



Global Water
Partnership



GWP Strategy *Towards 2020*

A Water Secure World



A message from our Patron

I am very pleased to introduce 'Towards 2020', Global Water Partnership's new Strategy for 2014–2019.

Global Water Partnership (GWP) is a multi-stakeholder action network, and a partnership for sustainable development. GWP provides its Partners around the world with a neutral platform to uphold the values of inclusiveness, openness, transparency, accountability, respect, gender sensitivity, and solidarity. As we move towards 2020, these values must remain core to our development endeavours.



I share GWP's vision of a water secure world. It is a vision we must embrace as a global community, and continue to work towards, regardless of the obstacles.

Water security is at the heart of the global development challenge. It is fundamental to countries' sustainable development paths. As you review this GWP Strategy, I encourage you to consider the ways in which we can all work towards a water secure world.

*H.E. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Republic of Liberia
Patron of Global Water Partnership*

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Global Water Partnership (GWP) is an international network that was created in 1996 to foster the implementation of integrated water resources management: the coordinated development and management of water, land, and related resources in order to maximise economic and social welfare without compromising the sustainability of ecosystems and the environment.

The GWP Network is open to all organisations which recognise the principles of integrated water resources management endorsed by the GWP Network. It includes states, government institutions (national, regional, and local), intergovernmental organisations, international and national non-governmental organisations, academic and research institutions, private sector companies, and service providers in the public sector.



Foreword

Since its inception in 1996, the Global Water Partnership (GWP) family of Partners has helped countries around the world to recognise the principles that underpin good water management. Collectively, they have contributed to developing a stronger enabling environment of policies and laws; building more appropriate institutional frameworks; and sharing, adopting, and adapting management instruments and tools. A change in thinking and action has steadily taken place. We must continue to build on this progress towards improved water resources management and development for sustainable and inclusive growth. We should learn from experience and increase our collective efforts by focusing on solutions that address water resources issues at all levels.

This Strategy builds on GWP's previous work and achievements. It was developed through a year-long process of regional dialogues and consultations with all of our Partners. It addresses the gaps and concerns that our Partners identified, and it has benefitted from advice and contributions from GWP's Technical Committee and GWP global secretariat staff. The Strategy identifies GWP's role within the evolving global water scene over the next six years, based on our unique capacity to provide a neutral and creative space. It recognises new and modified paradigms. The Green Economy/Growth and the Water–Energy–Food Nexus have become subjects of international debate, reinforcing the need for an integrated approach to water management.

But the conceptual attractiveness of paradigms is not enough. They must be applicable in a fast-changing world. So, beyond the theory, GWP's long-standing challenge – improving water security – remains. It is about stewardship of water resources for the benefit of societies and the environment. It is a public responsibility that requires dynamic, adaptable, participatory, and equitable planning. It is about coordination and sharing. Multi-sectoral approaches are needed to adequately address the threats and opportunities relating to water resources management in the context of climate change, rapid urbanisation, and growing disparities. Many complex processes are involved, and consistency and long-term commitment is needed in order to succeed.

This Strategy identifies three goals: formulating and advocating evidence-based policies; generating and sharing knowledge; and supporting change through partnerships. They are interdependent and we will work towards them together to ensure an integrated approach, and they will guide our activities at all levels. Six thematic areas are identified about which we will seek awareness of their interdependencies with water security in order to identify a substantive set of insights that can provide a basis for action.

Successfully implementing the Strategy requires a dynamic and responsive Network of Partners, rigorous planning and monitoring, and financial resources. I am confident that this Strategy will guide GWP's work during the next six years and I hope that the investments made by so many in its effective implementation will provide a stepping stone out of water insecurity for millions of people. This is particularly vital for the poorest people, who are most vulnerable to the risks of water scarcity, conflicts, and water disasters.



Achieving water security means meeting the needs of both humans and ecosystems. It requires fundamental changes in values, beliefs, perceptions, and political positions, not just among water management institutions, but among all stakeholders. Progress may be slow and questions complex but there really is no alternative to a water secure world for the future of humanity. We must meet the challenge.

Dr Ursula Schaefer-Preuss
Chair of Global Water Partnership



1

The water challenge



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Global Water Partnership has learned from its worldwide Network of Partnerships that increasing water security requires sound policies, knowledge, and action. This is a major challenge and one that we aim to tackle through this new Strategy 'Towards 2020'. It offers hope and generates new enthusiasm to support countries and regions to better plan and manage their water resources at all levels for sustainable and inclusive growth.

We live in a world of growing interdependence. The impact of economic, financial, and natural crises spreads faster than ever before, and affects more people. When one part of an economy collapses, it can trigger a chain reaction across the globe. The climate crisis has shown that our planet is an indivisible whole; and the food crisis has demonstrated that nations depend on one another's ability to produce food, and on the policies that support production.

Water security is influenced by all of these global challenges. The financial crisis has constrained capital investment in increasing water security in many countries. Recurrent spikes in food prices have exposed the vulnerability of national food security. Changing weather patterns have caused catastrophic floods and droughts. The lives lost, damage done to homes and businesses, and direct economic losses from these water-related disasters have a negative impact on employment, social services, and infrastructure.

“*Water is key to all aspects of development*”

Global water challenges in 2013

- 70% of all freshwater withdrawals are for food production and yet 870 million people suffer from chronic hunger.
- By 2050 food demand will increase by 60% and energy by 100% if current trends continue.
- 770 million people do not have access to improved drinking water sources.
- 2.5 billion people lack adequate sanitation.
- 75% of the world's wastewater flows untreated into the environment.
- 35 million people die prematurely each year from water-related diseases.
- US\$2.5 trillion economic losses from disasters so far this century – 70% relate to floods and droughts.

