Advancing towards gender mainstreaming in water resources management

About

This report is produced by the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme, a coordination mechanism that assists governments in designing and implementing country-led actions to advance the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicator 6.5.1 on the degree of implementation of integrated water resources management (IWRM). This work serves as an entry point to accelerate progress towards achieving water-related SDGs and other development goals, in line with countries' national priorities. This directly supports the official SDG monitoring and reporting processes, and should lead to measurable progress on the relevant SDG target(s).

Under the guidance of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), as the custodian agency for SDG indicator 6.5.1, and coordinated by Global Water Partnership (GWP) in collaboration with UNEP-DHI Centre and Cap-Net, the Support Programme brings together a unique blend of partners in each country, representing governments, civil society, academia and the private sector, in the spirit of SDG 17 on Partnerships for the Goals. For more information, and for any enquiries relating to this report, please refer to https://www.gwp.org/en/sdg6support/ or write to sdg6iwrmsp@gwp.org.

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Contents

List of acronyms

Cap-Net UNDP	International Capacity Development Network for Sustainable Water Management of the United Nations Development Programme
GWA	Gender and Water Alliance
GWP	Global Water Partnership
IWRM	Integrated water resources management
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP-DHI	UNEP-DHI Centre on Water and Environment
WASH	Water, sanitation, and hygiene
WRM	Water resources management

Foreword

Gender equality and social inclusion are among GWP's core values, and have been since our creation in 1996. A lot has changed in the world since then, and much progress has been made, but advancing towards gender equality by fully recognising the important role of women and marginalised populations in water resources management remains a major challenge. In our 25th anniversary year, GWP remains as committed as ever to pursuing this objective.

Since 2017, we have partnered with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UNEP-DHI Centre, and Cap-Net through the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme. This Programme assists countries in monitoring and accelerating progress towards their water-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Support Programme uses the SDG 6.5 monitoring process as a three-yearly status check on how well the world is progressing towards fully implementing integrated water resources management (IWRM), and builds on that process to provide guidance and assistance for countries to advance towards their national targets. We believe that mainstreaming gender in countries' water resources management is a key strategy to assist them to reach not just SDG 6.5, but also, in the indivisible spirit of the SDGs, many other related targets.

We are therefore proud to present this summary of the study on the gender-related question in the SDG 6.5.1 survey instrument, which all UN Member States were invited to fill in during the 2020 data drive. This report has been prepared as a starting point for more detailed conversations with national and local governments, international development partners, non-governmental organisations, academic institutions, and any other interested party, on how best to achieve gender mainstreaming in IWRM. It was opened for comments in March and April 2021, and the feedback received has been incorporated in this version. Rather than a final version, we prefer to view this document as a starting point for the necessary dialogue and action around how to advance towards the vision of fully mainstreaming gender considerations in water resources management.

As a network of networks striving for a water secure world, we welcome any organisation that shares this vision to join forces with us. If our 25 years of work have taught us anything, it is that the world's water challenges can only be solved by working in partnership.

Darío Soto-Abril

Executive Secretary
Global Water Partnership

Executive summary

This report presents the key findings of the study *Understanding and advancing towards gender mainstreaming in Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), in line with SDG indicator 6.5.1* commissioned in 2020. The starting point for the study was the results of the 2017 baseline survey on SDG 6.5.1, completed by 172 countries, which showed that the gender-related questions were among the least advanced among all aspects of IWRM. The study also drew upon the 2020 country responses to the survey, which showed that the global average score for the gender-related question had risen from 44 out of 100 in 2017 to 54 out of 100 by 2020, revealing definite progress, although clearly much more needs to be done.

The main objective of this report is to showcase and disseminate a range of practices that have been implemented in different countries to mainstream gender in water resources management (WRM), drawing on: (a) real examples collected from SDG 6.5.1 focal points[1] from 23 countries that participated in structured interviews, and (b) the textual responses from all countries that reported under the gender-related question 2.2d "Gender included in laws/plans or similar within water resources management" in the 2020 survey. This report therefore presents some of the different mechanisms, practices, and tools used by those countries to advance gender mainstreaming in WRM. It is hoped that this report will thus allow for cross-fertilisation of knowledge, highlighting some of the common gaps, challenges and constraints, and key enabling factors, and providing recommendations on how to replicate and upscale these practices.

The participants interviewed in this study identified that gender mainstreaming in WRM goes beyond the issue of the integration of women. **Gender mainstreaming is about fully integrating all gender perspectives** (differences in needs, uses and practices, employment and entrepreneurship, access to resources, vulnerabilities and impacts, adaptation and mitigation capacity of men,

women, and non-binary individuals) in water planning, management, and decision-making. It is not just about increasing women's representation in councils and committees or creating a new general legal framework on gender protection, although those actions may be necessary; it is mostly about integrating gender issues in all policies in a cross-cutting manner, linking water and other relevant policy areas. This also supports the achievement of SDG 5 – achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

Different organisations have developed numerous gender mainstreaming strategies within WRM, and many countries have adopted gender policies or strategies. While more such strategies are without doubt required, merely having a strategy does not necessarily translate to significant progress, as **evidence has revealed a clear gap between these policies and practice**. Such strategies are not always accompanied by concrete action plans, nor are they adequately funded; measures and mechanisms are often not fully implemented; and data collection and monitoring and evaluation processes may not always be sophisticated and disaggregated enough to reveal the true gender and inclusion power dynamics occurring within a WRM context.

While the majority of the SDG 6.5.1 focal points interviewed as part of this study understood the importance of integrating gender considerations in WRM policies, most also recognised that not enough has been done in their countries to implement comprehensive gender mainstreaming strategies in WRM, because of the lack of knowledge, resources, technical expertise, and/or political backing. They highlighted that, in practice, gender mainstreaming is not always identified as a priority or explicitly recognised at various levels of water-related policy-making, often being treated as a separate, ad hoc topic. We also need to better understand and account for a broader range of factors that can lead to exclusion and marginalisation, such as age, disability, ethnicity, caste, and sexuality, if we are to truly ensure that no one is left behind.

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[1] Each UN Member State names an official focal point to represent them for the purpose of reporting on SDG indicator 6.5.1. These focal points are government representatives, either from the nation's water or environment agency or ministry, or sometimes from the statistics division.

Despite these challenges and gaps, many countries have taken significant and concrete steps towards advancing gender mainstreaming in WRM. Even though a one-size-fits-all strategy for gender mainstreaming does not exist for any sector, countries seem to have adopted common practices and mechanisms related to the following **seven enablers for gender mainstreaming in WRM**:

There is strong commitment to gender mainstreaming among the executive leadership at the national level. High-level commitment, both outside and within water-related sectors, is key to drive the process, as it encourages commitment and action from national to local government and organisational levels. High-level political commitment, for example from the head of state or ministerial level, can raise awareness about the need for gender mainstreaming in WRM, supported through evidence-based analysis. Independent bodies reporting directly to the executive and legislative branches of power, and accountability mechanisms at all levels, can help to ensure that political discourse is turned into tangible and effective action.

Egalitarian legal frameworks and gender are explicitly integrated into water laws, policies, and strategies. An egalitarian constitution is often cited as an important foundation to promote gender mainstreaming, although on its own, it may be insufficient. Additionally, gender mainstreaming tools and strategies are increasingly integrated into the legal and policy frameworks for water, but still not commonly enough to ensure systemic changes. Integrating the concept of gender equality[2] in policy-making is not only about recognising that men and women have the same rights, but also about identifying and implementing specific strategies to address the barriers to access those rights across all social categories.

[2] In this report, the term gender equality is used rather than equity, since 'equality' is a legally binding term in the context of the human rights to water and sanitation, and equity is not (see also Grant, 2017).

Earmarked funding is allocated to gender mainstreaming in WRM, including establishing and running gender mainstreaming units in different ministries and at the local level, recruiting gender specialists, and implementing gender-focused activities. These units have a clear mandate to review the agenda and activities of the ministries or agencies they represent and ensure that gender matters are considered. Specific funds for gender equality measures are mainly present in programmes addressing social inclusion issues or fundamental human rights but should also be adopted in policy fields that are often not seen as immediately related to gender equality, such as environment and water.

Supportive frameworks are established for the effective participation and parity of women in the development and implementation of policies, programmes, and projects. There is a need to understand and address the direct and indirect barriers to women's effective participation in organisations and processes at all levels. It is essential to promote normative changes in women's participation in WRM and engage women and other vulnerable groups in the whole water value chain. It starts by not simply viewing them as end-users but instead engaging them in a gender-responsive transition in WRM. The use of quotas can be a good starting point, though the cultural and bureaucratic environment must also be conducive to ensure women have sufficient input and influence.

Centralised monitoring systems are overseen by a national body such as the statistics office, which has the means and technical skills to design gender-responsive indicators and gender-disaggregated data collection. Designing and collecting data and indicators on the gender approach is crucial to developing action plans that promote women's and men's access to decision-making and control over resources. The definition of gender-responsive indicators requires an expertise that not all countries have access to. More precise measurements of the participation of women and other vulnerable groups in WRM could be further developed.

Investments in education, awareness raising, and strengthening of capacities can help change current cultural issues and the prevailing norms and stereotypes about women's place in a society and can increase the opportunities available for women to enter policy- and decision-making spaces in WRM. This requires a change of mentality and culture, the starting point for which is awareness, strengthened capacities, and education on the multiple benefits of such an approach.

Multi-stakeholder and intersectoral coordination mechanisms and bodies carry out consultation processes and engagement, raise awareness, and support capacity development activities. Some countries have adopted multi-sectoral commissions, in which members of the central government, the local government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and user associations are represented, set goals, and monitor progress on gender equality. Intersectoral mechanisms are in place in some countries to design and implement robust capacity development activities.

These enablers are interdependent; however, achieving all of them in unison is a challenge for many countries, as acknowledged in their SDG 6.5.1 survey responses. It should be emphasised that, according to the findings of this study, countries that have developed and committed to a gender mainstreaming strategy with specific targets, clear definition of roles, financial and human resources, lines of accountability under an overarching implementation plan, and a data strategy, may be found all over the world, and in all income categories, as is also the case for countries facing challenges in implementing gender mainstreaming in WRM. Therefore, many of the examples shared in this report may provide pointers to countries looking to advance in that direction, whatever their geographic location and level of development.

1

Background, objectives, and methodology of the report

Background

Integrated water resources management (IWRM) has been a globally accepted framework for governing and managing water resources since the 1990s (Bertule et al., 2018). A widely used definition of IWRM has been formulated by the Global Water Partnership (GWP, 2000: 22): "IWRM is a process which promotes the co-ordinated development and management of water, land and related resources in order to maximize economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems and the environment". GWP further describes IWRM as management of water resources "in a sustainable and balanced way, taking account of social, economic and environmental interests. It recognizes the many different and competing interest groups, the sectors that use and abuse water, and the needs of the environment" (GWP, 2009).

One of the clearest commitments to advance IWRM globally is the dedicated Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 6.5, which calls upon countries to "implement, by 2030, integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate".[3] The achievement of this target is monitored and reported through two dedicated indicators, namely 6.5.1 on the "degree of implementation of IWRM", and 6.5.2 on the "proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation".[4]

In its agreed conclusions on "Mainstreaming the gender perspective in all policies and programmes in the United Nations system" in 2010, the UN Economic and Social Council defined gender mainstreaming as a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of all policies and programmes in all political, economic, and societal spheres. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women (UN Economic and Social Council, 2010).

Principle number 3 of the 1992 Dublin Statement on Water and Sustainable Development stated that "women play a central part in the provision, management and safeguarding of water" (International Conference on Water and the Environment, 1992). In line with the indivisible nature of the SDGs, achieving SDG target 6.5 requires attention to gender mainstreaming, in tandem with SDG 5 on gender equality and empowering all women and girls.[5] Specifically, target 5.5 focuses on ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life.

