

# MOBILISING FOR A WATER SECURE WORLD



STRATEGY 2020–2025

# WE ARE THE GLOBAL WATER PARTNERSHIP



The Global Water Partnership (GWP) is a multi-stakeholder action network and intergovernmental organisation dedicated to working with countries towards the equitable, sustainable, and efficient management of water resources. We comprise 3,000+ partner organisations in over 180 countries. Our network of 65+ Country Water Partnerships and 13 Regional Water Partnerships convenes and brokers coordinated action by government and non-government actors. A long-time advocate for integrated water resources management, we draw on implementation experience at the local level and link it across our Network and to global development agendas.

## OUR VISION

A water secure world.

## OUR MISSION

To advance governance and management of water resources for sustainable and equitable development.

## OUR UNIQUE VALUE

GWP mobilises action on the global water crisis through a unique combination of social capital, shared values, credibility within the global water community, bottom-up orientation, and expertise. A network of networks, we ensure the 'voices of water' can influence local, national, regional, and global development priorities. We are committed to our role as a neutral convener and respected for our focus on inclusiveness and sustainability.

## OUR WORK

Through our 2020–2025 Strategy, we will prioritise opportunities where key global or regional policy frameworks bring leadership focus, progress measurement, development partner action, and potential for financing. Specifically, we target the following Anchor Areas: Water solutions for the Sustainable Development Goals; Climate resilience through water; and Transboundary water cooperation.

## WE MOBILISE

We mobilise people and organisations to unite around shared development priorities that impact water resources. We bring all voices to the table, including the private sector. We work with youth as key agents of change. We work towards gender equality in all that we do. We build and leverage partnerships, and work through multi-stakeholder platforms to create space for diverse views and interests.

## WE ACT

We support coordinated action to address water risks and put integrated water resources management into practice. We work with our partners to change behaviours, strengthen institutions, build pilots and catalyse investment for water-wise sustainable development. We measure ourselves through the actions we take to improve water management and governance.

## WE LEARN

We learn from our actions and relationships. We curate, create, and share knowledge globally and across regions. We work with stakeholders to turn learning into ongoing improvements in water management and provide a constant feedback loop through our learning and knowledge architecture.

## OUR VALUES

Inclusiveness | Openness | Transparency | Accountability | Respect | Gender sensitivity | Solidarity

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# EXECUTIVE STATEMENT

We see great urgency to act. If the world remains off-track to deliver on its goal to bring sustainable water and sanitation to all, we will jeopardise the entire 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Poverty and inequality will grow, and our planet will not be able to sustain us. Instead, to successfully pursue and achieve sustainable development, we need a water lens on all we do.

Taking comprehensive steps in the water sector is not easy – it takes time, perseverance, and determination. The magnitude of the demands on water is stunning and the demands themselves are competing. The Global Water Partnership (GWP) is uniquely positioned to help. Our Network of over 3,000+ partner organisations is broad and brings a strong brand with over 20 years of experience that speaks to our staying power. Our 65+ Country Water Partnerships have strong relationships and have earned trust through multi-stakeholder engagements. Our 13 Regional Water Partnerships have taken on leadership and support roles in regional processes, region-to-region learning and cross-country coordination. Our Network is supported by a global team that brings passion and insight into global processes and strong competencies in managing programmes, funds, and relationships.

Our Strategy argues for agility and urgency. Its purpose is to guide how our Network focuses its work between 2020 and 2025. Because we are a network, the Strategy operates at different levels. It provides direction for our Country Water Partnerships and Regional Water Partnerships – outlining our consistent thematic priorities and codifying our distinctive approach to delivering change while allowing for autonomy and innovation. The Strategy also offers insights to our Network, laying out areas of action and impact we can collectively pursue. And, finally, the Strategy clarifies the roles of those supporting the Network – the GWP Organisation and its governance bodies – in enabling and in being held accountable for helping deliver the Strategy.

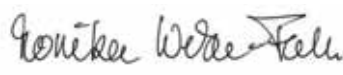
**Our Strategy is a Network Strategy**, reflecting the diversity and wealth of views and opportunities **across our many partners** and stakeholders. It provides space for everyone in our community to build **their work programmes** in alignment with the choices we make together.

Our Strategy has been informed by an independent evaluation (May–July 2018) and a GWP Partner Survey (November 2017). It benefited from early guidance from our Steering Committee, Financing Partners and Technical Committee. It took on input from our GWP Network Meeting, held in September 2018, bringing together 355 partner organisations from nearly 50 countries, as well as from our **13 Regional Steering Committees**. Our Regional Chairs and Regional Coordinators have provided **insight and** have been involved throughout. Our partners across our main stakeholder groups – from **international organisations**, research and academia, civil society, and the private sector – took time to review and **comment** on various versions of the document.

We are proud and **humbled** to share with you a document that will be the compass for our Network, provide accountability for our institutional and financing partners, and offer inspiration for all who work with the Global Water Partnership.



**Howard Bamsey**  
Chair



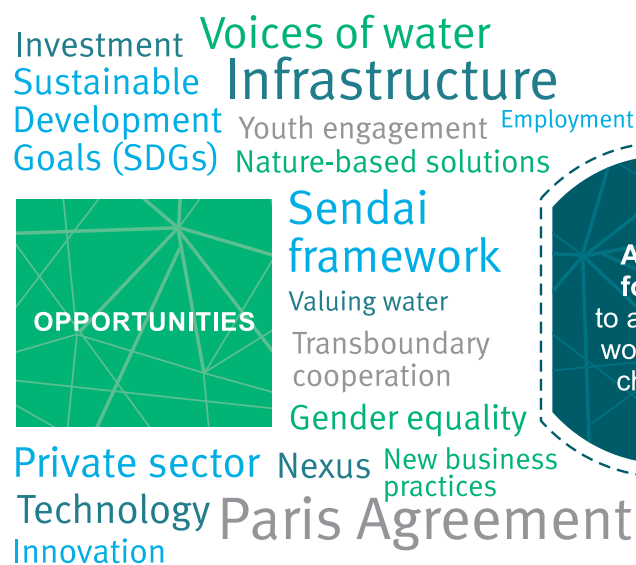
**Monika Weber-Fahr**  
Executive Secretary and CEO



**Amadou Maiga**  
Chair of Regional Chairs

# THE URGENCY

The global water crisis urgently needs **more attention** and **coordinated action**. Sound and integrated water resources management is needed more than ever.



## Our Strategy 2020–2025: Mobilising for a Water Secure World

As countries and development partners work to address major water challenges, GWP will mobilise key players and learn from new experiences **to create and maintain momentum for coordinated action**.

A multi-stakeholder action network, GWP will leverage global policy frameworks and mobilise its 3,000+ partner organisations – both within and beyond the water sector – to bring voices of water to the table and get things done.

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# THE GLOBAL WATER PARTNERSHIP: BRINGING THE VOICES OF WATER

**1. Water is a fundamental human right and is essential for sustainable development – and it is under threat.** Billions of lives are at risk because, in many parts of the world, water resources are managed poorly. Compromised by inefficiencies, struggling institutions, major data and infrastructure gaps, and a lack of inclusivity, the use of water is not adequately coordinated. As a result, scarce, polluted and poorly managed water resources are about to bring more and more countries to a breaking point, as additional pressures from climate change, population growth, urbanisation, and migration abound. In less than 100 years, the world has gone from 14 percent to 60 percent of its population living under water scarcity. A massive systems change is needed to allow countries to respond to the current crises and to provide clean and sustainably managed water to people.

**2. GWP will mobilise key players and learn from new experiences to create and maintain momentum for coordinated action that can respond to these threats.** A global multi-stakeholder action network, GWP and its more than 3,000 partner organisations provide a direct connection with influential stakeholders, from practitioners in local communities to senior politicians and global leaders. Our network modality allows us to create coalitions within and beyond the water sector in an agile and cost-effective way. We operate without ego: building partnerships is our way of working and we make sure we strengthen, complement, and do not duplicate the work of other development actors. We are deeply committed to our role as a neutral convener and we are respected as a voice for inclusiveness and sustainability.