An urgent message is emerging from international debates about Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be set in 2015: the world must act to prevent water crises. The scale of today's water security challenge should not be underestimated. The social, economic, environmental, and political consequences of water shortages are as real as disastrous floods and droughts. Threats to water security come from many quarters: rapidly growing and urbanising populations with changing lifestyles and consumption patterns; competing demands from agriculture, industry, and energy; unpredictable risks caused by climate change and environmental degradation; and growing tension over scarce water resources that flow across administrative boundaries.

Water is a central theme of the UN Rio+20 Declaration. The Declaration emphasises the need to establish a green economy as the means to achieving sustainable development while protecting and restoring the world's natural resources. Water is key to all aspects of development: food security, health, and poverty reduction, as well as sustaining economic growth in agriculture, industry, and energy generation.

Too many people still lack access to water, sanitation, food, and energy. The burden on women and girls is disproportionately large, as they often do not benefit directly from clean water supplies. This is totally unacceptable. We must take a human rights-based approach to remove these inequalities and achieve equitable and sustainable development.

The scale and complexity of these challenges is daunting, but solutions are within reach. The goal is to increase water security at all levels, by balancing the needs of society with available water resources. But there is no 'one-size-fits-all' strategy. Each country has its own unique set of physical, social, economic, political, and environmental circumstances that will determine its pathway towards water security. Governments will need to engage with private and civil society partners to address water use and waste treatment, retention, and pollution. Together they must find ways of balancing today's needs with those of future generations in a socially just and gender equitable way.

Water connects us all. Understanding the connections will help us to find equitable ways of sharing limited water resources among many competing demands. Political will and skill, combined with strong, visionary leadership, can help bring together opposing interests, integrate scientific understanding into policy-making, and negotiate socially acceptable trade-offs. Partnerships for sustainable development, such as GWP, can help countries to design and implement effective policy and build consensus to reach positive outcomes. Increasing water security is crucial to achieving new and sustainable development pathways.



2

Global Water Partnership



Global Water Partnership is a worldwide action Network of Partner organisations. It is recognised internationally as a leading advocate for integrating the development and management of water, land, and related resources in order to maximise economic and social welfare without compromising the sustainability of ecosystems and the environment.

GWP was founded in 1996. By 2013 its global Network comprised 13 Regional Water Partnerships and 84 Country Water Partnerships, involving more than 2,800 Partner organisations in 167 countries. Partners and allies, both within and outside the water community, include government institutions, UN agencies, bilateral and multilateral development banks, professional associations, research institutions, non-governmental organisations, civil society groups, and the private sector.

GWP core values

Our core values are neutrality, inclusiveness, openness, integrity, accountability, respect, gender sensitivity, and solidarity. They steer our internal conduct as well as our relationships with the outside world.

“Global Water Partnership is a worldwide action Network of Partner organisations”

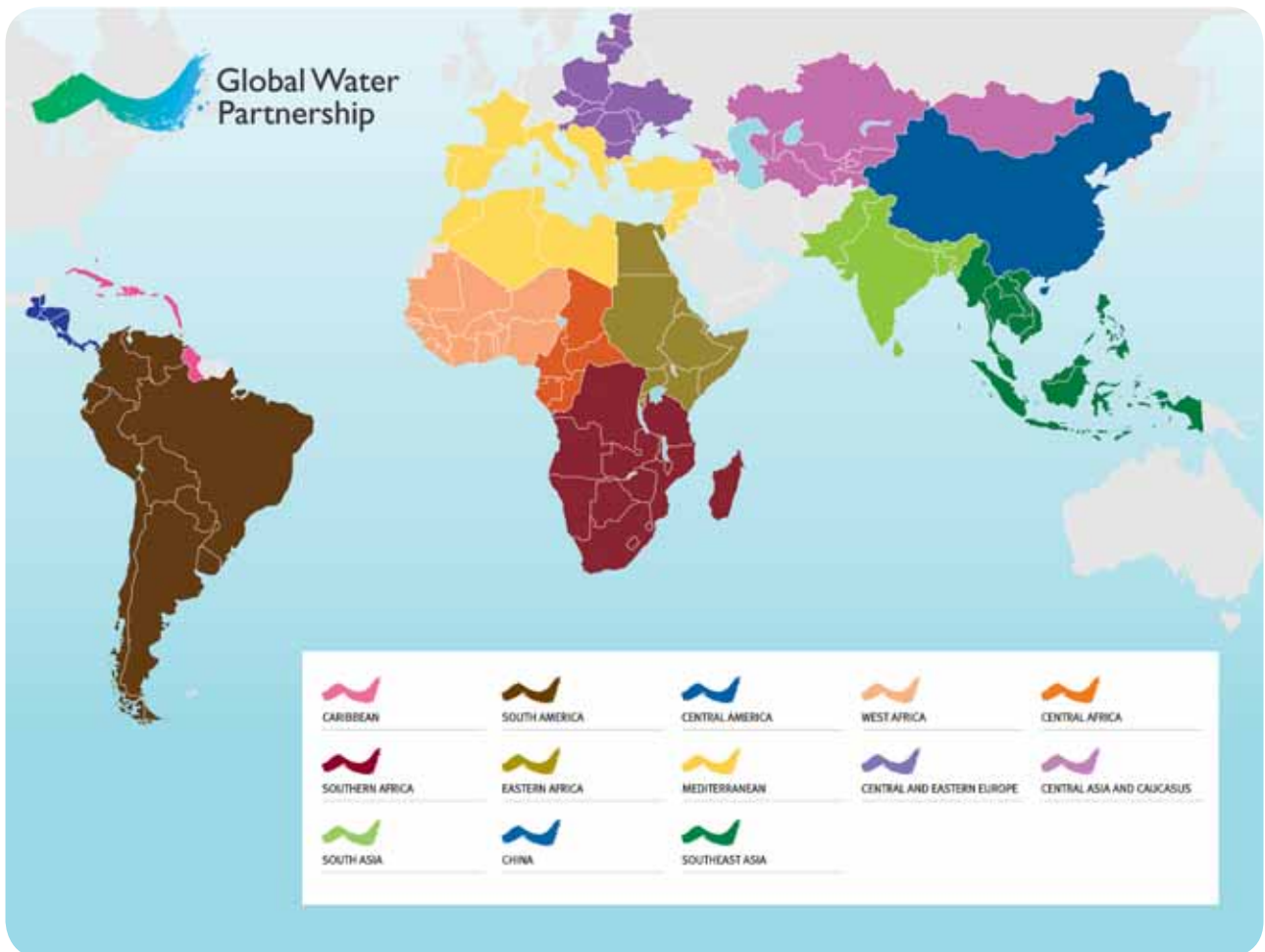
Examples of GWP Regional and Country Water Partnership engagement