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[3] United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 6 (https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal6).

[4] https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal6
[5] United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 (https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal5).

While it is true that women typically bear the brunt of the water provision tasks at the domestic level, the argument for including them in water governance and related decision-making processes should not be based solely on the sometimes idealised role of women as providers and users of water and guardians of the living environment. For this principle to be accepted and implemented, deliberate policies are needed to address women's and men's specific needs and to equip and empower women to participate at all levels in water resources programmes, including decision-making and implementation, in ways defined by them. Gender mainstreaming in WRM can be instrumental in helping countries address other national and global challenges (poverty, inequalities, social justice, climate change, etc.), and should thus be integrated into holistic and cross-cutting national policies which contribute to the achievement of the many related SDGs.

Objectives of the report

To support the monitoring and evaluation of gender aspects in IWRM implementation, the SDG indicator 6.5.1 survey includes a gender-related question. This enables UN Member States to self-evaluate the extent to which gender is included in their laws/plans or similar within WRM. However, both in the 2017 baseline and the 2020 update to that SDG indicator, the average global score for this question was rather low (44 in 2017[6] and 54 in 2020, on a scale of 0–100). Many countries also reported challenges in interpreting the question and knowing how to report on it in the national context. This report thus aims to enhance understanding on the multiple benefits of more fully integrating gender considerations into WRM and enhancing women's participation, and thereby accelerating achievement of SDG 6.5.1 and other related SDG targets. More specifically, the report aims to:

- clarify misconceptions around gender mainstreaming in WRM

- provide clear guidance to countries in terms of what it means to mainstream gender in WRM, within their relevant laws, plans, and practices

- showcase and disseminate a range of practices that have been implemented around the world, drawing on examples collected from SDG 6.5.1 focal points in national governments, fostering knowledge sharing

- highlight some of the common gaps, challenges, and constraints experienced by countries, as well as key enabling factors that facilitate gender mainstreaming in WRM

- support understanding of gender mainstreaming in WRM and recommend how to strengthen current practices.

Methodology

The primary purpose of the survey instrument for SDG indicator 6.5.1[7], to be completed approximately every three years by all UN Member States, is to support national, regional, and global monitoring and reporting on indicator 6.5.1. It has been designed to be useful as a simple diagnostic tool for countries to identify strengths and weaknesses in different aspects of IWRM implementation. To support the monitoring and evaluation of gender aspects in IWRM implementation, the 2020 version of this survey instrument included a gender-related question, 2.2d, "Gender included in laws/plans or similar within water resources management". Countries scored themselves on this question on a 0–100 scale and provided additional supporting free text information in the "Status description" and "Way forward" fields. This free text information, referencing evidence wherever possible (e.g. quoting reports, laws, plans, etc.), was analysed for this report.

In addition, the report draws on the findings gained through structured interviews, which were conducted in late 2020 with 23 nations and states around the world following their submissions of the 2020 SDG 6.5.1 survey, namely (in alphabetical order): Australia, Austria, Brazil, Cyprus, Dominica, Georgia, Greece, Grenada, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Nepal, Nicaragua, Panama, Philippines, Republic of Moldova, Somalia, South Africa, State of Palestine, Sweden, Turkmenistan, and Viet Nam. A set of criteria was used to select these case studies: broad representation of scores (from 0 to 100) assigned to question 2.2d in the survey; dispersion among all UN regional groups[8] and GWP regions;[9] representation of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and small island developing states; and the relevance and depth of the textual information that was provided in the countries' responses to question 2.2d.

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[6] In the 2017 survey, three gender-related questions were included, referring to the national, sub-national, and transboundary levels, which were merged into one in the 2020 survey, at all levels. The 2017 score is the average of the national (46) and sub-national level (41) questions. See Annex 1 and Annex 2 for more details on the 2020 survey.

[7] Country Survey Instrument 2020 for SDG Indicator 6.5.1: http://iwrmdataportal.unepdhi.org/IWRMDataJsonService/Service1.svc/DownloadSurveyDocument/English/IWRM_Survey_Final/docx
[8] https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/regional-groups
[9] https://www.gwp.org/en/About/who/Regional-Water-Partnerships/

2

Gender mainstreaming in water resources management: concepts and understanding

Links between gender and water resources management

The concept of gender in WRM has been included in the criteria monitored through SDG indicator 6.5.1 for various reasons. First, water scarcity disproportionately affects poor communities and the most marginalised individuals in society (UN, 2018). Second, access to water is relevant for women's empowerment because it further affects women's access to education and health (in relation to pregnancy, childbirth, and water-borne diseases), as well as their income and safety (gender-based violence) (WaterAid, 2013). Third, as highlighted by Oxfam in a recent report on SDG Goals 5 and 6, "gender equality and access to water are basic human rights and are thus foundational for achieving the other SDGs" (Crawford, 2020).

It is important to note at this stage that the terms 'women' and 'gender' are not interchangeable. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), sex refers to the biological differences between men and women, which are universal and do not change. Gender refers to social attributes that are learned or acquired during socialisation as a member of a given community. Because the latter attributes are learned behaviours, they can and do change over time (with increasing rapidity as the rate of technological change intensifies) and vary across cultures (UNDP, 2016).

Gender in WRM therefore refers to the socially constructed attributes (roles, activities, responsibilities, needs, and opportunities) associated with women and men, boys and girls, non-binary, transgender, and intersex people, in a given society at a given time, in designing, planning, managing, implementing, monitoring, decision-making, and evaluating the use and exploitation of water resources. While it is now generally agreed that we need to ensure inclusive and sustainable water governance for all genders, this report focuses on mainstreaming women's participation in WRM.

## Perceptions of gender mainstreaming in water management

People and countries interpret the concept of gender and gender mainstreaming in WRM differently. The following three interpretations are the most prevailing ones:

- **fair representation** of all gender groups and individuals in management, executive, and decision-making bodies

- **equity in opportunities to raise voices and participate** in the decision-making process at all levels

- **full integration of all gender perspectives** (differences in needs, uses and practices, employment and entrepreneurship, access to resources, vulnerabilities and impacts, adaptation and mitigation capacity) in water planning, management, and decision-making.

It is important to understand that gender mainstreaming, as highlighted in this report, goes beyond the issue of equality between men and women. The intersectionality between gender and various other social issues (ethnicity, migrant status, sexual orientation, age, disability, geographical settings, etc.) is important and should be considered when designing gender mainstreaming strategies and plans for the water sector.

"The number of women representatives in water projects and boards should not be the sole goal, neither the ultimate objective of gender mainstreaming. Having women in planning bodies alone doesn't guarantee that gender issues are mainstreamed; it is a much wider process. The presence of women in water projects won't radically influence the impact of the project if the women have not been included in the design phase and if the projects have not integrated all gender needs and set objectives that are gender-sensitive and beneficial for all."

**Dibya Kansakar,
retired employee of the Department of
Water Resources and Irrigation, Nepal**
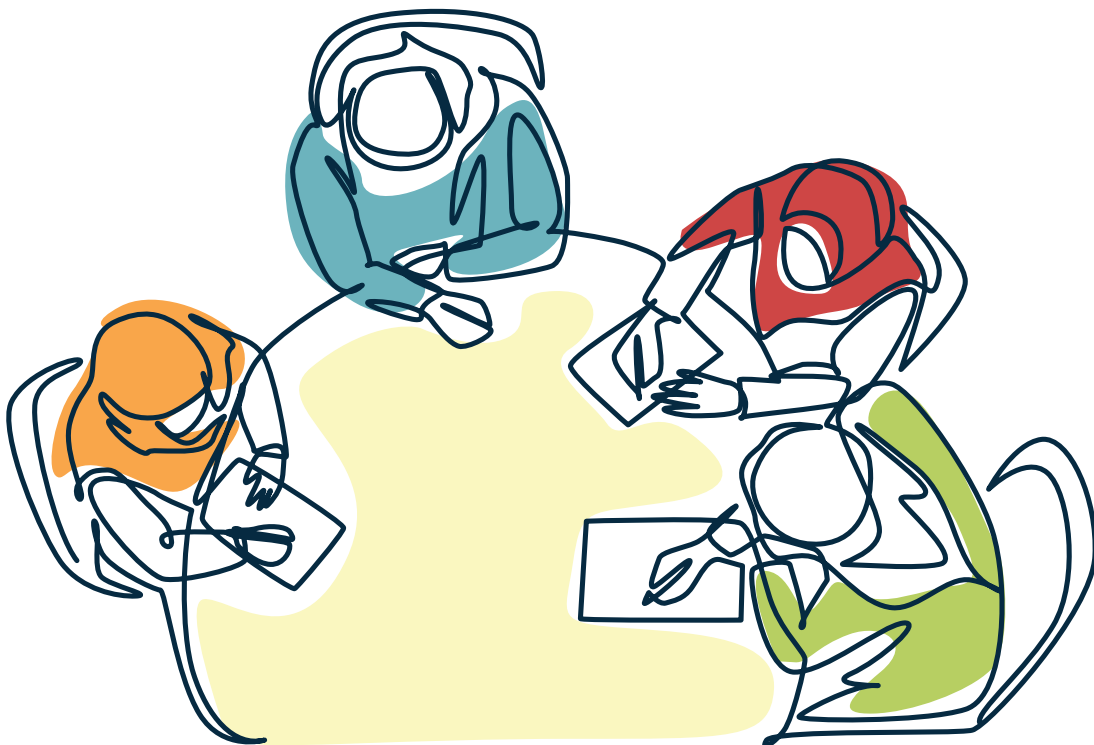
3

Mechanisms and practices for gender mainstreaming: experiences from different countries

This chapter presents and discusses the different 'specific ways' (mechanisms, practices, tools) in which countries have implemented gender mainstreaming in their WRM strategies and in practice.

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs), governments, regional bodies, partnership organisations, multilateral development banks, and bilateral aid agencies have developed countless gender and inclusion strategies within WRM. Yet, evidence has revealed a clear gap between these policies and practice (Grant, 2017). Gender mainstreaming is not always well understood; gender strategies are not always accompanied by concrete action plans and are frequently inadequately funded; measures and mechanisms are seldom fully implemented; and, on the whole, data collection and monitoring and evaluation processes may not always be sophisticated and disaggregated enough to reveal the true gender and inclusion power dynamics occurring in WRM. Furthermore, there is a need to better understand and account for a broader range of factors that can lead to exclusion and marginalisation, such as age, disability, ethnicity, caste, and sexuality, to ensure that no one is left behind.

Despite these challenges, many countries have taken significant and concrete steps towards advancing gender mainstreaming in WRM. This report presents examples of some specific mechanisms, practices, and tools that have

been developed and used by countries in order to progress with gender mainstreaming. These have been grouped into six categories:

- advocacy, high-level commitment, changing prevailing norms and stereotypes

- legislative and policy framework and governance

- human capital, financial resources, institutions, and support organisations

- women's participation and parity

- monitoring activities to track and assess progress

- awareness raising, capacity development, and education.

Advocacy, high-level commitment, changing prevailing norms and stereotypes

A clear, high-level institutional commitment to mainstreaming gender and inclusion objectives is important to drive the mainstreaming process. This can be a commitment at the central government level (from legislative bodies and commissions such as unions and parliamentarians), local government level (from river basin organisations, political

parties, etc.), and/or organisational level (user associations, water councils, institutions, industries wishing to maximise impact and reduce investment failures, etc.). Ideally it would be at all of those levels in parallel.