**3. Our aim is to foster systemic change so that the pressures on water can be moderated and managed.** While many development partners are lending their financing and technical experience to support governments and other actors, few have the capacity or credibility to mobilise the breadth of stakeholders needed at the basin, country, and regional levels to work towards long-term solutions. New, broader, and more visible efforts are needed to change decision-making around water. Many understand this and some have begun to build and reinvigorate the enabling environments, institutions, policies, and management instruments around water, and to explore new technology and infrastructure choices. However, inertia remains rampant. We see this at the policy level as well as in administrative agencies, and even among development partners: short-term and siloed thinking is impeding systemic action. To break this mould, mobilising voices, action, and learning are needed. It is our ambition to provide just that.

**4. We draw from experiences with integrated water resources management (IWRM) at the local and regional levels and link those lessons to global insights.** IWRM is a process that promotes the coordinated development and management of water, land, and related resources. It explicitly aims to maximise economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems and the environment. Insights on IWRM have historically been one of GWP's key services to Network Partners and stakeholders, and our knowledge base and ongoing research provide a unique and valuable feedback loop to strengthen knowledge at all levels.

**5. Our distinctive business model leverages network effects to strengthen the impact of autonomous local partnerships.** Most of our teams operate out of and are part of in-country or regional non-profit organisations that convene stakeholders for action. Committed to operating through partnerships, we unite around our efforts to integrate water resources management across sectors, stakeholders, and borders. Yet we are diverse in our independent Country and Regional Water Partnerships. Each Network Partner operates independently and takes decisions that reflect local needs and opportunities. We actively seek to include groups in our Network that may be excluded from policy decisions – such as indigenous peoples, women, youth, and others. Our global team ensures we all benefit from being part of the Network – by coordinating our governance, facilitating cross-network activities and learning, and advocating for good water management globally.

**6. We are well-positioned to drive this change thanks to our reputation, our network of local organisations, and our expertise in water management.** This unique combination of resources and capabilities allows us to be a credible interlocutor with global organisations, mandated institutions in over 100 countries, and across diverse and inclusive platforms – including organisations that do not focus directly on water. GWP’s nearly 25-year history provides us with a positive reputation and the credibility needed to contribute to resolving the difficult water-allocation and water-sharing decisions needed going forward. We are seen as a trustworthy partner that can convene relevant stakeholders and facilitate constructive conversations about challenging topics. Our long-standing relationships with a range of partners and global leaders ensure that the ‘voices of water’ are heard in the implementation of local, national, regional, and global development priorities.

## Our Accomplishments

Since it was founded in 1996, GWP has grown into a network that has promoted, learned about, and shaped new ways for managing water in an integrated way. We are a network of networks with a track record of successfully ensuring that water and its many users and uses are reflected in policy and investment decisions. There is no organisation like GWP in its combination of strong social capital, shared values, trust earned in the world’s water community, bottom-up orientation, and water management expertise.

**GWP’s track record in achieving results is strong.** During our last strategy period from 2014 to 2019, GWP’s Country and Regional Water Partnerships supported over 80 countries in managing their water resources, manifested in more than 200 water governance outcomes. These outcomes also brought financial returns: GWP-supported plans, strategies, and initiatives influenced water-related investments of more than €1 billion. These included national water management policies and plans, investment plans, and river basin management strategies.

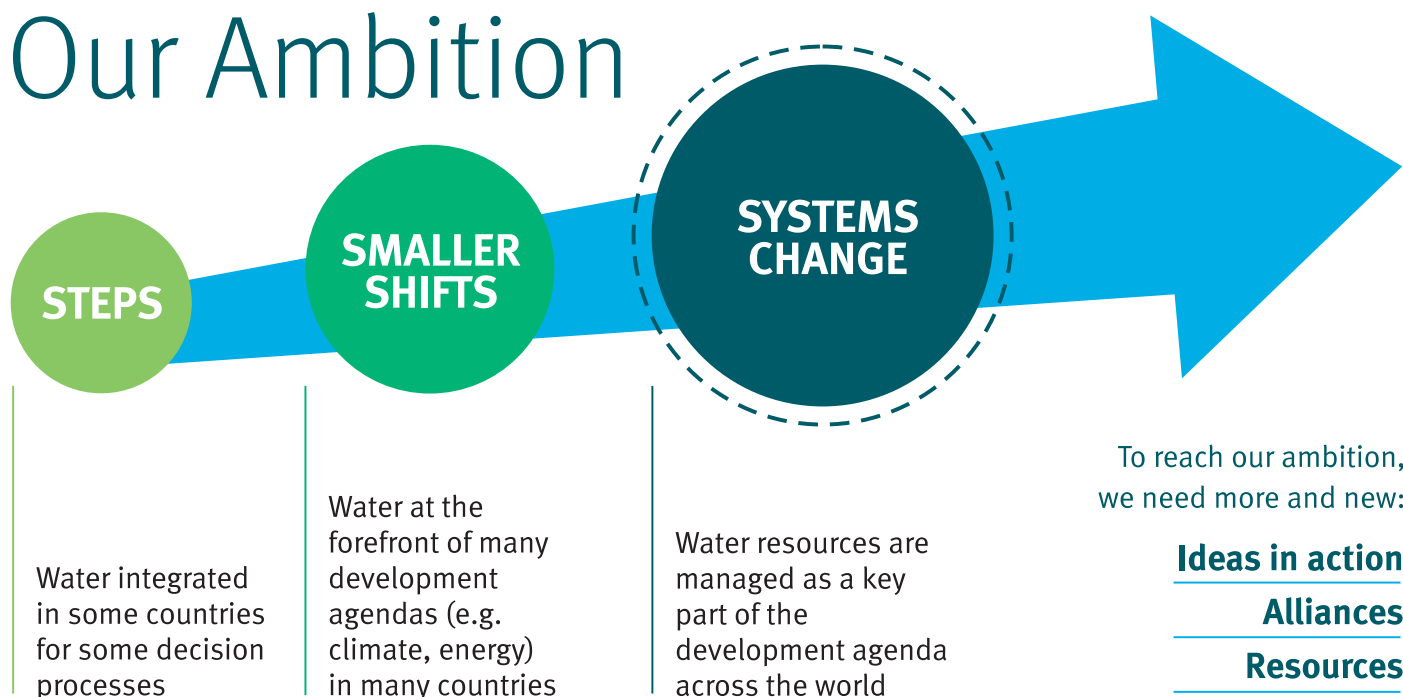
**A 2018 independent evaluation of GWP’s track record between 2014 and 2017 concluded that GWP has delivered against its strategic plan and far exceeded a majority of its targets.** The evaluation found that GWP is an important and needed player in water resources management and that the global context strongly validated the relevance of GWP’s mission. It also found that GWP has put in place an effective global architecture to monitor funding and results. With this Strategy, we are building on the evaluation’s recommendations, further investing in and strengthening our operational model and agility at the local and regional level.

# OUR STRATEGY: MOBILISING FOR A WATER SECURE WORLD

7. The water crisis is too big for half measures. With our Strategy, we commit ourselves to ambitious targets that will contribute to enabling water secure, sustainable, inclusive, and resilient development between 2020 and 2025. Our ambitions will be driven by opportunities that we identify with our partners and shaped by the ideas emerging through our collaboration, by the alliances we can build, and by the resources we are able to generate. Throughout the Strategy, we will work to mobilise these ideas and opportunities, alliances, and resources. We will measure our success based on a results framework that aligns with the global development agenda and contributes to development goals. Specifically, we will aim for the following overarching targets for our Network:

- ✔ **Support 4 billion people living in 60 countries and 20 transboundary basins.** We will significantly advance the water-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 60 countries and 20 transboundary basins with a combined population of over 4 billion people.
- ✔ **Promote €10 billion in new investments.** We will influence more than €10 billion in water-related investments from government and private sources.