- **GWP Caribbean** supports the Caribbean Community to advance regional cooperation on water and climate change. The Regional Framework for Achieving Development Resilient to Climate Change is being implemented in partnership with the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre.
- **GWP Central Africa** played a key role in developing a regional water policy with the Economic Community of Central African States. It is now involved in developing a strategy to monitor water resources.
- **GWP Central America** seeks to improve water security by promoting harmonisation and implementation of regional policy instruments. The application of these instruments requires sound legal frameworks to foster good water governance. GWP will continue to support legislators and other actors in this arena.
- **GWP Central and Eastern Europe** works in the context of the European Union Water Framework Directive and is part of the Task Force for developing the Danube River Basin Management Plan, a river shared by 19 countries.
- **GWP Central Asia and Caucasus** is helping to solve inter-state water resources issues, and assisting countries in developing an integrated water resources management approach in Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.
- **GWP China** convenes high-level roundtables that bring together stakeholders across sectors and ministries in order to incorporate an integrated approach into water legislation and processes.
- **GWP Eastern Africa** collaborates with the Nile Basin Initiative to advance regional cooperation and climate change adaptation among the countries that share this river basin.
- **GWP Mediterranean** supports the development of the Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean as well as in the development and implementation of the Action Plan for the Drin River Basin.
- **GWP South America** supports the facilitation of integrated water resources management at regional and national level.
- Through the Country Water Partnerships, **GWP South Asia** is addressing poverty, agricultural productivity, and water supply and sanitation, and is developing a regional drought early warning system with key stakeholders.
- **GWP Southeast Asia** fosters the integrated approach by influencing organisations at regional, national, and local level, including academic and professional institutions, and non-governmental organisations.
- **GWP Southern Africa** works closely with the Southern African Development Community to develop and implement the regional water policy and strategy, and is helping to mainstream climate resilience in 14 countries.
- **GWP West Africa** is a strong partner of the Economic Community of West African States, engaged in mainstreaming climate resilience into the Volta River Basin Plan, and contributing to a transboundary project in the Mekrou Basin.
- **GWP supports the African Union** through the African Ministers' Council on Water to integrate water security and climate resilience into national and regional development plans in Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Ghana, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tunisia, and Zimbabwe.

We work with our Regional and Country Water Partnerships to distil and share knowledge. Such insights can support decision-making and help people to find solutions to water management problems that are tailored to local conditions, informed by local experiences, and based on good practice from across the Network. The GWP ToolBox – an online knowledge centre providing tools, references, and case studies – supports this work. Our Partner organisations are ‘ambassadors for water’ at local, national, regional, and international levels. Together we advocate an integrated approach to water management and development, and ensure that water is a key consideration of the development agenda.

GWP’s Technical Committee of international experts supports the Network by identifying and articulating current and emerging water management issues, transforming ideas into policy and actions, and generating knowledge that is understandable, reliable, and accessible. Since 1996, the Technical Committee has generated and disseminated peer-reviewed knowledge products on a wide range of water issues including governance, financing, social equity, and integrated urban water management. It has also developed resources on international law to facilitate transboundary water cooperation, and the economic value of moving towards a more water secure world.

GWP regions



3

Our vision



A water secure world is vital for a better future: a future in which there is enough water to support social development, sustainable and inclusive growth, and ecosystems. In a water secure world, we will respect the intrinsic value of water and recognise its vital role in supporting human lives and livelihoods.

A water secure world harnesses the productive power of water and minimises its destructive force. It is a world where every person has enough safe, affordable, clean water to lead a healthy and productive life. It is a world where communities are protected from floods, droughts, landslides, erosion, and water-borne diseases. Water security promotes environmental protection as well as social justice, and addresses the impacts of poor water management. All of these will become even greater challenges as climate variability increases.

A water secure world reduces poverty and improves living standards. The human right of access to clean water and sanitation are now enshrined in international law. Putting this into practice will improve the quality of life for the most vulnerable, especially women and children, who benefit most from good water governance.

We believe that an integrated approach to managing and equitably sharing the world's limited water resources among the many different and competing uses is the best way to achieve a water secure world.

Our vision:

A water secure world

Water security is...

Water security is the capacity of a population to safeguard sustainable access to adequate quantities of acceptable quality water for sustaining livelihoods, human well-being, and socio-economic development, for ensuring protection against water-borne pollution and water-related disasters, and for preserving ecosystems in a climate of peace and political stability.

UN-Water (2013)

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Our mission



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GWP will support countries to realise our vision by helping them to advance their governance and management of water resources for sustainable and equitable development.

Effective governance and a willingness to work together are widely accepted as the keys to solving the problem of how to share limited water resources equitably among many different and competing water users.

Across the world, at every stage of national development, we will continue to build understanding of the relationship between economic growth and increasing water security. We will demonstrate how water security can be achieved in practice based on a firm foundation of knowledge and innovation.