It is important to clarify what gender mainstreaming looks like at all levels and what it entails, to identify how power is exercised in each country (power is defined here as the capacity for influence). The consensus across all the different interviews conducted shows that women and other vulnerable groups have little impact and limited ability to raise their voices to influence water policies, how funding is allocated, or water-related management practices. However, efforts are being made at different levels of government and citizen's participation to address this representation gap. Some of these efforts are related to awareness raising and capacity development, which are addressed below. In parallel, several countries have highlighted that gender considerations are integrated in the processes of reform of their national water resources action plans.

More often than not, these efforts are inspired by the objectives of Agenda 2030, international commitments, and/or by requirements related to funding opportunities provided by international financial institutions. Countries like Somalia, Brazil, Nepal, and the Lao People's Democratic Republic are currently in the process of developing new national strategies or action plans led by the relevant water-related ministries with gender considerations as an integral, overarching component of the strategy and not as an afterthought. However, when looking at the comments provided by other countries in the 2020 survey, gender mainstreaming is not often considered a top priority and is frequently disassociated from WRM plans. Such plans are often drafted and finalised before the issue of gender can be appropriately addressed. It is essential that countries reach a common understanding that gender mainstreaming is an integral and founding component of IWRM. In this sense, the following actions could be taken:

■ National management plans and national development plans, for example, emphasise and clarify that the role and needs of women and other vulnerable groups in environmental management must be recognised and advocate for the promotion of gender parity at all levels of decision-making.

■ Independent bodies reporting directly to the executive and legislative branches of power are established and conduct policy assessments and gender analyses to inform policy-making.

■ A gender perspective is analysed and integrated into the responsibilities at all levels of decision-making from the national government to local administrative boards with general guidance and tools prepared and made available in order to facilitate this process.

■ Accountability mechanisms, at the different levels of government, are adopted to ensure that policy and practice are linked and that progress does not depend on the commitment of individuals.

To stimulate political will, it is often essential to make the problem explicit, since the business-as-usual model may hide the prevailing issues. Evidence that highlights these issues is needed to break customary patterns to enable behavioural change and forward planning. In this sense, the following actions could be taken:

■ A gender and WRM analysis and assessment is undertaken, and data presented as an evidence basis for establishing a common understanding of the prevailing gender issues.

■ WRM reports highlight and disseminate the prevailing issues to raise awareness, presenting any available numbers about the limited women's representation at the different decision-making levels to provide a robust baseline.

■ Targeted awareness-raising campaigns and activities are developed at all levels addressing various groups (from politicians to citizens).

The following examples are taken from country reporting on SDG 6.5.1 and interviews with focal points in national governments. In that sense, the comments are those of the countries in question, and the terminology and assumptions may not necessarily be fully aligned with those of the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme.

Box 1. Country examples on advocacy, commitment, and political will

In **Algeria,** a ministry responsible for the status of women was set up and the 'National Strategy for Promotion and Integration of Women' was adopted by the government in July 2008. This confirms Algeria's interest in the issue of the promotion of women, their participation in all areas of the development process, and their role in family stability and in social cohesion.

The **Austrian** Government Programme (AGP) 2020–2024 safeguards gender equity. The AGP is supported at the highest level by the Chancellor, who is keen on pursuing gender equality among ministers. The Minister of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Regions and Tourism (BMLRT), which includes the Water Directorate, is also setting a good example, and a gender mainstreaming working group has been established.

In **Georgia,** there is a permanent 'Parliamentary Gender Equality Council' which has its own Action Plan (2018–2020) according to which a Gender Impact Analysis (GIA) methodology must be institutionalised in the Parliament. According to indicator 1.3.1, each Parliamentary Committee must implement a gender impact analysis for at least one draft law per year. Considering this, the Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Committee of the Parliament of Georgia, with the support of the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and UKAid, conducted a study on the GIA of the new draft law on WRM. The study includes specific recommendations on how gender can be mainstreamed within the new legislation, including both specific articles of the law and mainstreaming gender in the decision-making processes envisaged by the draft law.

In **Nicaragua,** the Ministry of Women (MINIM) was created in 2013 to formulate, coordinate, execute, and evaluate government policies, plans, programmes, and projects that guarantee the participation of women in development processes. The Directorate of Protagonism and Economic Empowerment of Women, the Directorate of Training for the Practice of Gender Equity and Human Rights, and the Directorate of Public Policies for the Development of Women, all contribute to gender mainstreaming in water resources management.

In **New Zealand,** Gender Implication Statements are a requirement for all policy papers that go to the Cabinet Social Wellbeing Committee and are considered good practice for all Cabinet papers.

In the **Philippines,** mainstreaming at all levels is usually observed where the governor or the mayor is committed to ensuring that both men and women are equally heard, and where training on women's leadership occurs. Leadership and political will are very important factors for gender mainstreaming.

In **South Africa,** there is a strong political will for gender mainstreaming. All departments are given a mandate from the President of South Africa to establish Transformation Units responsible for gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women and youth as well as people with disabilities. These Units have a uniform structure in all departments.

Legislative and policy framework and governance

Gender mainstreaming tools are increasingly integrated in governance structures as highlighted by the countries who participated in the 2020 survey on SDG 6.5.1, but often nowhere near enough to ensure systemic changes. This may be due to many factors, including lack of inclusion of gender aspects in water policies, strategies or plans, lack of specific gender objectives in these strategies and plans, weak or missing action plans that translate the objectives into specific programmes and activities, or a gap between policy and implementation. The fact that the different bodies and institutions involved in WRM within a country or region may be at different stages of maturity, technical knowledge, and understanding about the water management system is also a contributing factor. All these elements can compromise putting policy into practice.

Gender equality in WRM should be viewed and implemented as a tool for social and economic development of all genders and other vulnerable groups. However, the focus in terms of legislative and policy frameworks seems to often reside in the technical components rather than in social inclusion. Integrating the concept of gender equality in policy-making is not only about recognising that men and women have the same rights, but also about identifying ways to address the barriers to access those rights by the population across all social categories, considering the prevalent social norms (local hierarchy, class/caste system, economic circumstances, etc.). In this sense, various actions can be taken separately, ranging from establishing overarching, more basic and general structures, enhancing policy requirements and mechanisms, to promoting more specific and comprehensive mechanisms. Some of these are presented below:

Overarching, basic mechanisms

Specific, comprehensive mechanisms
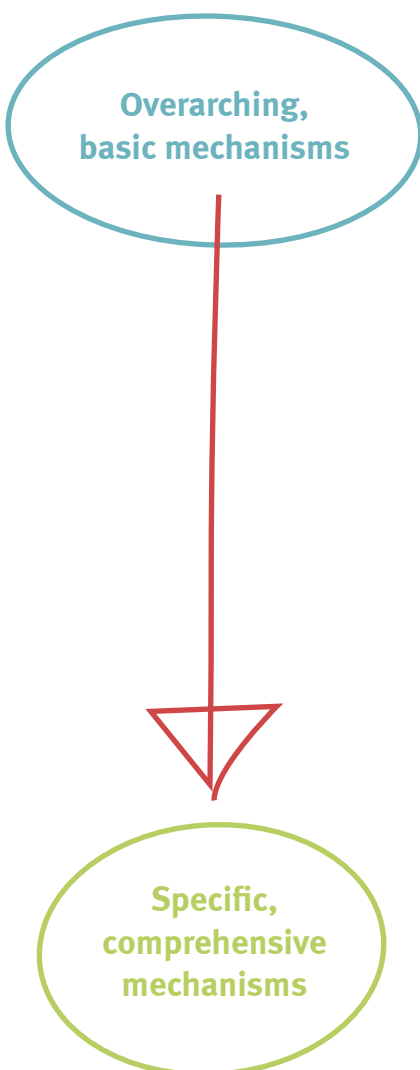
National legislation/constitution safeguards gender equality.

National gender policy/plan/strategy is in place (which covers all sectors, including WRM).

National water policy/law/strategy mentions general consideration of women's needs in project planning and implementation (including **women-friendly policies** to create safe and adapted work environments for women).

Policy and legislation including IWRM are **aligned** to avoid contradictions and inconsistencies.

There are **specific requirements** for considering gender in **water policy/law/strategy/acts** and relevant international conventions.

There are **specific requirements** for considering gender in **'local level' water planning** or in river basin plans.

Gender equality component is **embedded in most WRM policies, plans, and programmes**.

Specific **strategy for gender equality in WRM** is drafted.

Guidelines and action plans for implementing the strategy for gender equality in WRM are elaborated.

Specific strategy for gender equality in WRM is **implemented and progress towards gender-related targets is monitored**.

Box 2. Country examples on legislative and governance mechanisms

In **Algeria**, the **National Action Plan for the Promotion and Integration of Women (PANPIF)** is an instrument for the execution, coordination, and monitoring of the **National Strategy for Promotion and Integration of Women** (adopted in 2010). WRM was represented in the Intersectoral Commission responsible for drawing up the 2017–2021 National Action Plan, aiming to strengthen equality between men and women in WRM and their complementary roles at different levels of political, social, and economic life.

In **Australia,** under the Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011, each new bill introduced into Federal Parliament is accompanied by a **Statement of Compatibility with Australia's international human rights obligation,** and thus a range of issues (including gender) must be considered. While there is no explicit reference to gender equity in the water legislation, Australia incorporates gender equality concepts through the policy cycle.

In **Austria,** there is no specific policy for gender mainstreaming in water since the high-level legislation suffices. The **Austrian Government Programme (AGP)** 2020–2024 safeguards gender equity as one of its basic principles. The Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Regions and Tourism (BMLRT), which includes the Water Directorate, has a **Specific Ordinance** for fostering women's equality (called Frauenförderungsplan) with specific objectives and measures (organisational, financial, etc.), including for example raising the ratio of women occupying positions in the ministry, supporting gender mainstreaming, and facilitating work-life balance. Annual reports are issued to monitor the objectives of the Ordinance.

In **Bangladesh**, the **National Water Policy (1999)** and the **Coastal Zone Policy (2005)** include gender considerations, and the **National Women Development Policy (2011)** provides an overarching framework for gender mainstreaming which can also be applicable in WRM.

In **Western Africa**, gender is one of the principles of the ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) Water Resources Policy adopted in 2008. In line with that policy, in **Burkina Faso**, the National Gender Policy (PNG) was adopted in July 2009. Its general objective is to promote participatory and equitable development for men and women, by ensuring equal and equitable access and control over resources and decision-making spheres, while respecting their fundamental rights. In the ten actions of the **National Programme for IWRM 2016–2030 (PNGIRE),** a specific action was devoted to cross-cutting aspects including gender. **PNGIRE action 10 is a specific objective that takes the gender dimension into account**. A strategy for involving women has been developed and actions are being implemented to allow gender to be taken into account in the establishment of management, consultation, and decision-making bodies.

In **Cabo Verde**, a number of mechanisms have been developed, ranging from strategies to plans, communications programmes, and networks, including the **ESGAS (Social and Gender Strategy for the Water and Sanitation Sector)** in force until 2020.

In **Costa Rica**, several recent policies incorporate the issue of gender equity, such as the Communal Aqueduct National Policy, providing significant empowerment of women.

Gender mainstreaming is a high priority in **Grenada** and is being addressed in the Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan (GEPAP), the National Water Policy, the National Land Policy, the National Climate Change Policy and the National Sustainable Development Plan 2020-2035 among other policies, plans, and programmes, as well as in the supporting studies for the Grenada Climate-Resilient Water Sector project. The National Water Policy mentions a number of areas such as gender balance in the workplace, human rights, and the benefits arising from social equity. It is noteworthy that gender issues were explicitly included in the 2018/19 water policy process, while 42 percent of the stakeholders consulted were women.

Box 2. Continued...

In India, the role of women in planning and implementing projects is also included in **National Water Policy 2012**, paragraph 9.6 of which says: "Local governing bodies like Panchayats, Municipalities, Corporations, etc., and Water Users Associations, wherever applicable, should be involved in planning of the projects. The unique needs and aspirations of the Scheduled caste and Scheduled Tribes, women and other weaker sections of the society should be given due consideration."