## Our Ambition





**8. We will address coordination and motivation challenges by leveraging political systems, technological change, and private sector drive.** We see countries and organisations pursue ambitious sustainable development agendas while discounting or ignoring crucial water-related trade-offs and conflicts between the development goals. Most countries have organised their decision-making processes and implementing institutions around sectors or development priorities; siloed approaches, fragmented thinking, lack of institutional integrity and bureaucratic competition are mirrored by many development partners and prevent solutions to the water crises. At the same time, technological and economic changes create new opportunities: social media are transforming network and community management; big data and new business models are emerging to help prevent human-made disasters, manage flooding, and raise public awareness of water conservation; the private sector is increasingly recognising the importance of water management to mitigate business risks; and the regionalisation of development agendas is changing the nature of water management interventions. We can capitalise on these opportunities to focus attention and mobilise action to ensure that water resources are managed as a key part of the development agenda.

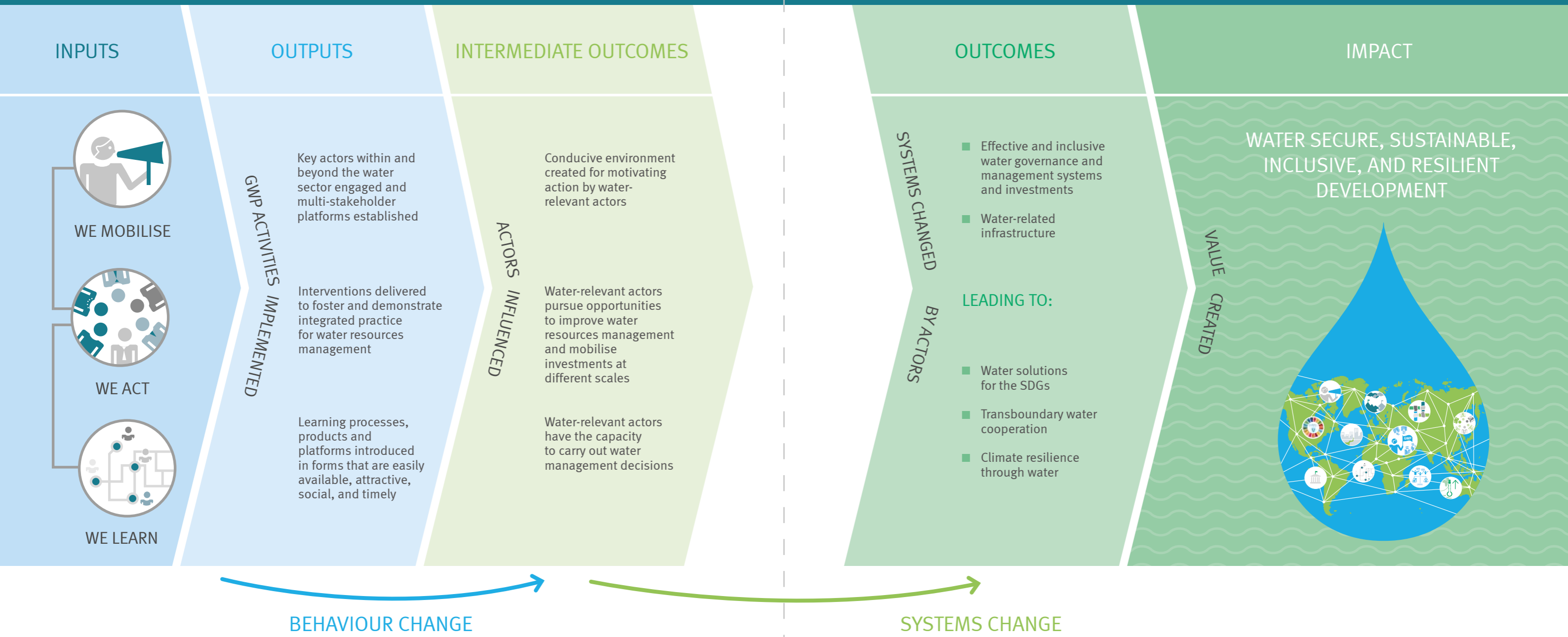
**9. We will anchor our work where key global or regional policy frameworks bring leadership focus, progress measurement, development partner action, and potential for financing.** In this Strategy, we have prioritised intervention points where governments, civil society organisations, and the private sector are already engaged, but where the persistent lack of coordination and failures to incorporate water-related insights create an opportunity for GWP to drive systemic change to address these issues. The 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework, and transboundary cooperation initiatives, offer compelling and realistic opportunities.

**10. Within each of our Anchor Areas, our Theory of Change injects motivation, opportunity, and capacity into processes that will lead to better water management.** Building on GWP's strengths, we will strategically shape and design our activities along three dimensions that together will help us maximise our impact: we will engage new actors and extend the reach of our current partners (*we mobilise*); we will create and maintain momentum for action across IWRM processes, building pilots, catalysing action and investments, and creating opportunities for systems change (*we act*); and we will create mindful learning processes for agile improvements and innovations (*we learn*).

**11. We are flexible in our approaches: there is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach in water resources management.** We see IWRM as an 'umbrella' concept, with its four dimensions now encapsulated in SDG 6.5 (enabling environment, institutions and participation, management instruments, and financing). Building on the targets set by SDG 6.5, we will flexibly leverage a broad set of related approaches to improve water-related decisions, including: water–energy–food–environment nexus approaches, nature-based solutions, corporate water stewardship, ecosystem management, integrated flood and drought management, source-to-sea approaches, circular economy approaches, water footprint management methods, and climate infrastructure management.

# Theory of Change underpinning GWP's Strategy 2020–2025

Our engagements are strategically chosen in areas where global or regional policy frameworks exist and bring focus, progress measurement, development partner action, and potential for financing. The 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework, and transboundary cooperation initiatives are such frameworks.



# OUR ANCHOR AREAS

**12. The next six years offer a window of opportunity to leverage global policy frameworks to build momentum and change complex systems.** The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework, the Desertification Convention, and commitments made towards transboundary cooperation frameworks, among others, offer opportunities for countries and organisations, and the partnerships between them, to fight poverty and advance sustainable development. Working in specific basin-, country-, and regional-level contexts, we know that we can mobilise greater momentum where such broader forces are already at play. We will therefore anchor our work in these three global priorities: the SDGs, the imperative to support climate adaptation, and efforts to advance transboundary cooperation.



## Water solutions for the Sustainable Development Goals

*“We recognize that water is at the core of sustainable development as it is closely linked to a number of key global challenges.”*

from *The Future We Want*, United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/66/288, outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, 2012

**13. GWP will support work on the policies and investment plans that help countries resolve water-related trade-offs inherent in achieving the SDGs.** We will stimulate ongoing awareness of the need that, to achieve the 2030 Agenda as a whole, mandated institutions must work in new ways, especially through multi-stakeholder partnerships, as highlighted in SDG 17. As part of this effort, we will focus on:

- Supporting agencies and key players to coordinate and resolve the competing demands for water resources as they work towards achieving the SDGs while driving investment and employment targets;
- Incorporating the multiple values of water in decision making; and
- Supporting countries to assess their progress towards integrated water resources management targets as set through SDG 6.5.

**14. Supporting agencies and key players to coordinate and resolve the competing demands for water resources as they work towards achieving the SDGs while driving investment and employment targets.** Investments in infrastructure and other measures to drive economic development and employment all draw on local water resources. For this reason, action must be coordinated and integrated across all the SDGs. Not doing so will endanger access to clean and sustainable water, and the achievement of other development goals. We will work with countries to facilitate engagement between different sector ministries and agencies and to engage all key players to identify priorities and formulate appropriate responses to water

resources management challenges. We will mobilise ‘nexus thinking’ on the food–ecosystems–energy nexus, the nexus with health and education, and the employment dimension of water resources. We will specifically involve the private sector and youth initiatives in focusing and maintaining attention on necessary action.