We will pursue this mission by promoting an integrated approach based on the principles and practices established at the International Conference on Water and the Environment in Dublin in 1991 and at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992. The value of this approach was again recognised at the Rio+20 Conference in 2012*. It is now internationally accepted as being crucial in effective and sustainable management of water resources and in stimulating green growth.

Our mission:

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

* The Rio+20 Declaration (2012) *The Future We Want*. Paragraph 120.

GWP's guiding principles are based on the Dublin Principles:

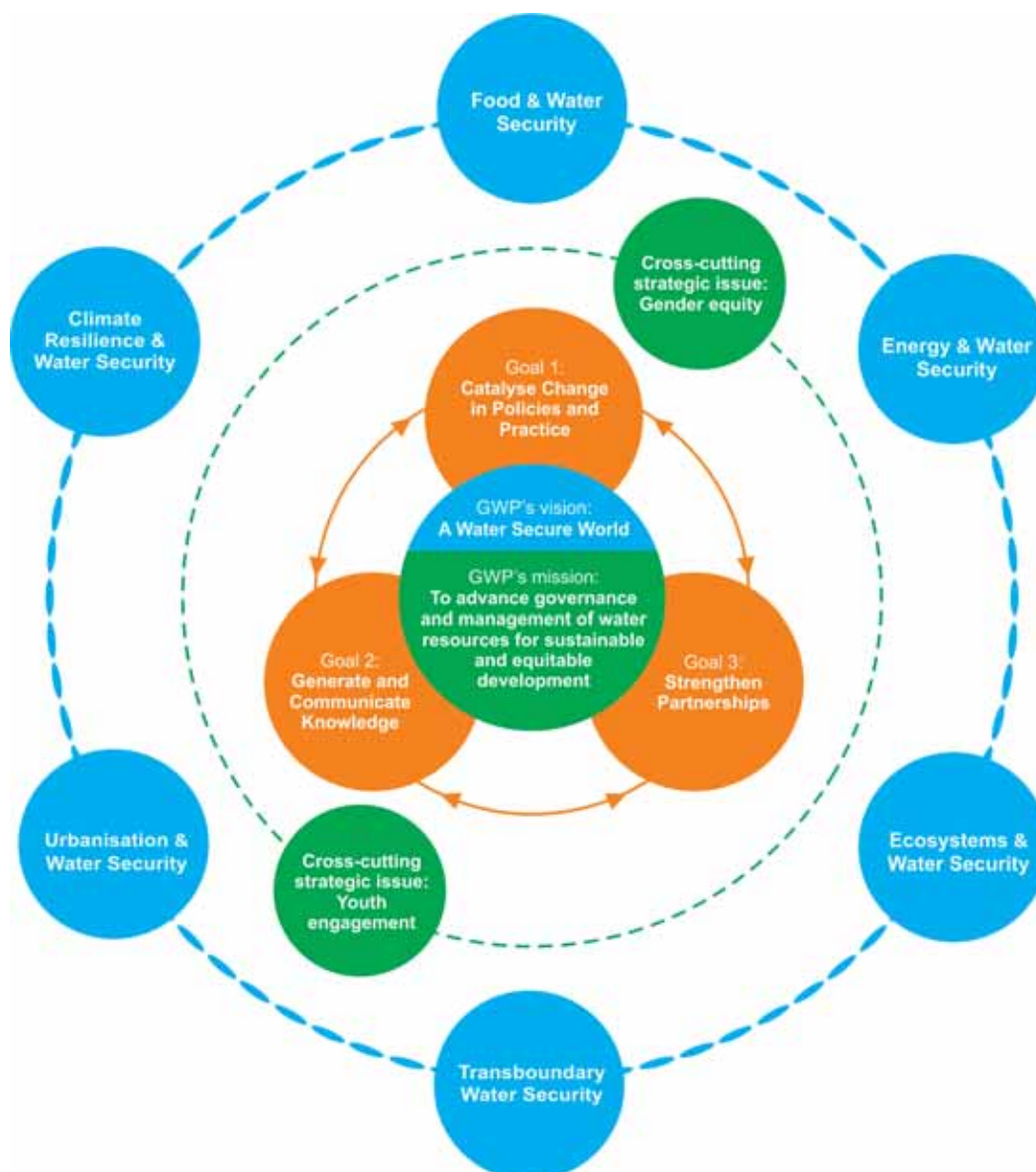
- Fresh water is a finite and vulnerable resource, essential to sustain life, development, and the environment.
- Water development and management should be based on a participatory approach involving users, planners, and policy-makers at all levels.
- Women play a central part in the provision, management, and safeguarding of water.
- Water is a public good and has a social and economic value in all its competing uses.
- Integrated water resources management is based on the equitable, efficient management, and sustainable use of water.

Our Partner organisations are united in upholding these principles and have already made major contributions to enabling an integrated approach in their regions. In doing so, they support all three pillars of sustainable development: economic efficiency, social equity, and environmental sustainability.

We will support gender mainstreaming to ensure that the interests and needs of women and men are taken equally into account when designing, implementing, and monitoring the impact of legislation, policies, and programmes on gender equity.

We will encourage and support young people and youth organisations to be fully active and engaged in water partnerships and processes.

Figure 1: GWP Strategy at a glance



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The strategic goals



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GWP has identified three strategic goals that will help countries to advance water governance and management and realise our vision of a water secure world.

These strategic goals are interdependent. Achieving the first two goals, *catalysing change in policies and practice* and *sharing knowledge*, depends upon the third goal: *creating strong partnerships*. Together the goals ensure a coherent approach and guide activities at all levels. In working towards them, GWP will provide knowledge leadership and products that draw on Partners' worldwide experience. We will influence and inform global, regional, and national policies on water and sustainable growth.