In **Lao People's Democratic Republic**, a set of **guidelines on water resources and river basin management and how to implement gender issues** on the ground are available at the local level. Evaluation and monitoring procedures are also specified in the guidelines.

Currently in **Nepal**, all strategies, government policies, plans, and programmes in the water resources sector, as well as the master plan and water-related legislations, include a **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion compulsory component**.

In the **Republic of Moldova, the Strategy for ensuring equality between women and men for 2017–2021 and the Action Plan** on its implementation were approved in 2017. This Action Plan also covers water supply and sewerage, and will in turn be adjusted in the future based on the legislation for gender issues.

In **South Africa**, a multi-layer approach in the legislative process promotes gender equity. **The National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality (nPFWeGe) 2000** set a roadmap for public policy, legislation, and organisational and operational policy. There is an established **National Gender Policy**, which promotes the participation of women in the water sector. The **Constitution of South Africa**, the basis for all legislation, guarantees gender equality. More specifically, certain chapters of the Constitution guarantee the participation of women in society, such as the Bill of Rights (Chapter 2) and State Institutions Supporting Constitutional Democracy (Chapter 9). The **National Environmental Management Act (NEMA)** makes it clear that the role of women and youth in environment management must be recognised. In the **National Water Act**, as a measure to redistribute national resources, priority is given to historically disadvantaged groups (including women) when obtaining licences for the use of water resources. At the lower implementation level, government authorities, catchment management agencies, and water user associations have **gender-sensitive policies**.

In **Sweden,** five Water District Authorities (WDAs), operating from the County Administrative Boards offices, implement the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) at the regional level. The implementation of water district management plans is based on the **County Administrative Boards' Strategy for Gender Equality.**

In **Uganda**, the **Water and Sanitation Gender Strategy (2018–2022)** demonstrates the resolve of the water and environment sector to contribute to eliminate all gender inequalities. The National Gender Policy, adopted in 2007, aims to ensure gender-responsive planning in water resources at all levels, including community, district, and national.

Human capital and financial resources, institutions, and support organisations

The SDG 6.5.1 national focal points play an important role in reporting on IWRM activities implemented within their countries, although their technical expertise is mostly water-related. For questions related to gender mainstreaming specifically, they often rely on the expertise of technical units dedicated to defining and monitoring the implementation of gender mainstreaming strategies in the processes related to WRM. More often than not, SDG 6.5.1 focal points from countries that have invested in this in-house expertise have a better understanding of the interlinkages between gender equality and IWRM. The creation of gender units within WRM bodies has been clearly identified as a key enabler to design and implement gender mainstreaming strategies.

Different countries have moved in this direction: for example, in **Senegal**, a gender unit within the Ministry of Water and Sanitation is responsible for the gender strategy in WRM; in **Burkina Faso** gender units exist at the national level and at the level of each ministry and ensure involvement and parity; and in **Grenada**, a gender unit exists in the Ministry of Social Development, Housing and Community Empowerment. However, the existence of a gender unit does not guarantee mainstreaming; gender units are often not properly staffed by qualified gender experts and are not adequately funded. Gender mainstreaming strategies can also be developed within working groups, joint ministerial committees, and other mechanisms where exchanges of best practices can be capitalised, resources can be pooled, and cross-cutting issues can be identified.

In addition, in interviews, several SDG 6.5.1 focal points highlighted the need for dedicated resources to conduct gender assessments and policy analysis. Although some of the required assessments and monitoring activities certainly have associated support costs, there are other gender mainstreaming tools and processes that can be embedded in existing structures. In this direction, the following actions could be taken in relation to financial and human resources and institutional support:

Overarching, basic mechanisms

Specific, comprehensive mechanisms
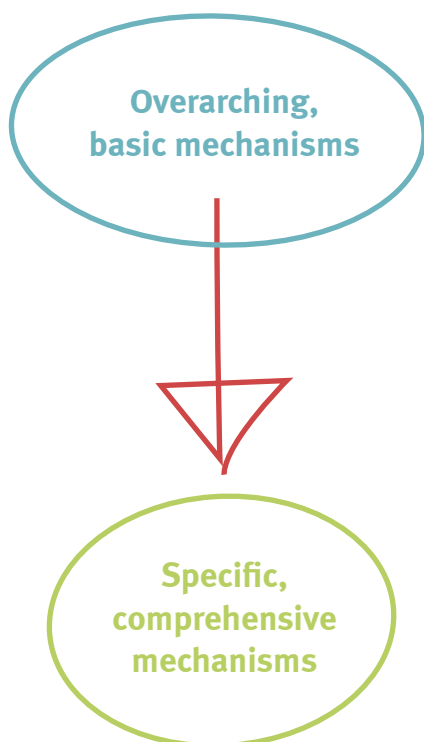
Establish **coordination mechanisms** between relevant ministries (environment, health, education, etc.) to address cross-cutting issues.

Set up specific **working groups and identify focal points**.

Dedicate funds to transform and promote **gender and social inclusion policies**.

Provide **in-house expertise**.

Identify **organisations with expertise** that **offer support** at various governmental and/or local entities.

Impose **gender equality as a funding condition**, for example for water utilities or local development funds.

Integrate **gender equality in the contracting** process.

Support **women-led** or **women-focused social enterprises** and water-related **businesses**.

Box 3. Country examples on human capital and financial resources, institutions, and support organisations

Financial resources:

In **Australia,** some funding agreements mention gender equality in relation to contracting. There are explicit clauses stated in the contracts that recognise gender equality in some of Commonwealth Government's agreements to fund programmes and projects at the state or local level (e.g. clauses/terms for the irrigation organisation projects and urban water management programmes). There are also some specific clauses when selecting a partner to work with. Partners must be aligned with the Sex Discrimination Act, so there is a check to make sure they have a history of good practice.

In **Nicaragua,** funding agreements for WASH and IWRM programmes and projects must include the cross-cutting theme of gender and equality with dedicated indicators and a budget with a view to fulfilling the national gender policy.

In the **Philippines,** the Republic Act No. 9710, passed in 2009, otherwise known as the 'Magna Carta of Women' (MCW), consolidates and reinforces previous national policies on Gender and Development (GAD). This law mandates all government bodies including local government units (LGUs) to pursue gender mainstreaming as a strategy to protect, promote, and fulfil women's human rights, and eliminate discrimination in their systems, structures, policies, programmes, and processes. This law has budget provisions; that is, there is a certain percentage in government budgets to be spent on GAD-related activities. At the local level, the GAD Fund is about 5 percent of the total internal revenue allotment (IRA). The IRA is the fund that the LGUs have for all their different development programmes and initiatives. Portions of that IRA come from the national government, and the rest comes from local taxation and other revenue measures. So the GAD Fund is a major resource that allows LGUs to undertake gender-related activities in the water sector, although it is not solely dedicated to water. In government agencies and major divisions there is a Focal Person for Gender to ensure that the GAD Fund is used properly and to have a full overview of developing gender-responsive programmes.

Human resources and expertise, institutions, and support organisations:

In **Australia**, many departments in businesses and organisations across the water sector have gender equality practices, policies, and strategies in place. The Office for Women provides great support for the different departments on the various mechanisms they can use to ensure they have the right practices and policies in place. In addition, Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) accredits organisations in their diversity strategies to enable women to have access to key roles and to education. Finally, the Water Services Association of Australia, the key urban water industry body, shares detailed information on achieving gender balance in water utilities.

In 2016 the **Brazilian** National Water and Sanitation Agency (ANA), which is linked to the Ministry of Regional Development, established a voluntary Gender Committee (GC), directly linked to the Director. The ANA GC provides support and training with a focus on addressing gender and water, talking about gender in the water management system, and mainstreaming steps. The budget available to the GC from ANA is limited, so additional resources must be pulled from other sources.

In the **Lao People's Democratic Republic**, there is a Lao Women's Union (LWU) in the Department of Water Resources (as in all departments). The LWU was recognised in 1991 under the Constitution as being responsible for responding to women's development needs, promoting the status and role of women, and promoting unity among women of different ethnic groups and social strata throughout the country. In the annual LWU meetings every sector reports the progress made in the past year. The LWU of the Department of Water Resources was involved in the development of the Gender Strategy in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and the Action Plan 2021–2030 update.

Box 3. Continued...

In **Togo**, on the initiative of the ministry responsible for the advancement of women, in 2019 a Gender Unit was created within the ministerial departments, whose mission is, among others: to ensure the production of sex-disaggregated data to guide decision-makers; to develop programmes and projects with a gender perspective relating to the department concerned; and to follow up on actions and/or activities and make any suggestions necessary for improving programmes and plans aimed at gender equity and equality. The Ministry of Water and Village Hydraulics has thus set up its Gender Unit, the chair of which is the Director of the Ministry's Cabinet.

In **Zimbabwe**, focal points responsible for gender policy and gender concerns are in place in authorities that deal with water resources.
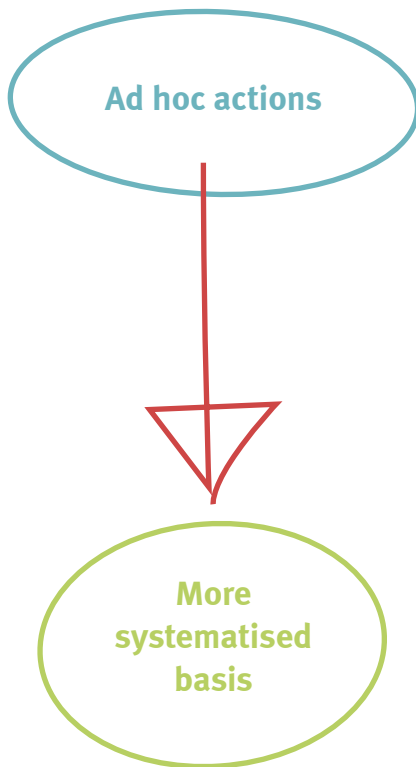
Women's participation and parity[10]

It is essential to promote normative changes in women's participation in WRM and to engage women and other vulnerable groups in the whole water value chain. This starts by not simply viewing women as end-users but engaging them in the process of gender mainstreaming in WRM. Around the world, women are often blocked from participation in WRM institutions by both direct and indirect obstacles. Direct obstacles may include the lack of title deeds to land, which means they cannot participate in water user associations, or the lack of technical qualifications, which is assumed to make them unsuitable candidates for management jobs. Indirect obstacles can include harmful gender norms, which discourage girls from engaging in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education and from reaching management positions in other fields, or norms that prevent women from active participation in consultation mechanisms. Other indirect obstacles include high illiteracy rates among women, lack of positive women role models, male hiring committees that are reluctant to bring women into all-male environments, job requirements for frequent travel or long hours that make it difficult for women to reconcile work life with family life, and

lack of women-friendly policies to retain women working in WRM after they get married and/or have children. In the 2020 SDG 6.5.1 survey, many countries provided examples of the use of quotas to ensure that women are better represented at different levels of government and decision-making, while highlighting at the same time that the participation of women or other vulnerable groups does not guarantee gender mainstreaming at the policy level. Moreover, these quotas are usually limited to specific bodies (parliament, parliamentary committees, water boards, etc.) and are not carried out throughout the different decision-making levels and representative bodies. In some cases, even if women are represented fairly in a body or committee, their specific role and responsibilities may be limited. However, women who have the opportunity to be part of decision-making structures through a quota system and who are provided with the needed support and framework to actively participate in decision-making processes can have a positive impact on representative policy-making. Therefore, emphasis should be placed on promoting and diversifying women's and other vulnerable groups' opportunities in WRM. In this sense, various actions can be taken, ranging from ad hoc to more comprehensive and systematised actions:

[10] This is also closely linked to SDG target 5.5 "Ensure full participation in leadership and decision-making" and its indicators 5.5.1 and 5.5.2 (https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal5).