**15. Incorporating the multiple values of water in decision making.** To generate cross-sectoral interest and wider political commitment, we will seek to contribute to a better understanding of the multiple values of water and of water’s importance for implementing SDGs beyond the water targets of SDG 6. We will use values- and ethics-based entry points in conversations about water. We will mobilise expanded assessments of the values of water through economic and non-economic business case development, building evidence-based arguments tailored to non-water stakeholders, mindful of the need to take inclusive approaches. We will work with others to provide the context and evidence necessary to make a robust case for taking the values of water into account when making decisions at national, basin, regional, and continental levels.

**16. Supporting countries to assess their progress towards integrated water resources management targets as set through SDG 6.5.** The United Nations’ ongoing monitoring efforts provide a welcome context for refocusing attention on improving water management. We will support countries to establish national IWRM status assessments in an inclusive and action-oriented way, thereby creating important entry points and reminders for conversations that will drive continued action. These initiatives will model broad engagement beyond the water sector and establish priority issues across water-related SDG targets. The actions agreed upon towards concrete improvements in sustainable water management will showcase how coordination on water benefits the SDG agenda as a whole.



*“GWP East Africa organised a SDG 6 workshop so we could all better understand the challenges and priority areas for IWRM in Burundi. Following this we were able to make important recommendations for improving IWRM implementation in line with SDG target 6.5. We really appreciated this support to make it successful.”*

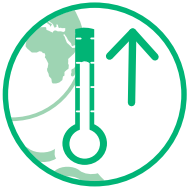
Engineer Anicet Nkurikiye, Advisor to the Minister for Water and Environment in Burundi, and Chair of GWP Burundi



## SUCCESS WILL BE...

**More than 300 water-related policies, laws, institutional arrangements, and related management instruments** incorporating IWRM principles adopted at regional, national, and local levels.

**More than 80 approved investment plans and budget commitments** associated with policies, plans, and strategies that integrate water secure development.



## Climate resilience through water

*“Water is to adaptation what energy is to mitigation.”*

*from the World Bank’s High and Dry: Climate Change, Water, and the Economy, 2016*

**17. GWP will introduce water-specific insights into national dialogues, planning, and investments associated with climate resilience-related development priorities.** As part of this effort, we will focus on:

- Including water-informed insights in national adaptation planning;
- Facilitating access to climate finance for resilience-building water projects; and
- Supporting integrated resilience planning, including in water infrastructure.

**18. Including water-informed insights in national adaptation planning.** We will work to introduce water-specific insights – particularly on flood and drought management, a stated priority of most countries – into national dialogues on climate resilience-related development priorities. We will do so primarily through existing national processes as countries update their Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement and develop, implement, and refine their National Adaptation Plans. We will highlight transboundary perspectives in these national processes and channel insights from practical work at country- and river basin-level to inform global climate and disaster risk reduction policy.

**19. Facilitating access to climate finance for resilience-building water projects.** Many countries’ water agencies struggle to access multilateral development and climate finance for resilience-building water projects. GWP’s Country and Regional Water Partnerships will support countries to strengthen upstream country readiness, identify and prepare projects, conduct the multi-stakeholder outreach necessary to build ownership, and ensure projects are designed to benefit the most vulnerable populations.



*“In Zimbabwe, as part of the Water, Climate and Development Programme, GWP Southern Africa provided technical and financial support to organise stakeholder consultations during the drafting of water-related Action Plans for the National Climate Change Response Strategy (NCCRS). Because of the extensive consultations and media coverage, more people are now aware of climate change issues. This will make it easier to implement the NCCRS and for Zimbabwe to be more climate change resilient.”*

*Professor Sarah Feresu, Institute of Environmental Studies, University of Zimbabwe*

**20. Supporting integrated resilience planning, including in water infrastructure.** Investment in resilience-building water infrastructure, both built and natural, as well as supporting institutions and information systems is essential for sustaining economic growth and jobs, reducing inequality, sustaining vital ecosystem services, and managing floods and droughts. But progress is slow, stemming from sectoral and siloed approaches. Our Country and Regional Water Partnerships will use their convening power to support integrated resilience planning and to catalyse and accelerate collaborative action among water, climate, development, disaster risk reduction, and finance communities.



## SUCCESS WILL BE...

**More than 30 countries access climate finance** to implement water-informed National Adaptation Plans and integrated flood and drought management policies and measures.

**Investments of more than €1 billion** directly supported in climate-resilient water management and infrastructure founded on robust, inclusive, and effective water governance systems.



## Transboundary water cooperation

*“Transboundary water cooperation is a precondition for sustainable development, peace and stability.”*

from UN-Water's *Progress on Transboundary Water Cooperation 2018: Global Baseline for SDG Indicator 6.5.2, 2018*

**21. GWP will work across sectors and administrative borders to identify solutions that can promote sustainable transboundary water resources management.** As part of this effort, we will focus on:

- Facilitating dialogue across political jurisdictions;
- Learning about water governance and international water law; and
- Improving transboundary water governance.

**22. Facilitating dialogue across political jurisdictions.** As neutral conveners able to work across sectors and administrative borders, our Country and Regional Water Partnerships can facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogue and promote sustainable transboundary water resources management. We will work at the technical level to open up dialogues where water conflicts exist, as a way to promote peace and cooperation. Our engagement approach is broad, mobilising key actors and stakeholders, including river basin/lakes organisations, institutions supporting cooperation over transboundary aquifers, regional economic commissions, governments, key stakeholders from countries sharing freshwater, and local communities and users of transboundary waters. Mobilising youth groups focused on water resources issues and beyond will be an important element of building positive momentum for regional dialogues.

**23. Learning about water governance and international water law.** We have found that learning provides a positive environment for otherwise potentially adversarial dialogue to be initiated informally and constructively. We will therefore build on GWP's successful engagement in training on water governance and international water law and expand towards supporting peer-to-peer learning and knowledge-sharing among transboundary water practitioners in collaboration with existing global learning platforms. We will also leverage the alumni dimension of such learning activities as an effective way for practitioners to continue to understand and to jointly identify solutions to complex transboundary water issues. We will engage government, regional economic bodies, and other key transboundary basin stakeholders in learning processes and opportunities.

**24. Improving transboundary water governance.** Where water resources cross boundaries, political complexities exist that empower some but not all actors to put IWRM into practice. GWP teams will deploy a wide range of measures to foster transboundary water cooperation, including: (i) supporting investment planning and mobilising finance; (ii) contributing to the development of transboundary water action plans and to the establishment of joint institutional mechanisms; (iii) advocating for reducing disaster risks through data sharing; and (iv) providing insight on developing mechanisms for benefit sharing and for enabling regional (energy) trade. GWP will facilitate integrated management in transboundary basins, as well as from source to sea. In particular, GWP will work in deltas, a key connecting point for freshwater and ocean water issues.



*"GWP Mediterranean's assistance enabled us to review our 10-year strategy through an IWRM lens. They contributed to our national water sector strategy and helped to set up a decision-support system for managing six main rivers using the water evaluation and planning system model."*

Dr Fadi Comair, Director General, Directorate for Electrical and Hydraulic Resources, Ministry of Energy and Water, Lebanon



## SUCCESS WILL BE...

**More than 20 new transboundary agreements, commitments, and arrangements** supported through GWP's role as a neutral convener and facilitator of cross-border dialogue.

**More than 20 transboundary institutions strengthened or established** with support from GWP teams, with a mandate to coordinate cross-border water resources management planning and investment.

# ACROSS OUR ANCHOR AREAS

## Engaging the private sector

**25. Today's water challenges need *all* water interests to be at the table to jointly diagnose, discuss, and develop shared solutions – including the private sector.** So far, private sector engagement in water resources management or governance has been limited; yet, as water users, as producers of waste water, as service providers, financiers, or insurers, private sector entities enormously influence water availability and how water-related risks and opportunities are addressed. GWP has been able to build experience in engaging the private sector, including by working with farmers on water efficiency solutions, with beverage companies on non-conventional water resource mobilisation, with mining firms on water quality and quantity standards, and with utilities on drought management planning.