“ GWP will provide knowledge leadership and products that draw on Partners' worldwide experience ”

GWP's three strategic goals

- Goal 1: Catalyse change in policies and practice
- Goal 2: Generate and communicate knowledge
- Goal 3: Strengthen partnerships

Goal 1: Catalyse change in policies and practice

This goal focuses on advancing effective governance, based on comprehensive and mutually supportive policies, institutions, partnerships, processes, and information-sharing.

GWP supports good governance processes that enable everyone to respond effectively to global, regional, and local water security challenges. Good governance is essential to strong economic development, social equity, and environmental sustainability. Effective water governance enables sound investment in institutions and infrastructure, and supports equitable use of water and other resources.

In seeking to advance effective governance, GWP will advocate and help to strengthen all aspects of the enabling environment: policies, legal frameworks, financing, and incentives that safeguard human rights and protect public assets, such as ecosystem services

and their intrinsic value. The enabling environment encourages the participation of all stakeholders from national to local levels to achieve efficient, equitable, and sustainable water management and ensures gender equality and social justice in all outcomes.

We will support the strengthening of competent and accountable institutions. We will build individuals' capacities to develop and implement policies, regulations and investments, and encourage citizen groups to participate in all these functions. By strengthening Partner organisations, change can come from within.

We will support countries to develop and apply a wide range of management instruments to better manage water and related resources. Such tools can assist decision-makers in making objective and informed choices. The tools can also facilitate sharing of data and information, and guide processes of assessment, planning, negotiation, cooperation, regulation, and budgeting. We will work with key institutions and private sector partners to ensure that innovative instruments, models, and decision-support systems are robust and suitable for a range of contexts.



Beyond influencing policy-making, we will seek to catalyse policy changes and support countries to put them into practice. Interventions will focus on helping countries to develop and implement solutions that address the major threats to water security: climate change, urbanisation, food production, and energy generation. The protection of ecosystems will also be addressed, as well as transboundary water management and other challenges.

Based on experience and lessons learned, we will support consensus building to remove the bottlenecks to policy implementation. We aim to create a sense of urgency to take action in priority development areas, and to scale up successful approaches to sustainable water resources development and management.

Our Regional and Country Water Partnerships will promote and facilitate meaningful and open dialogue using evidence-based knowledge, and build consensus on a range of critical water and development issues. We will draw upon the strengths of our global Network and experience on the ground to influence global policy discourses. We will:

- establish a high-level Global Dialogue on Water Security and Sustainable Growth to highlight the issue of water security within the Post 2015 Development Agenda, and conduct national stakeholder consultations in many countries to support the case for a dedicated global water goal
- support planners from priority national economic development sectors such as finance, water, agriculture, energy, infrastructure, and environment to incorporate water security in national development, sectoral investment programmes, and core planning processes
- work with development banks and countries to address bottlenecks to project preparation and enable access to finance to invest in water security
- promote inter-sectoral collaboration and coordination through dialogues at national, regional, and global level
- use our convening power to bring together a wide range of key stakeholders who influence water planning and management. These include ministries, academic and research institutions, private sector businesses, water users in energy and food, and civil society and community-based organisations that support the participation of women, youth, and indigenous people

- support policy-makers at all levels to prepare for the increasing impacts of climate-related events such as floods and droughts, and promote the benefits of soft measures, such as early warning and monitoring systems, wetlands protection and rehabilitation, and investments in climate-smart infrastructure.

Putting sustainable and integrated management of water resources into practice must be anchored at all levels with the highest political commitment. We will work with key global actors to ensure political leaders and decision-makers are informed, convinced, and committed to increasing water security. We will build networks at different levels, and support policy-makers to become water champions in their own sectors.

The Global Dialogue on Water Security, alongside other programmes, will reinforce our actions and advocacy at regional, national, and transboundary levels, as well as at global level. We want to see water security embedded into development plans and strategies on climate adaptation, poverty reduction, sector development, and investment. This should lead to better policy-making, and make funds available for water financing. Locally, we will support the development of both public and private sector investment programmes and demonstration projects to generate evidence to influence national policy.

Cross-cutting strategic aims:

Ensure gender equity and youth engagement



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Goal 2: Generate and communicate knowledge

This goal focuses on developing the capacity to share knowledge and fostering a dynamic communications culture.

To bring about change, people need knowledge to understand the state of water resources and the tools needed to sustainably develop and manage them. Knowledge can stimulate behavioural change towards a new 'water culture'. We will support countries to tap into knowledge based on experience and grounded in sound theory and methodology.

We will continue to generate objective analysis, evidence-based arguments, and innovative ideas to influence policy debates on interconnected global challenges.

We will use our partnership Network to generate, access, and share water knowledge, and explore new ways of producing, customising, and communicating useful knowledge to a wide range of stakeholders. It is essential that shared solutions are applicable to regional priorities, gender sensitive, responsive to the needs of all stakeholders, and take into account indigenous knowledge, regional diversity, and local experience. We will also continue to support Regional and Country Water Partnerships to develop tailored knowledge products in appropriate formats and languages to promote regional and country outcomes.

We will use our knowledge products to influence the global discourse on water security, its integration into national development, and scaling-up investments. We will engage with global thought leaders and key regional, national, and local development planners and water managers as part of this process.

We will encourage countries to take an adaptive approach to strategic decision-making, forward planning, and day-to-day decision-making. To enable this, we will support access to reliable, up-to-date data and information on water resources and management, which is essential to properly monitor and measure progress, and capture lessons learned.