Ad hoc actions

More systematised basis

Gender considerations on an ad hoc basis in WRM projects.

Women's participation in the consultation processes.

Women's participation in developing and implementing water policy/initiatives/programmes.

Representatives of women's organisations specifically invited to participate in the consultation and development process.

Community participation (i.e. women are included as part of the wider community participation).

Gender accounted for in the appointment of managerial positions.

Gender accounted for in the tendering processes of consultancies.

Mandatory representation (quotas) of women in executive and decision-making positions.

Assessments of **policies** affecting women professionals in the water sector.

Box 4. Country examples on women's participation and parity[11]

In **Australia**, the Victorian Government in its 'Water for Victoria' policy includes a focus on developing programmes to support women who want to lead at the highest level. The share of women on the water sector boards has increased to more than 50 percent, including 18 out of 29 chair positions. The Victorian Government has extended this to the executive level, and a 12-month programme was launched in 2019 supporting women working in the water sector and related fields to develop their leadership skills to position themselves for future executive roles. The impact of the programmes will be visible in the next few years.

In **Austria**, within the Directorate General on Water in the Federal Ministry responsible for WRM (BMLRT) four of seven units are headed by women.

In **Dominica**, there is a higher percentage of women in WRM organisations. For example, in the Dominica Water and Sewerage Company, four of the seven members on the board of directors are women and three out of five positions in the top management are held by women. Also, in recent years, most of the top governmental positions that influence the water policy of the company were held by women.

The new Draft Law on Water Resources Management in **Georgia** promotes a river basin approach. Several river basins will be created and then different Consultancy Coordinating Councils will be established with key stakeholders from the specific basins. Gender balance will be supported during the work of the Councils, which will review the river basin management plans, support and monitor their implementation.

Women's participation in **Grenada** is today at a very good level, as a result of the strong involvement of women in political issues and policies since the late 1970s. There is an enabling environment in the country that facilitates participation and allows women to voice their opinion, actively participate, and shape policy.

In **Kenya**, at the catchment level, emphasis has been placed on women's representation in water management structures. For example, the Catchment Management Strategy of the Tana catchment area set targets for women's representation and to maintain a 30 percent gender balance in Water Resource Users' Associations and Catchment Area Advisory Committees.

Kazakhstan and **Kyrgyzstan** share the waters of the Chu and Talas river basins, which provide water for irrigation of agricultural lands of both countries. Joint meetings of the Chu-Talas Water Commission (ChTWC) successfully discuss the use of interstate rivers and reservoirs, and a series of seminars, trainings and educational events have been organized. It should be noted that the country offices of the Secretariat are headed by women, while the Working Groups under the Secretariat of the Commission are dominated by women. The ChTWC is widely known as one of the most successful commissions that deals with cooperation between the two neighbouring countries on the use of water resources in the two river basins.

In the **Lao People's Democratic Republic**, the National Socio-Economic Development Plan sets the targets for gender equality and women's empowerment. It specifies that 20 percent of the top management positions have to be allocated to women. The plan also sets the target to increase the representation of women in the National Assembly to 30 percent and to increase the percentage of women who graduate from secondary schools to 85 percent in order to improve the education and financial independence of women.

[11] The information presented on gender disaggregated statistics in relation to positions of leadership held true at the time of writing the report.

Box 4. Continued...

In **Nepal,** all the water-related government policies, plans, and programmes have gender equality and social inclusion components in them and at least 33 percent representation of women.

In **Nicaragua,** as part of the multi-level water governance, the participation of women has been promoted since 2012, as key actors for the sustainability of water resources in the Dipilto River Basin, with 66 percent women's participation in the committees of consultation forums at basin, sub-basin, and micro-basin level. Likewise, gender equity and community participation in IWRM are promoted through the drinking water and sanitation committees formed in rural areas of the country to guarantee water and sanitation services. The water management plans in basin 72 and sub-basin Mayales have gender equality as a cross-cutting theme, with a goal of at least 40 percent women in all management roles, a percentage that was exceeded in both basins.

In **Pakistan,** women played an active role in formulating the National Water Policy and its implementation plan at different levels. Women participated in equal numbers to men during the consultations and awareness campaigns run by the Pakistan Water Partnership through its Area Water Partnerships, especially in water scarce areas.

In the **Philippines,** the Magna Carta of Women 2019 requires 40 percent participation of women in the Development Councils, which are responsible for planning water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) and IWRM.

In the **Republic of Korea,** according to the ordinance of the Framework Act on Water Management, the gender ratio of the Presidential and Basin Water Commission members should be considered. Currently, more than half of the civic members of the Presidential Water Commission are women.

In **Slovakia,** in the Department of Strategic Water Planning, out of 36 staff members 30 are women and 6 are men. Also, the Directorate has three departments, two of which are led by women.

In **South Africa,** at the local level there are established entities called 'Water Boards' playing a key role in the water sector, operating water infrastructures and providing technical support to municipalities. The aim in the Water Boards is to have a 50-50 representation at all times.

In **Togo,** the involvement of women in management of water points in rural and semi-urban areas is strongly recommended, with a defined quota of at least two women out of the five members of the committee.

In the **United Republic of Tanzania,** the membership of Basin Water Boards has a requirement of at least one third women.

In **Vanuatu,** there is a provision in the amended Water Resources Management Act that requires 40 percent women's participation in all local water committees, and this is implemented through the registration of local water committees (committees with fewer than 40 percent women will not be registered). Gender equality in committees is encouraged and women can be found at all levels of decision-making.

Monitoring activities to track and assess progress

Monitoring and evaluation is one of the key pillars of any gender mainstreaming strategy, which needs to be based on evidence collected through disaggregated data. Most of the focal points interviewed highlighted gaps or the absence of gender-disaggregated data and/or progress-tracking tools related to gender equality and mainstreaming. In order for gender-disaggregated data to inform efficient policy-making, the relevant analysis needs to compare differences over time, and provide specific data for men, women, boys and girls, and other specific groups (age, race, urban population vs. rural population, etc.). Furthermore, data should measure quantitative as well as qualitative changes, since quantitative data do not tell the whole story, and qualitative data are important to highlight the barriers to access or participation.

"The lack of accurate and reliable gender-specific data, which would indicate the existence of problems, is one of the main challenges in gender mainstreaming in water resources management."

Ahmed Mohamed Hassan, Hydrometeorology Department of the Ministry of Energy and Water Resources, Somalia

Overarching, basic mechanisms

Specific, comprehensive mechanisms
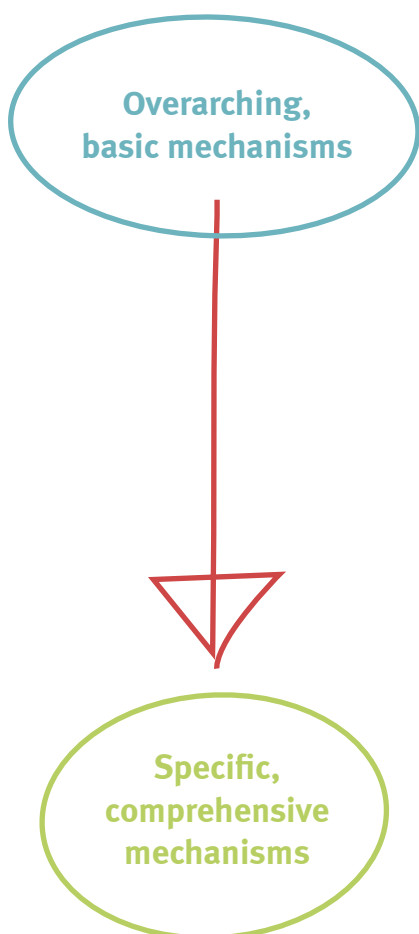
Headcount statistics (national).

Headcount statistics (local/regional).

Expert input on collecting data, monitoring and evaluation, assessment needs and processes, etc.

Gender gap assessments.

Enhanced **local technical expertise in collecting data and identifying relevant indicators** (seeking support for that purpose from, for example, central statistical organisations, donor institutions, universities, intergovernmental organisations, UN agencies, World Bank, IMF).

Gender impact assessments.

Systematic **reporting** on the **gender-related question of the SDG 6.5.1 survey instrument** to monitor overall progress on gender mainstreaming in IWRM, using that reporting process as a springboard to accelerate progress between reporting periods.

Disaggregated gender statistics, in-depth assessments.

Monitoring of disaggregated gender statistics to assess progress made towards targets.

In interviews, most focal points identified a national body in charge of collecting gender-specific data such as the national statistical office, which collects some level of gender-disaggregated data. However, the data collected do not always provide a comprehensive image of the local situations as they might focus only on the number of women employees in the relevant ministries and not provide information at the smaller, local administrative levels. Other countries have established monitoring mechanisms within the water and sanitation departments that track gender representation at all levels. In some cases, data are collected mainly at the project level, but they are fragmented and a central depository and dataflow process are lacking. However, countries need to make sure they have the right tools to assess the effectiveness of their policies and practices.

Sufficient resources and time for monitoring and reporting are paramount in the process of gender mainstreaming. The following actions could be taken:

"Gender disaggregated data should be collected to help track the progress in achieving objectives. The lack of gender-disaggregated data is very problematic, makes monitoring very difficult and the estimation subjective. Authorities could use some assistance, although they have in principle the know-how for collecting the data. However, the main issue is having limited resources and capacity, as the staff is focused on solving technical problems and it is difficult to assign the people needed to collect the data."

Magnus Williams, Chief Engineer at the Dominica Water and Sewerage Company Ltd.

Box 5. Country examples on monitoring activities

In **Australia**, most workforces collect gender-disaggregated data, as well as information on culturally/ linguistically diverse groups, indigenous groups, and so on. At the government level, the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA), charged with promoting and improving gender equality in Australian workplaces, collects and analyses gender and intersexual related data on Australian industries, including gender pay gap statistics, representation at executive levels, flexible working arrangements, and maternity leave. According to WGEA, women's representation in the water sector has recorded growth in the last 20 years. States and territories also have their own monitoring systems and track gender data. It is quite a common practice in Australia that all major water utilities capture information on gender and diversity groups. Overall, at the government level, when companies, departments, and agencies do their annual reports they have to report gender information/fundamental employment statistics.

In **Austria**, Annual Reports are issued to monitor the objectives of an Ordinance by the Water Minister (BMLRT) for fostering women's equality. Annual Reports at the Federal level, where each ministry is evaluated, and statistics on the percentage of women employed in each ministry are also included (per ministry, not per sector).

In **Lao People's Democratic Republic**, there are monthly and annual reports from the Lao Women's Union meetings where every sector reports the progress made in the past year.

In **Panama**, the Water Resources Department of the Ministry of Environment collaborates with the Ministry of Health, which collects gender-disaggregated data, relevant to the access of communities to water services at the community level.

In **South Africa**, the Department of Water and Sanitation constantly monitors the impacts of employment and development in the water sector as well as the impact of the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework, which emphasises the empowerment of women. As an example, the Department is informed on a monthly basis about the extent to which companies owned by women are responding to invitations to tender. Given this information, officials are able to estimate, for example, the number of women engineers, their employment rates, and skills. Reports on the findings are forwarded to the Presidency.

Awareness raising, capacity development, and education

Cultural issues and prevailing norms and stereotypes about women's place in society and their role in planning, management, and decision-making are often significant barriers to gender mainstreaming. During the interviews conducted, some of the challenges highlighted by respondents indicate that the power dynamics in the following areas need to be addressed to ensure that water-related decision-making bodies and consultations are more diverse and representative:

- within households (where women's participation in non-traditional sectors or in the public sphere may be viewed as a weakness of the male parent)

- in the local community (where women and other vulnerable groups may find it difficult to contradict older men or men with a certain social status)

- within national institutions (where there may be an absence of women at the highest levels of decision-making).