**26. We will mobilise private sector engagement where we see key water challenges coincide with our role, structure, and competencies.** We will do so in the context of our work towards IWRM – specifically to mobilise private sector engagement and contributions to building enabling environments, institutions, management tools, and finance for managing water resources in an integrated way. Strategically, we will:

- **Focus on highly water-relevant sectors.** The choice of sectoral engagement will vary, depending on the country or region, and it will be driven by the relevance of a particular sector to water management challenges and solutions. From a global perspective, key sectors will include: mining, textiles, food/agriculture, the financial and insurance sectors, water service providers, and products (including for off-grid solutions, non-conventional water resources, water efficiency, water quality measurement, etc).
- **Focus on specific areas where GWP's role as a trusted convener and solutions broker can make a difference.** These areas are likely to include:
  - (a) water data (creation, sharing, monitoring) – where GWP involvement can help contribute to collaborative solutions to data gaps;
  - (b) innovative solutions, approaches or technologies – where GWP involvement can help pilot, roll-out, or find acceptance for what is new;
  - (c) integrity, transparency, standards – where GWP involvement can help broker sector-wide improvements in private sector performance, including water accounting practices, procedures, and protocols.
- **Focus on national- or basin-level challenges – not on site-level or company-level engagement.** GWP's strategic role does not lie in being a service provider to facilitate agreements between individual companies and the communities they engage with. Instead, the multi-stakeholder dimension of our setup positions us to mobilise and bring together multiple players to solve challenges at the basin level or the national level specifically where longer-term engagement, institution building, and policy frameworks are needed. This will allow us to complement and support the work of others.



**27. We will design engagements carefully to create a level playing field and address power asymmetries, integrity challenges, potential attention diversion, and the risk of bias.** There are real risks associated with engaging private sector parties in water resources management processes and initiatives. Engaging with large companies can divert government and public focus away from otherwise agreed upon policy priorities, particularly when the initiatives are backed with significant resources and require government attention to go forward. Also, there is the risk of 'regulatory capture': where water resources institutions are weak, corporations or water services providers may begin to dominate water resources decisions, intentionally or unintentionally, undermining regulatory systems. Furthermore, where regulatory entities and private sector money coincide, corruption is a real risk and integrity initiatives may be required. The mandates and interests of private entities, governments, and civil society do not typically align: given the differences in power structures and access to resources and information, the engagement of the different parties must be designed in a manner that levels the playing field.

**28. Our business model for private sector engagement initiatives will be built around partnerships and may involve private sector contributions.** In building private sector engagement initiatives, we will partner with organisations that bring specific competencies. We will mobilise funding for private sector initiatives jointly with these organisations and through contributions from bilateral and multilateral donors as well as from private sector contributions.



Rocrops Agrotec, a smallholder family farming business, joined GWP Caribbean as a partner in 2010. *"Membership has encouraged us to focus more on promoting climate-smart agriculture and water management on our farm. This is helping us to adapt to climate change and we help others by building capacity among local agricultural and environmental practitioners. All this has enabled us to contribute to rural development and food security in Trinidad and Tobago."*

Ramgopaul Roop, CEO Rocrops Agrotec, Trinidad and Tobago



## SUCCESS WILL BE...

**More than 20 initiatives with private sector actors** to mobilise investment, reduce impacts on water by key industries, and promote innovation and entrepreneurship.

## Contributing to gender equality

**29. Through GWP’s Gender Strategy we will implement a ‘never without them when about them’ approach.** As part of all programmes developed under GWP’s Anchor Areas, our work to promote gender equality will focus on:

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

**30. We commit our portfolio of action to promoting gender equality beyond statements of intent.** Across our entire portfolio, we will unlock barriers to progress on gender equality and inclusion in water resources management, ultimately expanding benefits for women, vulnerable and excluded groups, and the environment through a dedicated global programme. We will invest in gender informing and gender sensitising our work, including through tailored training and project and programme design, through specific analyses, and through dedicated monitoring and evaluation efforts. We will partner with other organisations to better understand and account for a broader range of factors that can lead to exclusion and marginalisation in water resources management, such as age, disability, ethnicity, caste, and sexuality, to ensure that no one is left behind. We will hold ourselves accountable by using GWP’s Gender Strategy (2015) and Gender Action Piece (2017) as guides when designing all of our initiatives.



### SUCCESS WILL BE...

**More than 20 countries implement** development plans, strategies, and formal commitments that aim to contribute to gender inclusion and/or equality through water secure development.

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# Mobilising youth for water resources management

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## 31. Anchored in our Youth Strategy, we will engage youth on decisions, employment, and innovation.

Over the past five years, GWP teams around the world have begun to purposefully reach out to and mobilise youth groups and younger individuals to confront water resources management challenges. We will reinvigorate our efforts to include young people in water decisions, offering pathways for youth to become agents of change for improved water resources management and sustainable development. More specifically, as part of all programmes developed under GWP's Anchor Areas, our work to mobilise youth will focus on:

- Supporting youth engagement in water policy processes, including through joint learning and capacity building on youth engagement with youth and partners;
- Cultivating youth-led initiatives for advancing good water management and governance; and
- Leveraging water resources management to build employment opportunities and innovative approaches relevant for youth interested in contributing to building a water secure world.



*"Being part of GWP has been one of the most important experiences of my life. I have been able to learn and collaborate with people from different countries and regions, but above all, it has been an opportunity to be part of an initiative that has addressed water scarcity issues for women in rural communities. This experience has helped me to understand that access to water continues to be a great challenge, but also that everyone, especially young people and women, must be part of the change to guarantee water for all."*

Vilma Alicia Chanta, GWP Central America Youth Focal Point. Works at FUNDE, in El Salvador, a GWP partner