To support an adaptive approach we will:

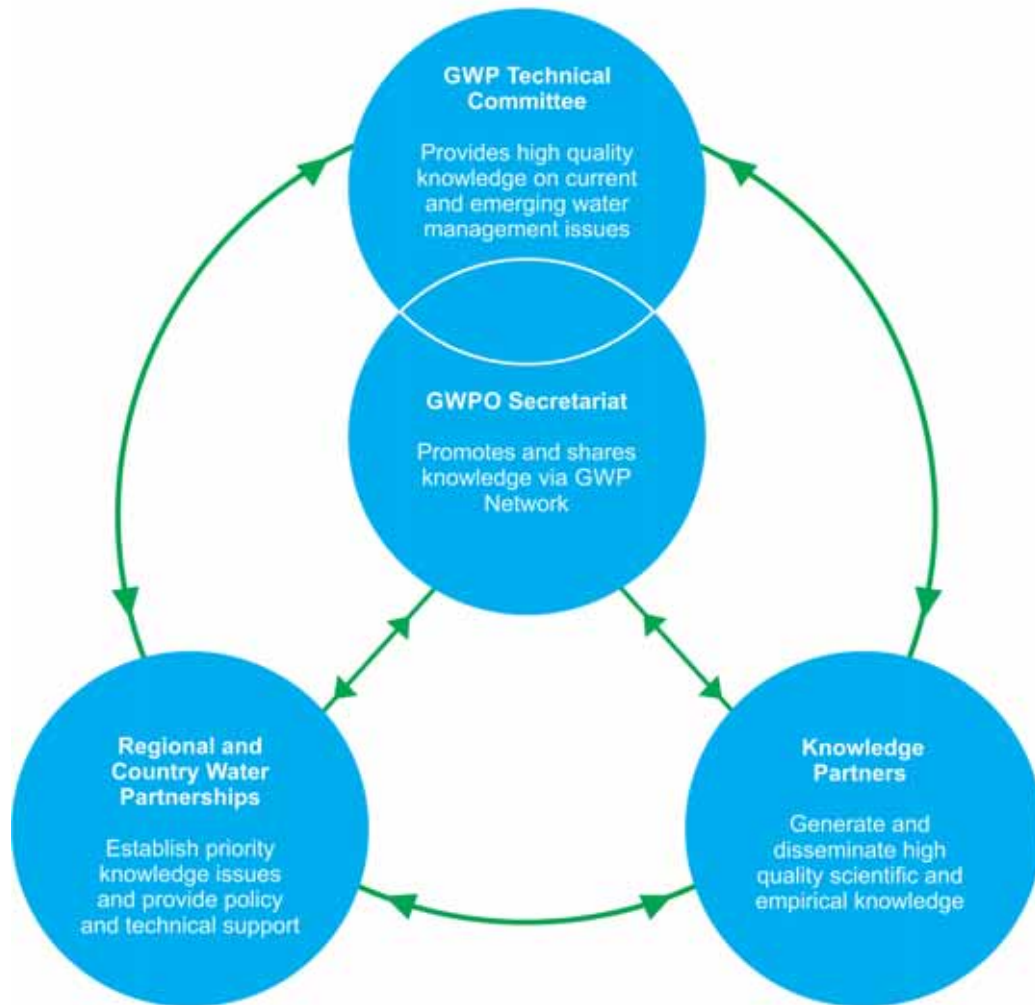
- support the development of a global monitoring and reporting system for water resources
- work with the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) to support further development of the Global Framework for Climate Services, which is involved in producing and using climate information and services
- work with UN-Water and others to develop water security targets and indicators that link to both the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals
- strengthen the global, regional, and country secretariats' role as knowledge brokers by improving network communications, knowledge management, and media outreach.



Our Knowledge Chain enables our Partners at all levels to stay at the forefront of emerging challenges and new ideas. The Knowledge Chain connects the Regional and Country Water Partnerships, the Technical Committee, the global secretariat, strategic knowledge partners, and wider audiences so that knowledge flows in many

directions: global to regions; region to region; regions to global. It enables us to develop and disseminate new demand-driven knowledge products based on local knowledge and experiences rooted in different parts of the world.

Figure 2: The GWP Knowledge Chain



The GWP ToolBox

This online resource provides tools for establishing an enabling environment including appropriate policies, legislative frameworks, and financial and incentive structures. Tools for institution building deal with governance reforms, national water sector bodies, local authorities, river basin organisations, water utilities, and a range of institutional arrangements that support integration. Management instruments include water resources assessment, integrated water resources management planning, demand management, bringing about social change, conflict management, the design and implementation of regulatory and economic instruments, and information management and exchange processes.

Our online ToolBox for sharing knowledge products will continue to evolve to meet users' needs. It is structured around our governance outcomes and contains sets of tools that are regularly updated, enabling users to choose the most appropriate mix for their context and needs.

We will continue to build local expertise so that countries can manage their water resources more effectively with less need for external support. We will promote training courses in conjunction with local training institutes and partners, such as the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP's) CapNet programme.

We will work with knowledge partners to develop tailor-made capacity-building programmes, internships and scholarship opportunities that will provide knowledge stepping-stones for young people, as well as for mid-level professionals, to develop their careers within the water community.

We will ensure that our knowledge products speak to a wide range of audiences who influence water management outcomes. We recognise that increasing water security has roots in politics, economics, society, and the natural environment. As resources become scarcer, sustainability issues become ever more entwined, and a much broader set of actors will be needed to resolve them. We must find ways of drawing together partners, stakeholders, and communities to make decisions about development and investment that enjoy broad cross-sectoral and public support. We will reach out to future decision-makers by providing water knowledge products that can be adapted for use in schools and disseminated through teacher networks.

Goal 3: Strengthen partnerships

This goal focuses on enhancing the viability and effectiveness of GWP's Network by strengthening partnerships and Partner organisations to catalyse change, enhance learning, and improve financial sustainability.

Partnerships underpin everything that we do and while our partnerships are strong, they could be stronger and more inclusive. They are the catalysts for change in policies, institutions, and practice. They lay the foundation for agreed collective actions and are proving to be excellent and trusted vehicles for sharing knowledge.