Changing the current paradigm requires a change of mentality and culture, the starting point for which is, of course, awareness, capacity development, and education.

"Legislation, policy, organizational aspects are enablers of gender mainstreaming, but one more key enabling factor is education: providing education, giving opportunities to women and girls to go into the field of water management."

Kirsty Bunfield, National Water Policy Branch, Water Division, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, Focal Point for SDG 6.5.1, Australia

The following actions could be taken to advance these aspects:

- information on the current state of gender mainstreaming and prevailing issues disseminated through multiple means, to make people more aware, presenting numbers, facts, and so on

- best practices on gender mainstreaming captured and shared

- education and awareness-raising on the importance of women's participation

- capacity development for women's empowerment and skill development

- capacity development for improving the legal and institutional aspects of mainstreaming gender in WRM

- education in schools for increasing the number of women students in engineering, science, and maths-related disciplines (STEM) is for girls' campaigns as well as other relevant fields

- exchange networks for women experts and professionals in WRM

- endorsement and/or support from specific programmes and initiatives for women participants

- engaging with the media to make women's participation in WRM more visible

- internship and mentorship programmes in the public/private sectors and universities devoted to women graduates

- development of managerial skills of women through specific capacity development opportunities for women graduate students and practitioners.

Box 6. Country examples on awareness raising, capacity building, and education activities

In **Australia**, there are government policies and strategies for women in STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) to provide an awareness of the jobs that are available and to provide them with key pathways into those types of roles.

In **Austria**, an exchange network for women experts on disaster risk reduction, called Women exchange for disaster risk reduction (we4DRR) established by the Austrian BMLRT, supports women working in research and policy as well as practitioners in this field. Similarly, the FEMtech network established by the Ministry of Climate Protection, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology supports women in technical jobs. Several water experts are part of the network, while the Ministry engages young women and pupils in the network.

In **Brazil**, the ANA Gender Committee is developing the Platform 'Elas Existem (they (female plural pronoun) exist)' with different functionalities for empowering women: displaying pictures from events (e.g. the climate change events) showing the lack of women in discussion panels, having a database with CVs of women experts and search functions, and so on.

In **Nicaragua**, the participation of women in science and technological development is promoted through various spaces such as the National Day of Science, Technology and Innovation that aims to make the work of Nicaraguan women visible.

In the **Philippines**, in 2020 the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the DENR National Gender and Development Focal Point System (GADFPS) conducted a series of seven webinars on the priority programmes of the DENR as these are linked to climate change, gender, and health. Topics included pursuing climate-, gender-, and health-responsive programmes in the following sectors: biodiversity, forestry, solid waste and hazardous wastes, air quality, water sector, land, and mineral resources development. The context of the webinars was about better understanding the links, identifying entry points in mainstreaming, and emphasising the need to seriously consider going beyond mainstreaming gender in the priority programmes of the DENR.

In **South Africa**, gender objectives in policies are followed by specific programmes to address these objectives, including the Gender Training Programme to raise awareness and change attitudes, the Women in Water Entrepreneurship Incubator Programme which is run by the Department of Water and Sanitation and Water Research Commission, and the Gender Mainstreaming Training Program.

In **Viet Nam**, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment has signed partnerships with international organisations with strong gender expertise. A series of community-based climate change initiatives were implemented, including increasing the representation of vulnerable women, men, and children in risk reduction and climate change adaptation. Sharing and learning dialogues secured the participation of diverse community members. The participants received training and coaching sessions on how to make presentations and lead discussions with other stakeholders, provided by the experts from the NGO CARE International.

4

Strengthening current practices: steps for gender mainstreaming in water resources management

The interviews conducted with SDG 6.5.1 focal points and the responses provided to question 2.2d of the survey instrument highlighted that, in practice, gender mainstreaming is not always identified as a priority. It is not recognised at various levels of policy-making, but more as a separate topic often added on to IWRM-related policies at a later stage.

Countries that have developed and committed to a gender mainstreaming strategy with specific targets, clear definition of roles, financial and human resources, lines of accountability under an overarching implementation plan, and a data strategy, may be found all over the world, and in all income categories. The same can also be said of countries facing challenges in implementing gender mainstreaming in IWRM. The ability to integrate gender considerations in WRM policies is not solely related to overall levels of development, nor is it simply related to promoting gender equality in the national constitution, as some countries reported in the 2020 SDG 6.5.1 survey.

Creating an enabling environment for gender mainstreaming in WRM

Overall, the SDG 6.5.1 focal points of the countries interviewed as part of this study had a good understanding of some aspects of gender mainstreaming within WRM. While the majority understood the importance of this issue,

most of them also recognised that not enough has been done in their countries to implement comprehensive gender mainstreaming strategies because of the lack of knowledge, resources, technical expertise, and/or political backing to be able to implement them. Even though a one-size-fits-all strategy for gender mainstreaming does not exist for any sector, countries that are mainstreaming gender in WRM seem to have adopted some common practices and mechanisms, linked to the six categories of enablers discussed in the previous chapter, to integrate a gender perspective into policies and programmes. Some of these are summarised in Table 1, though countries may find more appropriate activities in Chapter 3.

Most of the enablers mentioned in Table 1 are interdependent. However, an integrated approach relying on all of the above in WRM remains a challenge, as several countries reported in the survey instrument for SDG indicator 6.5.1. In addition, during the interviews conducted for this report, several focal points highlighted the gap between political discourse and the design and implementation of policies specifically focusing on gender mainstreaming.

Table 1. Overview of key enablers and their main challenges, sustainability, and impact

CATEGORY	KEY ENABLERS	DESCRIPTION	CHALLENGES	SUSTAINABILITY	IMPACT
Advocacy, high-level commitment, changing prevailing norms and stereotypes	Strong commitment of the executive leadership	High-level political discourse sets the tone for specific gender-related policies to be established	This enabler is subject to the political agenda which could potentially shift with every change of government	Low	High
Legislative and policy framework and governance	Egalitarian legal framework promoted in the constitution of the country	The constitution formalises equality between men and women, including provisions on non-discrimination between genders	The constitution offers a framework for the development of laws. However, in itself it does not guarantee the achievement of gender equality	High	Low
	Gender is considered within water laws, policies, and strategies	Specific requirements for gender considerations are integrated into water-related laws, policies, and strategies	Water laws and policies tend to focus on specific water uses and management approaches, but more often than not do not integrate gender equality as part of WRM	High	Medium
Human capital, financial resources, institutions, and support organisations	Earmarked funding is set aside to advance gender mainstreaming in WRM	Creating gender units within WRM bodies with the necessary expertise in addition to dedicated funding can be a key enabler to design and implement gender mainstreaming strategies Some countries are also using gender budgeting as a tool to plan and assess how public funds (across all sectors) contribute to gender equality	The provision of specific funds for gender equality measures is mainly present in programmes addressing social inclusion issues or fundamental human rights. However, a gender equality perspective is rarely adopted in policy fields that are not seen as immediately related to gender equality, but that may have significant gender effects, such as environment and water (Directorate-General for Internal Policies: Policy Department, Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, 2016)	Medium	High
Women's participation and parity	Establish supportive frameworks for the effective participation and parity of women in WRM	Promotion of normative changes regarding women's participation in WRM, engagement of women and other vulnerable groups in the whole water value chain, not simply as end-users but as active stakeholders in gender mainstreaming in WRM. Development of specific mechanisms and tools to boost this engagement	Formalised participation of women alone does not guarantee gender mainstreaming at the policy level. The percentage representation of women is also not on its own a robust indicator of the level of mainstreaming achieved. In some cases, even if women are represented fairly in a body or committee, their specific roles and responsibilities may be limited	Medium	Medium

Table 1. Continued...

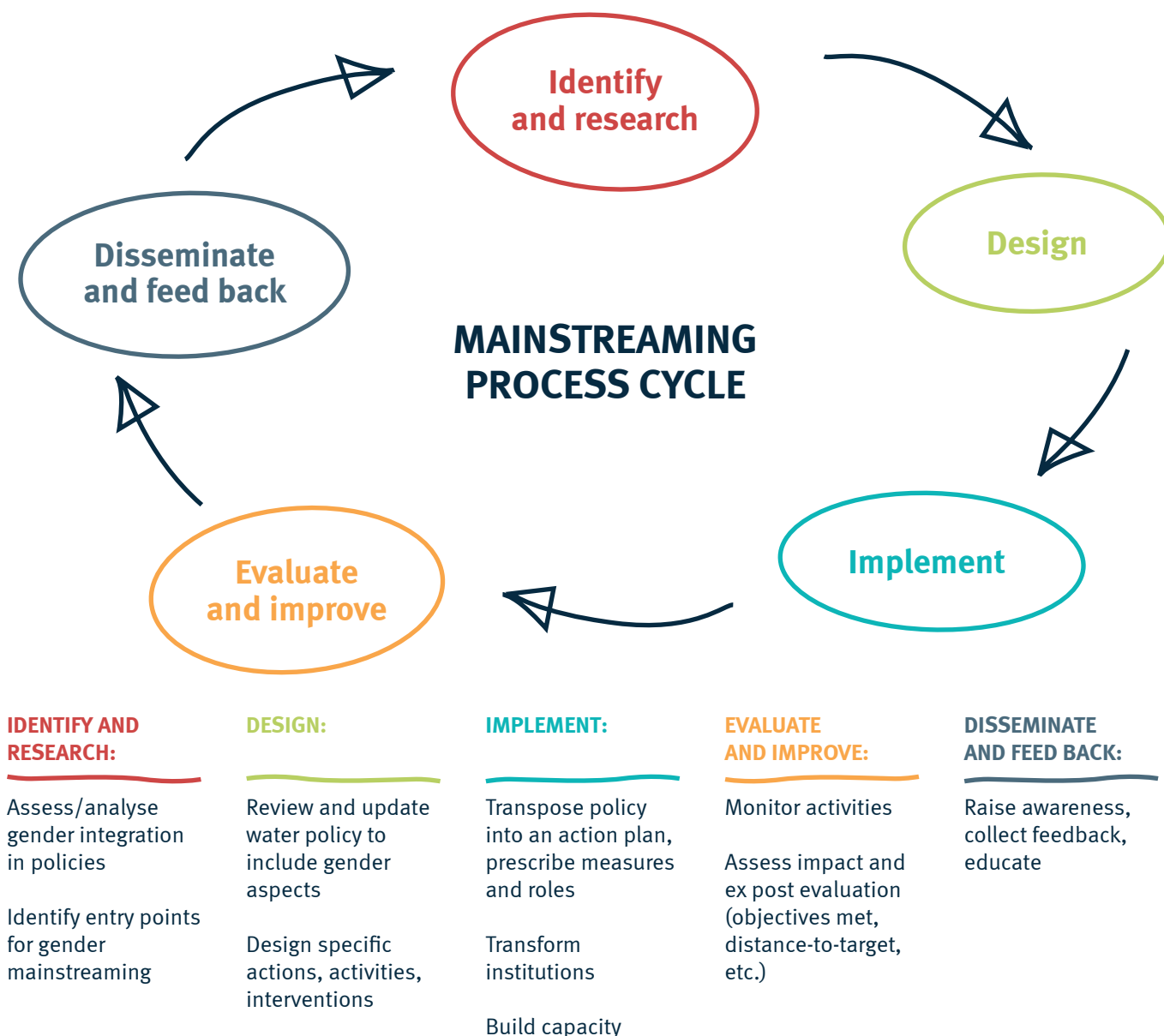| CATEGORY	KEY ENABLERS	DESCRIPTION	CHALLENGES	SUSTAINABILITY	IMPACT
Monitoring activities to track and assess progress	Centralised monitoring systems	The national statistics office or other structure collect disaggregated data to inform gender mainstreaming strategies. Designing and collecting data based on indicators using a gender approach is crucial to developing action plans that promote men's and women's access to and control over resources and to enjoy their benefits	The definition of gender-related indicators requires an expertise that not all national water management bodies have immediate access to. Indicators that meaningfully measure improvements in participation of women and other vulnerable groups in water and sanitation management still need to be further developed	High	High
Awareness raising, capacity development, and education	Multi-stakeholder and intersectoral coordination mechanisms and bodies, which carry out consultation processes and engagement, raise awareness, and support capacity development activities	Formal partnerships or coordination mechanisms (such as joint committees) are established to address gender-related issues (from access to water and sanitation services to gender-based violence) by consulting (with experts and local communities), coordinating, and evaluating activities. Intersectoral mechanisms are in place to design and implement robust capacity development activities	Without the strong political backing of government, these mechanisms tend to be short-lived and/or tokenistic and their recommendations may not be included in future policy planning	Low	High
	Investments in education, awareness raising, and strengthening of capacities	Investments are made in education and awareness raising (including through the media) on the importance of women's participation in the entire water value chain. Promoting the enrolment of women in STEM disciplines and relevant fields, strengthening capacities for women's empowerment and skills development and for improving the legal and institutional aspects of gender mainstreaming is crucial. Moreover, exchange networks for women experts and professionals, internship and mentorship programmes are being promoted	Cultural issues and prevailing norms and stereotypes about women's place in a specific society and their role in planning, management, and decision-making are often significant barriers to ensuring that water-related decision-making bodies and consultations are more diverse and representative. Changing the current paradigm requires a change of mentality and culture, which requires time and continuous action	Medium	Medium