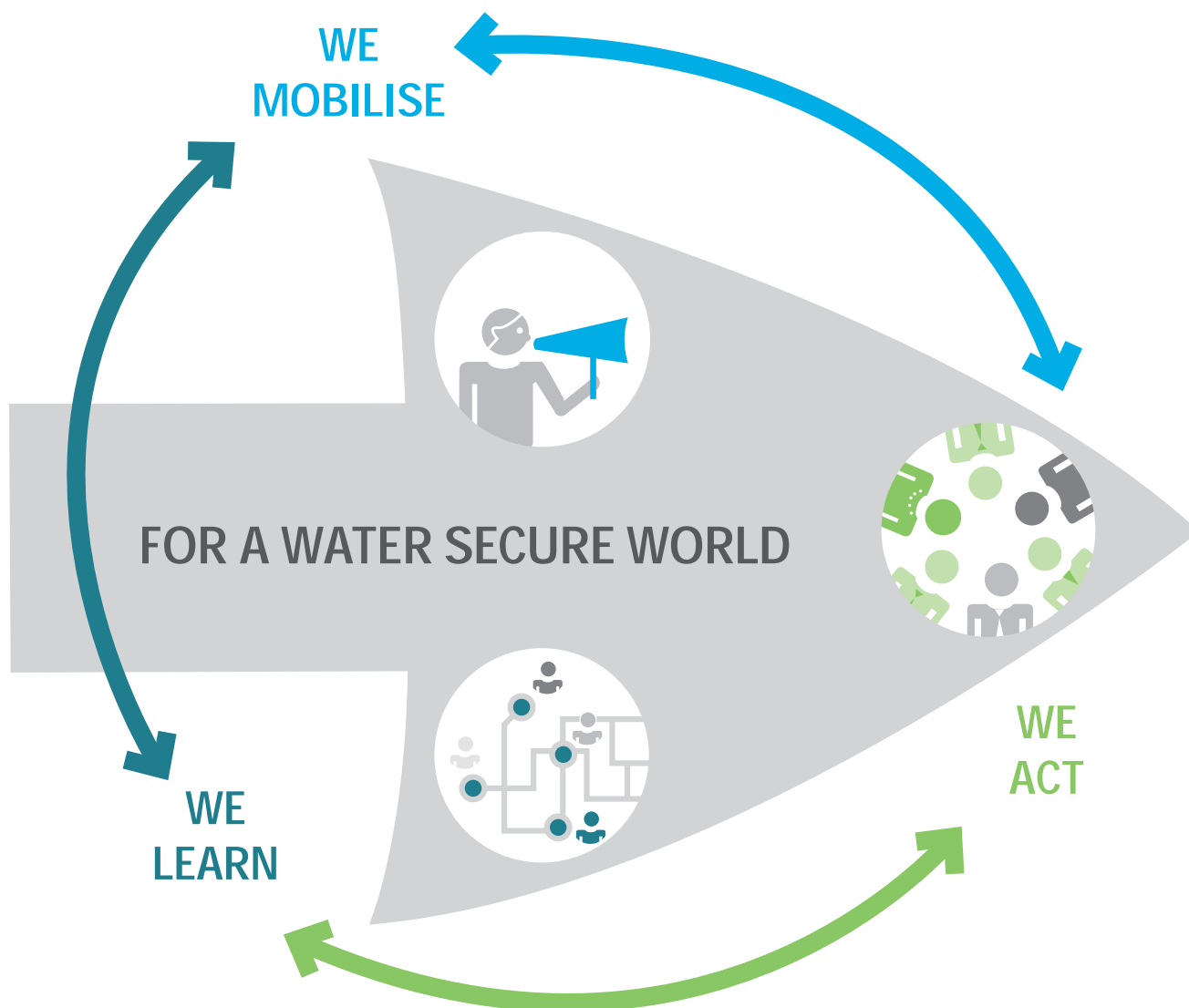


## SUCCESS WILL BE...

**More than 20 youth-centric initiatives** that mobilise youth to engage with water management and governance processes and systems and to participate in decision making.

# HOW WE WILL DRIVE CHANGE

32. Over the next six years, we will shape and design our activities along three dimensions that together will help us maximise our impact: mobilising, acting, and learning.



*"Every solution is provisional and contains the seed of a future problem; it works for a time and there is a constant challenge and response cycle. There is a spiral-like reflexive relationship between water and economic growth; improved water management promotes growth and economic growth creates opportunities for new kinds of water management interventions."*

John Briscoe, as referenced in Tushaar Shah's *Increasing water security: the key to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals*, Global Water Partnership, 2016



## We mobilise

**33. We will engage an increasingly diverse group of ‘voices on water’.** For good water governance and management, space needs to be made for all water users to be at the table. We mobilise people and organisations to unite around shared development priorities that impact water resources. We bring all voices to the table and build and leverage partnerships, working through multi-stakeholder platforms, to create space for diverse views and interests. Specifically, we will:

- ✓ Expand our Network;
- ✓ Support multi-stakeholder platforms to be well managed and impact oriented; and
- ✓ Work in tandem with key partners to contribute to coordination and collaboration.

**34. Expanding our Network by actively seeking to increase diversity, inclusivity, and vibrancy within our Partner base.** We will reach outside the ‘water box’ to include more and new voices, including civil society organisations, parliamentarians, mayors, human rights advocates, farmers, faith-based groups, indigenous peoples, artists, youth groups, gender equality organisations, and journalists. We will find nuanced ways to mobilise the private sector while maintaining the neutrality and integrity of our partnerships. And we will work to complete our geographical coverage in response to demands and opportunities.

**35. Supporting multi-stakeholder platforms to be well managed and impact oriented.** The complexity involved in constructing solutions for water management has led GWP to build Country Water Partnerships – and in some cases City Water Partnerships. These are permanent multi-stakeholder platforms in many countries, ready to engage with and address evolving water challenges. Supporting these platforms is a key element of this Strategy. Our global and regional teams will: (i) offer support to strengthen facilitation and convening capacities; (ii) identify and offer commonly used and effective tools; (iii) leverage relationships to link with other civil society activities within and across regions; (iv) create space for learning from each other about potential opportunities and pitfalls when engaging with new partners, such as foundations, the donor community, or the private sector; and (v) mobilise income streams that can appropriately position multi-stakeholder platforms as a ‘go-to’ place for development partners and mandated agencies.

**36. Working in tandem with key partners to contribute to coordination and collaboration to address fragmentation across organisations that work ‘in the water space’.** Building coalitions and addressing fragmentation and siloed approaches across and beyond the water community is a strategic priority for us – at the country and regional level as much as the global level. At the country and regional level, this will happen as part of our specific interventions. Also, as a Network, we will ramp up our focus on working in structured and focused partnerships, including by building alliances with organisations outside the water sector. In mobilising across global themes, we will work in ‘agenda alliances’; in supporting our learning and knowledge architecture, we will engage in ‘strategic learning alliances’; and in building specific programmes, we will set up ‘delivery alliances’.



## We act

**37. We ground our efforts in concrete and coordinated action to address water risks and put IWRM into practice.** We will work with our partners to change behaviours, strengthen institutions, build pilots, and catalyse investment for water-wise sustainable development. By supporting decision-makers and water-related institutions, catalysing additional investment in water infrastructure, and demonstrating the potential of new technologies, we will drive systems change to improve water management and governance. Specifically, we will:

- ✓ Support decision-makers and strengthen the capacity of institutions;
- ✓ Work to catalyse inclusive investment in water infrastructure; and
- ✓ Invest in pilots and demonstration activities.

**38. Supporting decision-makers and strengthening the capacity of institutions to act for better water management.** Tackling a problem as complex as water management requires high implementation capacity. This includes capacities to address institutional inertia across multiple organisations, inspire leadership and competent staff, and mobilise sufficient funding. Leveraging country commitments to global political frameworks, we will continue to do what we do best: build trusted and long-term relationships and increase political will. We will support institutions to design and implement good water management policies and practices, where appropriate, by providing technical guidance, support, and learnings from experiences, and we will convene and accelerate multi-stakeholder involvement and decision-making processes to make sure change actually happens.

**39. Working to catalyse inclusive investment in water infrastructure.** Addressing the infrastructure investment gap in the water sector is critical to advance equity and address population growth and migration. We will help selected countries to demonstrate the economic and business cases for investing in both new and existing infrastructure and highlight the role and value of water in the economy and in creating jobs. We will collaborate with international financial institutions, technology innovators, and corporates to support country readiness to design better, safe, more sustainable, and inclusive infrastructure, and to facilitate access to finance. In so doing, we will pay specific attention to gender mainstreaming, technical support, and capacity building.

**40. Investing in pilots and demonstration activities to stimulate systemic change.** Our Partners can deliver action through pilots, to demonstrate and learn about implementing sustainable water management and investment. In select contexts, we will invest in delivering tangible and replicable demonstration activities. These will be designed with replication and upscaling in mind both within and across countries. Our focus will be on strategic, integrated, and forward-looking approaches. We will also pilot collaborations with the private sector. We will specifically look to leverage our Network connections to support adoption of new technologies and business models to improve access to water and sanitation and efficiency in water resources management and water use. We will embrace these changes and innovations and we will collaborate with thought leaders to introduce new, scalable approaches to stakeholders.



## We learn

**41. We will work with stakeholders to turn learning into ongoing improvements in water management, promoting constant feedback loops through our learning and knowledge architecture.** There is no simple 'one-size-fits-all' solution when putting IWRM into practice. Learning about what works has historically been one of GWP's key services to Network Partners and stakeholders. We are committed to practising the use of fact-based analysis for decision-making, including water accounting, climate data, and modelling that set values to water to improve collaboration across sectors. Specifically, we will:

- ✓ Engage with learning and knowledge alliances;
- ✓ Make learning opportunities more easily available, attractive, social, and timely; and
- ✓ Assess how new technologies can support water resources management.

**42. Engaging with learning and knowledge alliances to better understand successful water resources management.** We have always collaborated with knowledge organisations, including academia, research, and think tanks, who share our interests and focus on water management. Now is the time to take collaboration to a new level, building strategic learning and knowledge alliances to ensure synergies are leveraged and a focus is maintained on action. We have already built one such close alliance with the United Nations Development Programme's Cap-Net initiative, a platform of 20+ networks with over 1,000 organisational members, jointly running a virtual learning platform on water resources management. Working with other thinkers, professional organisations, and practitioners, we will selectively engage in research programmes to deepen a shared understanding of the conditions that lead to successful water resources management. Under the guidance of GWP's Technical Committee, we will invest in curating, creating, and sharing knowledge globally and across regions.

