing commitments, principles, goals and actions set out in the various regional, continental and international instruments on human and women's rights including the Dakar Platform for Action (1994); the Beijing Platform for Action (1995); the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW 1979); the African Plan of Action to Accelerate the Implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action for the Advancement of Women (1999); the Outcome Document of the 23rd Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (2000); UN Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security; and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003)... Commit ourselves to report annually on progress made in terms of gender mainstreaming and to support and champion all issues raised in this Declaration both at the national and regional levels and regularly provide each other with updates during our ordinary sessions.

(Source: Assembly of the African Union, Third Ordinary Session, July 6-8, 2004, Addis Ababa)