A typical gender mainstreaming process cycle

As intimated above, gender mainstreaming involves different steps within a standard policy process cycle (see Fig. 1). As this is a cyclical process, this does not necessarily suggest that one should always start only if the identification step is fulfilled; efforts can be made at any step of the cycle and then be reiterated, improved, and redesigned. However, every step of the cycle matters. Worldwide, countries are at different phases of the gender mainstreaming cycle.

Putting gender mainstreaming in WRM into practice

The social, political, and environmental context of each country should be taken into account when designing and implementing a gender mainstreaming strategy in WRM. In this report there are several examples of specific mechanisms and tools shared by focal points for SDG 6.5.1, which reflect the different ways in which gender mainstreaming is carried out in practice. In order to strengthen current practices, while recognising that countries are at different stages of implementation,

Figure 1. Gender mainstreaming policy process cycle. Source: illustration by authors, based on the European Institute for Gender Equality gender mainstreaming cycle and the European Standard on Gender Mainstreaming in the European Social Fund.

MAINSTREAMING PROCESS CYCLE

- Identify and research
- Design
- Implement
- Evaluate and improve
- Disseminate and feed back

IDENTIFY AND RESEARCH:

Assess/analyse gender integration in policies

Identify entry points for gender mainstreaming

DESIGN:

Review and update water policy to include gender aspects

Design specific actions, activities, interventions

IMPLEMENT:

Transpose policy into an action plan, prescribe measures and roles

Transform institutions

Build capacity

EVALUATE AND IMPROVE:

Monitor activities

Assess impact and ex post evaluation (objectives met, distance-to-target, etc.)

DISSEMINATE AND FEED BACK:

Raise awareness, collect feedback, educate

the following paragraphs present some general recommendations for groups of countries at different stages of mainstreaming:

Countries with no or low implementation

For countries with no or low implementation of gender mainstreaming, it may be useful to undertake a preliminary gender analysis to understand barriers, gaps, and opportunities in current arrangements, to lay the foundation for a gender mainstreaming strategy for WRM. To support this analysis, the capacities of WRM staff may be developed through collaboration with gender experts (within NGOs and universities) and local partnerships with community-based initiatives. Joining forces with the health and WASH sectors is another interesting and straightforward collaboration as there are clear linkages between sanitation, health, and WRM. The relevant ministries can work together to improve the well-being of all citizens, while meeting the needs of vulnerable and minority groups in terms of water supply and sanitation, empowering them to take on new roles, beyond the role of 'water custodians', and raise their voice to inform national development agendas. The health sector usually has a good regional presence (primary health care centres are located in the most vulnerable communities), established monitoring and evaluation frameworks (for vaccine campaigns, births and deaths, etc.), and pre-existing and successful communication platforms used to inform the population about vaccination campaigns and more recently COVID-19-related messages. These centres and platforms can be used to conduct training programmes for women on new roles (such as the repair and maintenance of water systems). In addition, the health sector may be able to provide support in establishing monitoring and evaluation frameworks for gender mainstreaming.

Countries with a medium level of implementation

Countries that have a medium level of implementation might have previously developed a gender mainstreaming strategy but may be struggling to put it into action. Gender units could be created within all ministries, including for water and/or environment, and staffed with technical engineers and gender experts. These units would take the lead in conducting gender evaluations and gender impact assessments to identify the lack of progress using gender-disaggregated data collected annually. The difficulties

experienced by the surveyed countries mainly stem from the lack of these gender-disaggregated data. Gender evaluations are necessary because they provide: "systematic and objective assessments of the design and planning (objectives, results pursued, activities planned), the implementation and results of an ongoing or completed activity, project, programme or policy from a gender perspective. It can take place either upon completion of the project, when focus is placed on gender impacts and the contribution of the programme to promoting gender equality, or throughout project implementation, with the aim of seeking to have a process of continuous improvement. It can also take place ex-ante in order to evaluate how a policy can affect gender equality in [WRM]" (European Institute for Gender Equality, n.d.).

Importantly, such evaluations should consider all factors that affect the ability of women and other vulnerable groups to fully participate in the design of IWRM strategies, including proprietary rights, inheritance laws, tenure of land, and cultural norms.

Countries with a strong level of gender equality

Countries with a strong level of gender equality and which might have achieved several objectives in their gender mainstreaming strategies related to WRM should practise caution and acknowledge that disparities persist in every context. They should continue to implement and document (through disaggregated data) policies that address the asymmetrical relationships in their society. It is important to note that having female ministers or heads of the water establishment, albeit important because representation matters, does not replace the necessity to design and implement evidence-based gender mainstreaming strategies, to identify discriminatory practices, increase the number of women in the STEM and related fields, or develop gender budgeting and procurement strategies.

What type of support is needed?

Policy- and decision-makers

A thorough understanding of current barriers, gaps, and opportunities for gender mainstreaming is required at the highest levels to enhance commitment and political will to act for positive change. Conducting gender analyses in WRM and producing actionable data will support policy- and decision-makers in their understanding of the current status, in support of the necessary reforms in the legislative and policy frameworks. Coordination and collaboration between sectors and ministries will further strengthen shared knowledge and understanding and can open up new options and pathways for policy coherence and streamlined funding streams aimed at enhancing gender mainstreaming in WRM. Furthermore, raising broad awareness on the societal and economic benefits of gender mainstreaming in WRM can increase political will for the required policy changes.

Water planners and managers

In order to design and implement a gender mainstreaming strategy, water planners and managers typically require political and financial support from the central government. This is needed to support the capacity development of focal points, access to technical experts on gender issues, gender-disaggregated data, and a legislative framework that helps to define transformative strategies. This will put water planners and managers in a better position to improve access to water and sanitation services for all, improve the representation and participation of vulnerable groups in WRM decision-making bodies (at the local and national level), and ultimately break harmful gender norms. Ultimately, it is about making water planners and managers accountable for the achievement of SDG 6, including gender mainstreaming.

Local communities

It is important that local communities and minority/vulnerable groups are aware of the role they can play in contributing to policies that improve their well-being and the impact that gender norms have on their ability to fully participate in these processes. Furthermore, countries need to review how social, economic, and environmental data are collected. Disaggregated data should include all vulnerable groups in order to inform policies that will aim to improve the well-being of all local communities based on the local contexts. In the 2020 SDG 6.5.1 survey, various countries, such as Sweden and Slovakia, highlighted the water-related issues experienced by minority groups. These countries are trying to establish adapted policies to improve the access of these groups to water and sanitation services but also to increase their voices within local and national decision-making bodies.

Educational institutions and NGOs

Several SDG 6.5.1 focal points mentioned that educational institutions and NGOs did not participate in the design and implementation of IWRM policies. The focal points acknowledged that these institutions could provide the needed technical expertise that water planners and managers may lack in terms of gender mainstreaming. Educational institutions could therefore play an important role in the development of qualitative and quantitative gender-specific indicators to measure the impact of gender and IWRM policies and strategies. They could also conduct data collection exercises, in partnership with the relevant ministries, ensuring that data protection prerogatives are taken into consideration. They could develop curricula focused on gender mainstreaming in the water sector. This would ensure that future generations of engineers and water planners have a better understanding of gender issues. NGOs and UN agencies, working in the WASH and protection sectors (focusing on gender-based violence and the protection threats faced by marginalised groups), among others, should also be invited to intersectoral, multi-stakeholder consultations to provide insights on barriers to access and participation of vulnerable communities/groups. In some contexts, these stakeholders are able to provide funding to conduct multi-sectoral needs assessments and awareness-raising activities and to provide key services.

5

Concluding remarks

Gender considerations have been intrinsic to integrated water resources management since this term was first employed. As we have seen, from the Dublin Statement on Water and Sustainable Development, if not before, the world recognised that "women play a central part in the provision, management and safeguarding of water". This report has approached the question of why we should materialise such engagement, and some possible pathways to do so, based on experiences from countries around the world. We hope that by reading it, you will have been inspired by some of the specific actions that nations and states have taken, and will be asking yourself how you can contribute to gender mainstreaming in IWRM within your own context.

Our aim with this report was to share some guidance based on the experiences of a representative selection of countries. Given the complexity of countries' political, social, and economic systems, we deliberately avoid recommending any singular approach, since there is definitely no one-size-fits-all solution. However, we believe that the enablers that have been highlighted in this report may be common to all countries, and many of the examples from one country may be applicable to others. Be it around the legal framework, high-level leadership, policies and strategies, funding, human resources and expertise, normative support for women's participation, centralised monitoring systems, or multi-stakeholder consultation processes, clearly there is much that can and should be done to mainstream gender in WRM. In that sense, this report is intended to be a starting point for further exchanges on this important topic, between different stakeholders and geographies.

At the Global Water Partnership, it is our belief that fully achieving IWRM will not be possible without mainstreaming gender equality, and vice versa. The monitoring of SDGs 5 on gender equality and 6 on clean water and sanitation has shown that the pathway to fully achieving both objectives is long, and countries are at different points in their respective journeys. However, the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme and its member organisations are committed to supporting nation states wherever they may find themselves on that journey, by providing them with tools and facilitating experience exchange. We firmly believe that doing so will be a significant contribution towards the sustainable development of those nations, their economies, their societies, and their natural environments.

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Annex 1

Findings from the SDG 6.5.1 global data collection round 2020

To support the monitoring and evaluation of gender aspects in IWRM implementation, the SDG indicator 6.5.1 survey included a gender-related question, Q2.2d, "Gender included in laws/plans or similar within water resources management".

Based on responses from 170 countries in 2020, the global average score for the gender-related question was 54 out of 100 in 2020, revealing definite progress compared to the baseline in 2017,[12] although clearly much more needs to be done. Half of all countries reported limited or no achievement of gender objectives in their water management policies and plans (i.e. a score in the three lowest implementation categories), and approximately 25 percent of countries reported partial

achievement of gender mainstreaming in WRM (medium-high implementation category) (Fig. 2). One significant gap is the lack of monitoring and evaluation processes; only a quarter of countries reported mostly achieving gender objectives, supported by adequate monitoring on gender activities and outcomes.