**43. Making learning opportunities more easily available, attractive, social, and timely.** Along with other organisations, we have invested in developing knowledge assets, tools, and learning opportunities for water resources management practitioners and for policy-makers alike. Going forward, our Integrated Water Resources Management ToolBox will become more interactive while bringing in other organisations and their insights. We will review our knowledge architecture to ensure key knowledge gaps are filled and use communities of practice to build a more vibrant user base. Through strategic knowledge alliances, we will put a user-centric philosophy at the heart of our approach to learning and knowledge management.

**44. Assessing which technologies are best suited to support decision-makers and supporting the piloting of these technologies and their integration into existing governance processes.** Management and governance processes can be faster and more effective when users are networked and share data, yet the water sector has made little progress in analysing big data and applying machine-learning to support water resources management, forecasting, and risk assessment, and to increase business efficiency at scale. We will work with our partners to test these novel approaches and identify impactful models.

# HOW WE WILL SUPPORT AND STRENGTHEN OUR NETWORK

**45. Our ambitions are high and to deliver them we need to strengthen our Network by investing in our Partners and our community at the regional and country level.** To deliver on this Strategy, our community will focus on renewing and investing in key aspects of our Network operations. Specifically, this means growing our partnership base within and beyond water and strengthening the operational capacities of Country and Regional Water Partnerships. Every global programme will include elements that can be used to channel resources to regional and country teams in the form of learning opportunities, financial resources, and/or opportunities for positioning. In addition, we will leverage GWP's network effects: we will create more opportunities for Country and Regional Water Partnerships to work together, draw inspiration and motivation from each other, and enhance one another's delivery capacity. Specific learning opportunities offered to active Country Water Partnerships and their leaders will create opportunities for growth and impact at the country and basin level. Regular Partner surveys, annual Network meetings at the global and regional level, and Country Water Partnership capacity assessments will make sure we stay on course.

**46. We will invest in our global learning architecture so that Country and Regional Water Partnerships can leverage it to stimulate behaviour change.** In our experience, we have found learning opportunities to often be the first step for behaviour change. With our strategic goals in mind, we will update and tighten GWP's learning and knowledge management architecture as follows: (i) GWP's Technical Committee and its thought leadership will be expanded to also support quality assurance for knowledge products, technical mentoring, and guidance for our regional teams; (ii) our monitoring and evaluation efforts will be linked to building a Network-wide learning culture; (iii) the Integrated Water Resources Management ToolBox will be revitalised to offer space for interactive and timely contributions and updates, available in shorter formats and more languages; (iv) our communities of practice will become a systematic feature of channelling learning from experience across the Network; and (v) selective alliances with learning and knowledge-based institutions will be built to connect our partners to more technical learning opportunities. At the same time, we will ramp up how we communicate new knowledge and learning so that target audiences find it easier to access and engage with, thus stimulating behaviour change.

**47. We will enhance our multi-tiered governance structure to ensure that it balances legitimacy and effectiveness in decision-making across our Network and Organisation.** Our governance is unique in that it marries two different structures. There is the governance structure for the GWP Network, anchored in the Network Partner Meeting from a global perspective and in Country and Regional Water Partnership governance structures more locally. And there is the governance structure for the GWP Organisation, anchored in the Sponsoring Partner Meeting. The GWP Organisation is a body of eight countries and two intergovernmental organisations which was set up as an independent intergovernmental organisation to support the Network in 2002. Throughout the strategy period, we will introduce more ways for Country and Regional Water Partnerships to influence and engage with the Network's and the Organisation's governance, specifically in strengthening global decision-making, legitimacy, and clarity of participation, in line with our values and culture.



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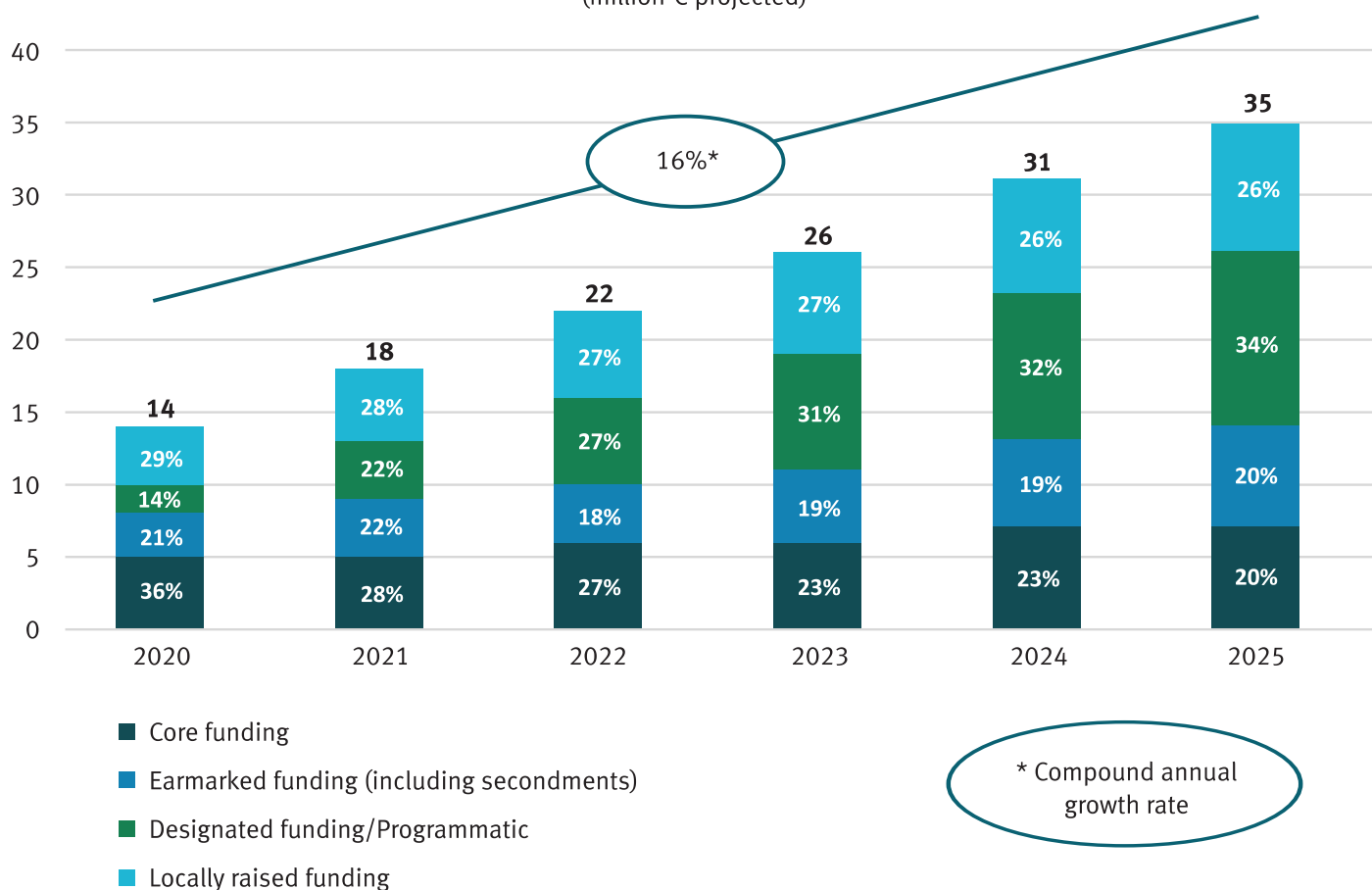
**48. We will maintain a global team, set up as an intergovernmental organisation, to provide Network services, global positioning, and leadership.** The global team supports the governance structures that keep us together, coordinates our regional and global presence and activities, sustains and facilitates our knowledge architecture, and ensures financial management and monitoring and evaluation are based on robust policies and reliable processes. The global team also coordinates strategy development, thematic engagements, global fundraising, and global programme management. Importantly, the global Chair and Executive Secretary position water-related themes in global fora, amplifying the voices of our members and arguing the case for water resources management. Throughout the strategy period, we will strengthen accountability and management approaches for the secretariat while ensuring that the team remains lean and focused on serving the Network.