The UN organisations are key GWP Partners, facilitating access to development resources and skills, and to national governments. Our formal partnership with UN-Water provides a platform to apply our principles in practice.



We plan to strengthen and increase our Network of Partner organisations and intensify our engagement with them. Our Network comprises many different types of organisations working on a broad spectrum of water-related issues in both developing and developed countries. They include the private sector, government departments responsible for national financing and development, the media, parliamentarians, educators, women's organisations, and youth groups. We intend to expand our Network to include a greater number of Partner organisations from major sectors such as agriculture, energy, industry, and the cities. These are important water users who significantly influence water allocation and management.

'Champions' within our Regional and Country Water Partnerships play important roles as agents of change, catalysts, and advocates. They seek to influence policies, laws, and institutions to improve health, reduce poverty, maintain viable ecosystems, improve education, encourage youth engagement, and support the development of a host of other public goods.

All of our Partner organisations subscribe to the principles set out in our mission statement and share our values of neutrality, inclusiveness, openness, transparency, integrity, accountability, respect, and solidarity. Our 'Conditions of Accreditation' and 'Policy on Partners' underpin our organisational structure and provide firm governance guidelines.

We will scale up our partnership development and continue to facilitate the global Network while supporting Partners to implement this Strategy at both regional and country levels. Regional Water Partnerships are now entering a new phase in their development with a well-defined development agenda, clear operational models, established governance systems, and stronger human resources. They are better equipped to raise funds, implement programmes, and effectively support the Country Water Partnerships in their regions.

We will:

- pursue and strengthen partnerships with global, regional, and national actors who make key decisions influencing water resources. These will include the private sector, knowledge partners, and other strategic allies
- support Regional Water Partnerships to enhance their capacity to undertake governance, communications, fundraising, programme

development and implementation, strategic planning, financial management, stakeholder engagement, and monitoring and evaluation

- assist Country Water Partnerships to work towards national reforms and pilot local demonstration projects
- promote Area Water Partnerships at basin, city, or district level to advance better water management that responds to specific local needs and demands in urban and transboundary settings
- institutionalise gender considerations into our structures, activities, and programmes by establishing gender focal points at regional and country levels, and by promoting gender-responsive planning, budgeting, monitoring, and evaluation
- deepen our engagement with young stakeholders and take steps to build intergenerational cooperation on water resources.



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The thematic areas



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GWP is at the forefront of helping countries to prepare and take full ownership of their plans for integrating water resources and services. Our support moves beyond planning and into practice. Our new Strategy takes a thematic approach to water security and supports programme implementation in six key areas of development: climate change, transboundary cooperation, food, urbanisation, energy, and ecosystems. This approach is designed to integrate water security initiatives with development actions in each of the six thematic areas so that the global development agenda reflects the importance of water security for meeting human development goals.

Our support moves beyond planning and into practice

Water, Climate, and Development Programme (WACDEP)

GWP and AMCOW developed this Programme to support the African Union Heads of State commitments to integrate climate change adaptation and investment strategies for water security into national and regional policy development, planning, and decision-making. The Programme has been rolled out and adapted to regional development contexts in Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Europe, providing guidance on financing strategies and investment plans for water-related projects. It also brings together a range of actors to support demonstration projects that inform national policies, and develops institutional capacity to enable climate-resilient development.

Below, we set out our value proposition and innovative approaches in each thematic area and illustrate their interconnectedness.

Climate resilience and water security

Climate change is intensifying the global water cycle and exposing large segments of the world's population to significant water-related hazards. These are expected to increase in severity over time. Floods and droughts are becoming more frequent and severe. Rainfall patterns are more unpredictable and sea levels are rising. These changes not only threaten the ecosystem and livelihoods of people – particularly the poorest and most vulnerable – they also pose a major impediment to economic and social development. So it is important for countries to incorporate water security and climate resilience strategies into development plans.

GWP's Water, Climate, and Development Programme (WACDEP) comprises projects that aim to build climate resilience through better water management. Our Regional Water Partnerships in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, and Latin America developed the projects, in collaboration with national governments and regional economic development communities. This global Programme involves nearly 60 countries and a wide range of international partners.

Through the Programme, we contribute to the process – initiated by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) – of reducing vulnerability to climate change in developing countries, and building resilience through national adaptation strategies. We will strive for greater coherence on adaptation by building strong links between development stakeholders with interest in climate change, water management, investment planning and financing, sustainable cities, agro-ecosystems, and forestry.

Together with the WMO, we lead the Integrated Drought Management Programme and the Associated Programme on Flood Management, which aim to increase scientific understanding and support for drought and flood management. We will promote an integrated approach to flood management to maximise the benefits of using floodplains, and minimise the loss of life. Together with our Partners we will provide support to countries and communities through the Programme's Helpdesk for integrated

flood management. We will produce guidance for developing national and regional drought policies and platforms. This will support drought preparedness measures, monitoring, and early warning systems, and the application of local knowledge and technological innovations.

In partnership with the Delta Alliance, we are working to enhance the resilience of delta regions and communities threatened by rising sea levels. Countries with densely populated and vulnerable delta regions need knowledge, tools, and policy frameworks to ensure their sustainable governance and management.

At the global level, we will strengthen our partnerships with the UNDP, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UNFCCC, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), WMO and others to support Least Developed Countries (LDCs), and others most vulnerable to climate change, in developing National Adaptation Plans (NAPs).