The regional average scores for question 2.2d on gender are provided below.[13]

Northern America and Europe | 77
Northern Africa and Western Asia | 67
Australia and New Zealand | 65
Eastern and Southeastern Asia | 62
Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand | 53
Sub-Saharan Africa | 48
Central and Southern Asia | 39
Latin America and the Caribbean | 29

Figure 2. Status of gender mainstreaming in water resources management (Q2.2d) in 2020
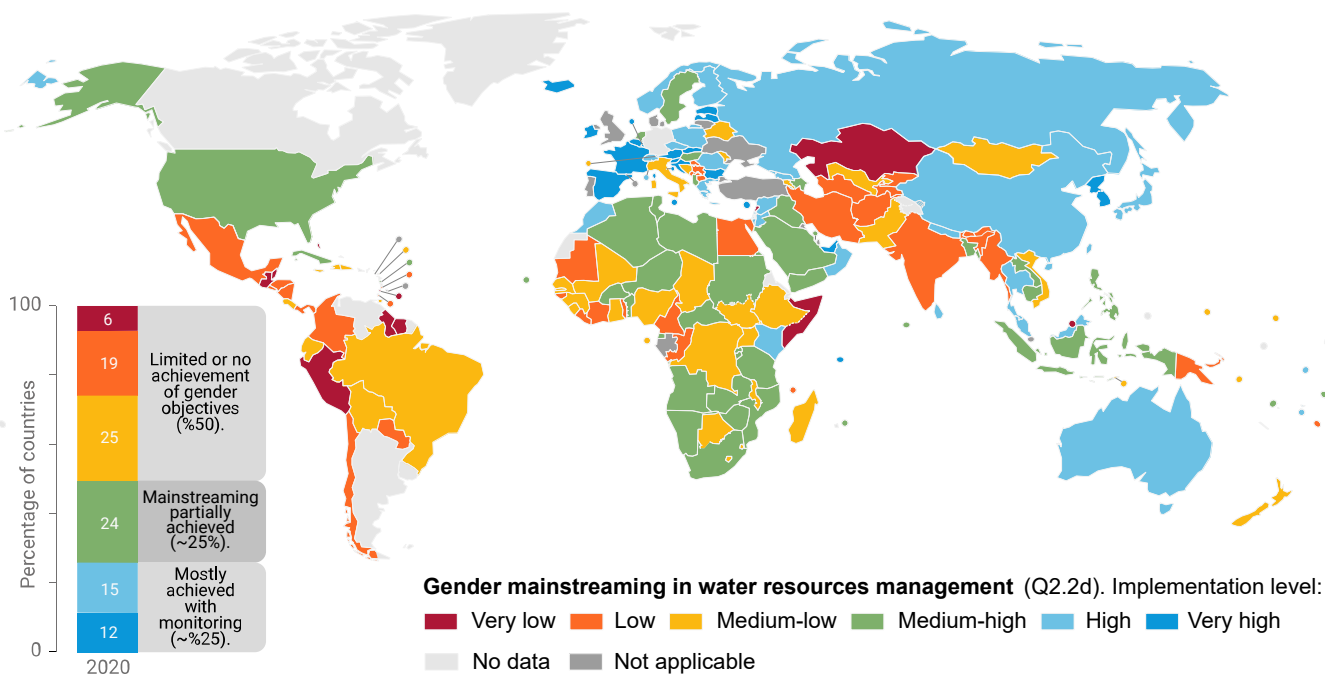
[12] The simple average score of the national and sub-national level questions on gender in the 2017 survey (2.1d and 2.2c) was 44. While the approach used to assess gender in 2017 was slightly different from 2020, this still gives some indication of progress.

[13] Eight regions as defined by the UN Statistical Division. Available at: https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/regional-groups/

Annex 2

SDG indicator 6.5.1 survey – Question 2.2.d

The following question and related guidance was included in the 2020 SDG indicator 6.5.1 survey.[14]

Preliminary guidance provided at the start of section 2: "The burdens of water-related work carried out predominantly by women have been acknowledged for decades,[15] has led to a focus on women's practical needs around water, especially in relation to carrying water and managing it within the home. In the context of water resources management, there has been growing recognition that a strategic and practical focus on increasing women's voice and influence, at all levels of decision-making, must become a priority. Furthermore, mainstreaming gender in the water sector supports a range of targets in the SDGs, including under Goal 5 on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.[16] Including a gender-related question in this survey (q.2.2d) also addresses the call for gender disaggregated data in the 2030 Agenda.[17]"

2.2 What is the status of institutions for IWRM implementation at other levels?

	VERY LOW (0)	LOW (20)	MEDIUM-LOW (40)	MEDIUM-HIGH (60)	HIGH (80)	VERY HIGH (100)
d. Gender included in laws/plans or similar within water resources management[18]	Gender considerations **not explicitly included** in national/ subnational laws/ plans or similar	Gender considerations **partially included** in laws/plans or similar	Gender considerations **included** (but limited implementation, budget or monitoring)	Gender **#objectives**[19] **partly achieved** (activities partially monitored and funded)	Gender objectives **mostly achieved** (activities adequately monitored and funded)	Gender objectives **consistently achieved** and effectively address gender issues (activities and outcomes reviewed and revised)

SCORE:

Status description: xxx
[E.g. gender objectives in laws/policies/plans/strategies. Programs/procedures to address gender objectives, incl. reference to reports. Examples of gender mainstreaming processes and outcomes. Consider whether funding, human capacity, monitoring and outcomes (e.g. in terms of achieving formal representation of gender issues, application of gender parity rules, and influence on IWRM outcomes). Consider 'level' of implementation, i.e. national/sub-national/local/transboundary. Consider also progress since baseline.]

Way forward: xxx
[E.g. planned or recommended activities to advance implementation of gender mainstreaming; barriers and enablers; draft interim targets where appropriate.]

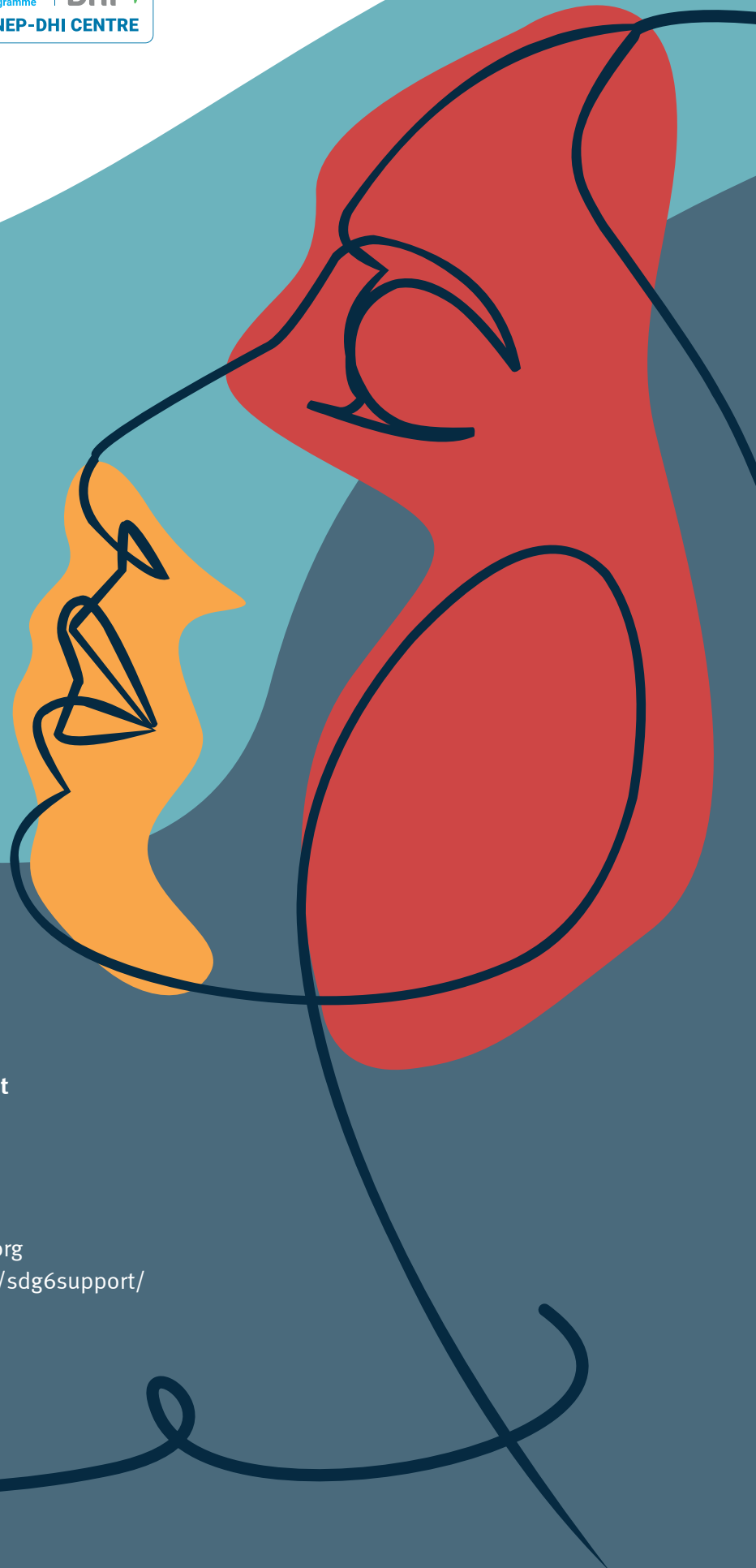[14] The full SDG indicator 6.5.1 survey is available at: http://iwrmdataportal.unepdhi.org/
[15] E.g. Dublin Principle Nr. 3 (1992): "Women play a central part in the provision, management and safeguarding of water". "[the] role of women … has seldom been reflected in institutional arrangements for the … management of water resources. Acceptance and implementation of this principle requires positive policies to address women's specific needs and to equip and empower women to participate at all levels in water resources programmes, including decision-making and implementation, in ways defined by them."
[16] E.g. SDG target 5.5 "Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life."
[17] E.g. SDG target 17.18 "By 2020, … increase … the availability of … data disaggregated by … gender, … and other characteristics relevant in national contexts."
[18] See discussion above the question. Gender-responsive mechanisms can include laws, policies, plans, strategies or other frameworks or procedures aimed at achieving gender objectives related to women's participation, voice and influence. Gender-responsive mechanisms may originate within the water sector or at a higher level, but if they are primarily addressed at a higher level, then there should be evidence of gender mainstreaming within the water sector to achieve scores in this question. In the baseline survey, national, sub-national, and transboundary levels were addressed in three separate questions. These questions have been merged into a single question, allowing countries to answer the question at the level which is most relevant in the national context. The situation at different levels can be explained in the 'Status description' cell, as appropriate.
[19] Gender objectives ultimately refer to equal participation and influence in water resources management at all levels. Ways of monitoring this include (please identify any of these or similar in the 'Status description' field): 1) Presence of Gender Focal Point responsible for gender policy and gender concerns in authorities that deal with water resources; 2) Gender parity in decision-making processes at all levels (e.g. in meetings or board members/committee members); 3) Presence of gender-specific objectives and commitments in strategies, plans and laws related water policy; 4) Presence and role of local women's groups/organizations receiving technical and/or financial support from government/non-government organizations involved in water resources management activities; 5) Budget allocation, and procedures for collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data of local populations, when planning for water-related programmes / projects, including infrastructure; 6) Presence of measures for improving gender parity and equity in human resources (HR) policies of authorities. Source: adapted from UNESCO WWAP Toolkit on Sex-disaggregated Water Data, 2019.