**49. Our ambitious targets will require a significant upward shift in fundraising. We will thus develop a strong and growing programmatic portfolio while retaining a focus on core funding to ensure a solid backbone of Network functions.** We expect to be able to increase the portions of our budget related to designated, programmatic, and locally raised funding by 16 percent per year. This rapid growth is essential for us to contribute to driving systems change in over 60 countries and contribute to the sustainable development of 4 billion people. In the meantime, we rely on the commitment of a group of core donors to continue to fund our Network's 'backbone functions' globally and regionally. Evolving resource mobilisation opportunities will include:

- **Designated funding.** We will develop a set of broader activities to follow up on GWP's successful Water and Climate for Development Programme, focused on contributing to gender equality and leveraging resources, as well as activities to support the multi-stakeholder and civil society engagement dimensions of our work.
- **Programmatic funding.** We expect the most significant growth in the area of programmatic funding, including fundraising alone or jointly with partners for:
  - Programmes to mobilise knowledge and learning alliances;
  - Programmes to support countries in readiness for climate finance projects, in the context of their engagement with the Green Climate Fund;
  - Specific thematic programmes in the context of stimulating progress towards water-relevant SDGs (e.g. food security/water, nature-based solutions/water, resilient urban development/water);
  - Programmes that address broad and water-specific challenges that require transboundary responses (e.g. source-to-sea solutions for river and marine pollution); and
  - Programmes to mobilise private sector engagement towards IWRM, leveraging funding from bilateral agencies, multilateral agencies, foundations, and corporates.
- **Locally raised funding.** We will work with country and regional teams as they continue to strengthen their own fundraising capabilities by developing larger programmes, typically in partnership with other larger organisations. This will involve investing in the leadership capacity of country and regional teams through collaboration and cooperation across the Network.
- **Core funding.** We expect support from our core donors to remain steady or to slightly increase.

# RESOURCES REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE GWP STRATEGY 2020–2025 TARGETS

(million € projected)



## Supporting documents

### GWP Gender Strategy (2015)

<https://www.gwp.org/globalassets/global/about-gwp/strategic-documents/gwp-gender-strategy.pdf>

### GWP Gender Action Piece (2017)

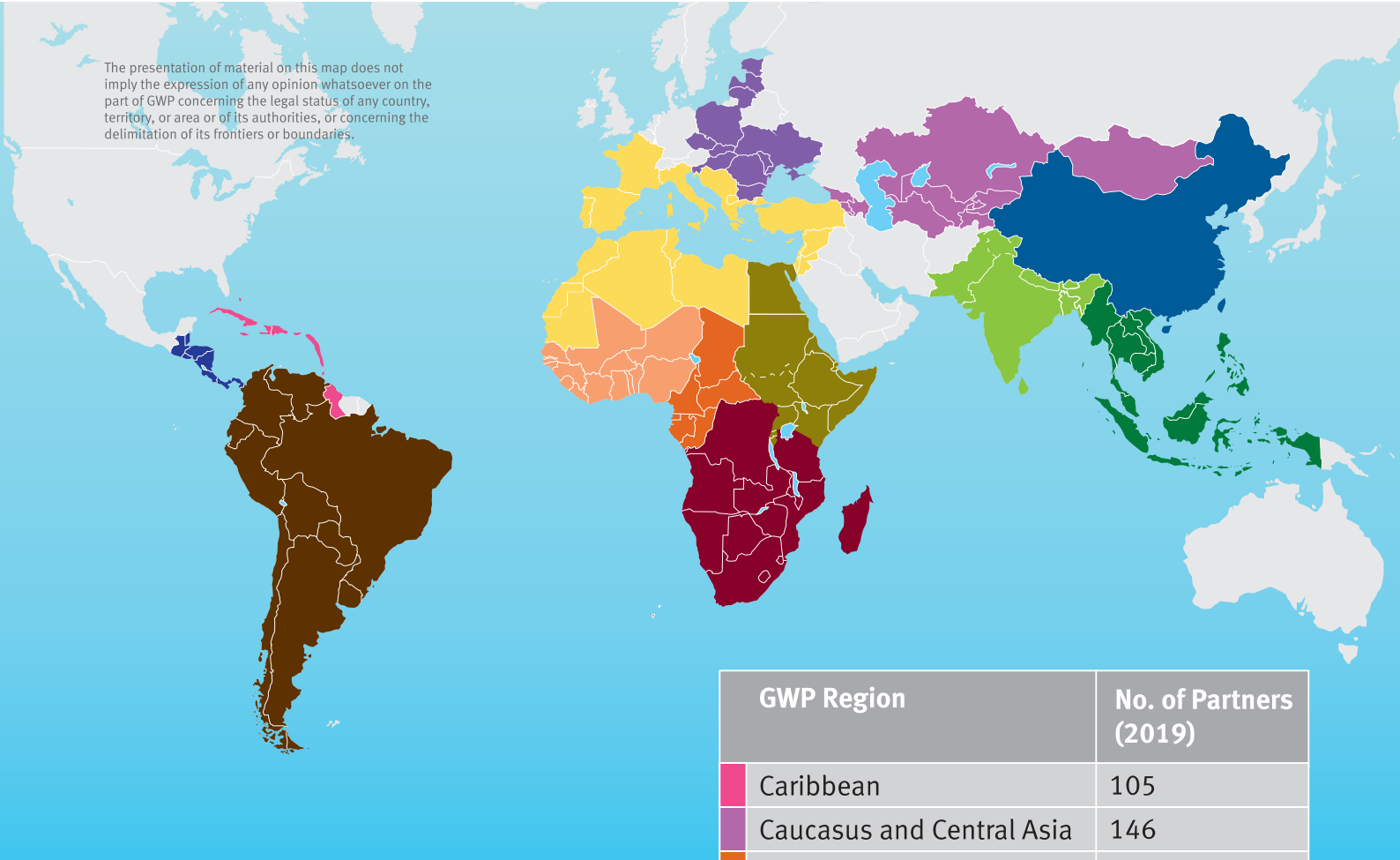
<https://www.gwp.org/globalassets/global/about-gwp/publications/gender/gender-action-piece.pdf>

### GWP Youth Engagement Strategy (2015)

[https://www.gwp.org/globalassets/global/about-gwp/strategic-documents/gwp\\_youth-strategy\\_web.pdf](https://www.gwp.org/globalassets/global/about-gwp/strategic-documents/gwp_youth-strategy_web.pdf)

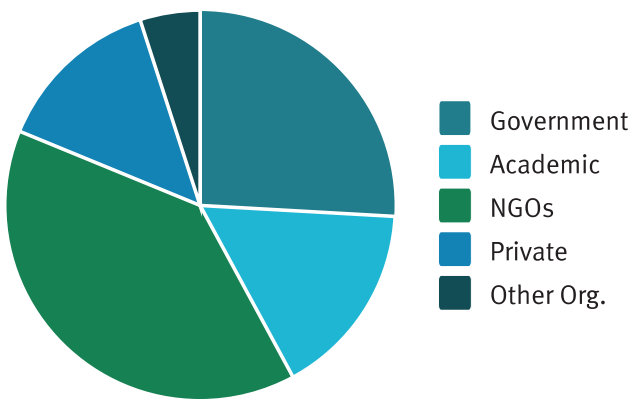
# AN ACTION NETWORK WITH A GLOBAL PRESENCE

The presentation of material on this map does not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of GWP concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.



GWP Region	No. of Partners (2019)
Caribbean	105
Caucasus and Central Asia	146
Central Africa	173
Central America	216
Central and Eastern Europe	184
China	99
Eastern Africa	303
Mediterranean	91
South America	359
South Asia	404
South East Asia	247
Southern Africa	338
West Africa	235
Global	290
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,190</b>

## GWP Partners by type



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