



Concept Note and Draft Agenda

**Learning Workshop
on Gender Equality for Sustainable Development
in the Drin basin**

To be held online, on 21 December 2020

In the framework of the project
***“Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in Southeastern Europe, through the
use of the Nexus approach”***

financed by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA)

implemented by the Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean (GWP-Med)
in partnership with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

Simultaneous interpretation between English, Albanian, Macedonian and Montenegrin

Introduction: Gender equality & sustainable development

Sustainable development at its core encourages us to think about how to improve economies and societies without compromising the natural environment and the well-being of future generations. In order for any development effort to be sustainable and effective, it must consider the needs of all people, including those who do not typically have a voice in decision making. That is why gender equality is a critical ingredient in achieving sustainable development.

Gender equality can enable and even accelerate the achievement of all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). While gender equality is captured as a stand-alone goal (SDG 5), its benefits are multiplied when gender is integrated across all the SDGs, and gender considerations are included in all sustainable development work and climate action.

Sustainable socio-economic development requires, among others, growing levels of food- energy- and water-services. The overall security of resources can be improved by co-optimising different sectors' objectives through an integrated Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems "Nexus" approach that aims at reconciling the interests of the different sectors, while respecting environmental needs and human rights. This is done by adopting an integrated and coordinated approach across sectors as sectors compete for the same scarce resources, all while capturing existing opportunities and exploring emerging ones. Under such an approach, interlinkages, synergies and trade-offs among the relevant sectors are assessed, with the aim of identifying solutions that foster water-food-energy security and efficiency and reduce impacts and risks on water-dependent ecosystems.

Gender mainstreaming and women's role in the overall sustainable management of natural resources is of key importance to accelerate progress in all the nexus related sectors. Access to and control over natural resources is unequally distributed all over the world and strongly related to unbalanced power relationships. Exclusion or restrictions imposed on certain communities and groups of people to own and access natural resources are examples of the structural inequalities and discrimination that can ultimately bring in challenges and even destabilize societies. These include differentiated power relationships between men and women.

Women and men tend to use and enjoy the benefits of natural resources according to the roles and responsibilities determined by their gender, as well as economic and social status. Crucial for achieving gender equality in natural resources management is equal access and control of men and women over the available resources in a particular community, village, or region. But because access and control over resources are unequally distributed, women are often limited from acquiring the latest information and knowledge and from participating in decision-making related to their management. Finally, while natural resources management may have very different impacts on and benefits for men and women, policies are very often gender neutral, resulting in a direct impact on women's livelihoods and therefore on their families and their social position in the community.

The Drin riparian countries have already ratified a number of international conventions and have committed to gender equality through national legislation. All countries have made important progress towards gender equality. They have ratified CEDAW and other international conventions, are all committed to EU accession processes and aim to align their legislation with EU directives, have adopted Gender Equality Law or Antidiscrimination Law, have developed Gender Equality Strategies and established gender machineries or have mechanisms in place and a number of other steps that claim the government's commitment towards gender equality. While progress has taken place in some priority areas, some of the sectors relevant to NEXUS still need to be reviewed carefully and be addressed

accordingly. As a result, all nexus related sectors need to be informed on the importance and on the barriers and opportunities that push for gender equality and accelerate progress towards sustainable development.

The SEE Nexus Project and its activities in the Drin basin

The overall objective of the SEE Nexus Project (full title: *“Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in Southeastern Europe, through the use of Nexus approach”*), supported by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), and implemented by GWP-Med in partnership with the UNECE, is to introduce the Nexus approach and catalyse action for its adoption and implementation in SEE at the national and transboundary basin levels.

Serving this purpose, Nexus Dialogue Processes are being implemented in the transboundary basins of the Drin and Drina rivers, and in Albania, including the development of analytical technical Nexus Assessments.

In the Drin basin, in the context of the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) developed under the GEF “Drin Project”, a Phase I Nexus Assessment for the Drin river basin was prepared in 2019, with co-financing from the SEE Nexus project. Drawing directly from its conclusions, the quantitative analysis supporting the Phase II Nexus Assessment Report focuses on two identified priority issues, namely:

- Hydropower and floods, aiming to understand the potential effect on flood management from increased coordination along and between the two hydropower cascades on the Drin;
- Biomass and forest management, aiming to assess the economic, environmental, and social impact of upgrading and modernizing the wood biomass value chain in the framework of sustainable forest management in the basin.

Scope and objectives of the workshop

The Learning Workshop “Gender Equality for Sustainable Development in the Drin basin” has a dual purpose:

- to familiarise the Nexus-related stakeholders from the basin with the basic concepts of gender equality as well as the importance of gender mainstreaming in policymaking. Moreover, to discuss how gender inequality impacts progress towards sustainable development and the Agenda 2030 and what can be the gender-related challenges and opportunities relevant to the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystem approach,
- to serve as a platform for sharing related insights, exchanging policy-related experiences, identifying entry points or best cases from the Drin basin and beyond. In that regard, interested gender-related stakeholders from the region could join an informal ad-hoc Gender Advisory Group for the project’s activities in the Drin basin.

Draft Agenda

09.00 – 09.30 *Participants encouraged to have test calls to ensure good connection quality*

09.30 – 9.45	INTRODUCTORY SESSION
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Welcoming Addresses

- Austrian Development Agency (tbc)
- GWP-Med

The SEE Nexus Project – an overview

Mr Tassos Krommydas, Senior Programme Officer, GWP-Med

09.45 – 10.50	SESSION 1 - An introduction on gender equality and its relevance to sustainable policies in the Nexus sectors
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09.45 – 10.05 **The Global Water Partnership Gender Agenda**

Dr Liza Debevec, GWP Senior Gender & Social Inclusion Specialist

10.05 – 10.25 **The role of gender in sustainable management of natural resources**

Ms Fiorela Shalsi, Senior Gender Advisor, GWP-Med

10.25 – 10.50 **Discussion**

10.50 – 11.00 *Coffee break*

11.00 – 12.00	SESSION 2 - Workshop: Gender and sustainable development in the Drin basin – Challenges and opportunities
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11.00 – 11.05 **Introduction: The gender-related activities under the Nexus Dialogue in the Drin basin – the scope of a Gender Advisory Group**

Mr Tassos Krommydas, Senior Programme Officer, GWP-Med

11.05 – 11.15 **Gender, rural development and sustainable forestry in Albania**

Ms Anila Aliaj, CNVP Gender Officer

11.15 – 12.15 **Roundtable Discussion – Gender and sustainable development in the Drin basin**

Representatives of institutions, agencies and organisations active on gender issues in the Drin riparian countries, as an informal ad-hoc Gender Advisory Group for the project's activities in the Drin basin, will share insights and experiences on:

- The status, knowledge, trends, and challenges regarding gender in the riparian countries.
- How is gender being mainstreamed in sustainable development policymaking.
- Experience from projects and activities in the region and beyond.
- Policy recommendations and guidance for further activities and issues of focus.

[Participants will split into break-out groups per country, followed by discussion in plenary. Guiding questions for discussion will be shared during the workshop]

12.15 – 12.20 **Closing remarks and next steps**