“GWP's Water, Climate, and Development Programme (WACDEP) comprises projects that aim to build climate resilience through better water management”

Transboundary water security

More than 250 internationally shared watercourses contribute to the economic, social, and environmental well-being of 70 percent of the world's population. Ensuring that the benefits of transboundary water sources are shared equitably among nations is a major challenge for national governments and international law. Competing claims and opposing interests can quickly bring nations into conflict, especially over fresh water, which is essential, limited, and unevenly distributed. Establishing a multi-purpose dam in an agricultural setting, for example, could lead countries to clash over trade-offs between hydroelectric power and irrigation. Water conflicts interfere with economic and social development and can lead to humanitarian crises.

Strengthening Institutions for Trans-boundary Water Management in Africa (SITWA)

This project is aimed at strengthening regional cooperation and local economic development through sustainable management of transboundary water resources in Africa. It provides support for the African Network of Basin Organisations (ANBO) – the continent’s common transboundary water resources management platform – and focuses on information management, capacity building, and investment planning. GWP implements SITWA in partnership with ANBO’s Technical Secretariat, currently hosted by Organisation pour la Mise en Valeur du fleuve Senegal (OMVS).

Our long experience with facilitating and supporting collaboration at all levels puts GWP in an excellent position to foster transboundary cooperation by providing a neutral space for dialogue and negotiation, backed up by knowledge products and project experience. We already engage with countries on transboundary water management on the River Nile and the Danube, and with other river basins in western and southern Africa, the Balkans, Central Asia, and China.



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We will build on these partnerships and use our experience to promote cooperation across national borders and at the global level. We will work to strengthen transboundary water management institutions in Africa through our support to the

African Network of Basin Organisations (ANBO) under the African Ministers’ Council on Water (AMCOW)/ African Union (AU) framework, in partnership with the European Union (EU). We will share results of successful practices and approaches with other regions and basins. This process will benefit from our experience in capacity building in international water law. We do this through initiatives like the GWP– University of Dundee scholarship programme, which is designed for water management practitioners from our Partner organisations.

Food and water security

In rural areas, agriculture is a path out of poverty and the key to food security for many. Yet the impact of agriculture on water resources is rarely considered, even though it accounts for 70 percent of all global water withdrawals and up to 90 percent in some developing countries. In addition, the use of chemicals and fertilisers causes ecosystem damage and water pollution due to runoff from farmers’ fields. As we seek to increase food production to meet the demands of a growing population, agriculturalists could come into serious conflict with other water users, especially energy producers and urban dwellers. This situation will get worse as climate change moves global rainfall patterns in new directions.

Increasing agricultural production and yields will be critical for achieving future food security. It will involve a mix of technological improvements, land-use change, improved water storage, making wastewater safe to reuse, and both large- and small-scale production systems. At a global level, GWP will seek ways to improve understanding of interconnected issues and share knowledge. We will assist national, regional, and local decision-makers to align agricultural policy with water resources management plans and processes, and climate adaptation strategies, and ensure these are integrated into national development planning. Water users’ associations on the ground will be encouraged to use sustainable and efficient water management practices that incorporate soil conservation and rehabilitation.

We will work with research partners at all levels, including CGIAR, to ensure that research on food and water security responds to stakeholder needs, and that research findings inform policy and practice. We will work with international organisations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural

Development (IFAD) to support these activities. We will work with the International Land Coalition to advocate coordinated land and water governance as an integral part of national agricultural policy. Together we will promote equitable and secure access to water and land as productive resources, and as a means of achieving sustainable development. We will also focus on the links between groundwater and land use in order to reduce groundwater pollution, decline in water quality, and soil degradation that result from large-scale land-use changes. We will support countries to prepare for the impact of extreme climate events, such as floods and droughts, on food security.

Energy and water security

Generating energy requires water. Water management in turn affects energy planning, as energy is needed for pumping water, desalination processes, and water treatment plants. It is critical to understand the driving forces, competing interests, and natural cycles within the water–energy nexus to ensure efficient and sustainable use of these resources.

Climate change will complicate these interconnections. Rising temperatures will increase demand for water and irrigation pumping. Introducing more renewable energy sources may affect water demand. Increased scarcity will amplify the potential for water conflicts and the need to better manage water and energy across national borders.

We will seek to bring together the energy and water sectors, building on integrated planning approaches on both sides. We can provide a neutral multi-stakeholder platform to coordinate development policies and governance strategies based on local needs and realities, and allocate resources and benefits equitably among all users. Integrating the food security dimension with the water and energy nexus will be essential in local development contexts, and it will add another level of cooperation among actors from all three sectors.

Urbanisation and water security

By 2050, 70 percent of the world's population, some 6.4 billion people, are expected to live in towns and cities, almost doubling the current urban population. Under such pressures, conventional urban water management is unsustainable in terms of cost effectiveness, technical performance, social equity,

and environmental sustainability. Cities of the future will experience difficulties in managing scarce and unreliable supplies. New solutions are needed that increase the efficiency of urban water systems, and develop new ideas. Future water systems will shift from being highly centralised to being local and self-contained. They will maximise opportunities for water reuse and recycling, generate energy and nutrients from wastewater, and use natural systems for water and wastewater treatment.

Water utilities in both developing and industrialised countries face major problems with conflicting social priorities. We need water utilities to be financially self-sufficient, but it is also vital that poor households have access to services, even though they cannot afford the full costs of piped water. Social equity, environmental sustainability, and economic efficiency are important objectives that often compete with one another in an urban context. Optimising their outcomes and ensuring transparency and cost recovery are vital for providing reliable services and viable urban growth.

An integrated approach to urban water management, which yields mutually beneficial improvements in water resources and improved management of extreme weather events, could provide an important model for addressing the challenges facing cities. It would also address trade-offs among urban water users, food and energy producers, and the need to protect ecosystems. Our focus on advocating integration requires that we now set our sights on preparing the cities of the future.



We will continue to promote an integrated approach to urban water management. We will support the development of Urban Water Partnerships that bring together professionals and representatives of civil society. We will encourage them to reach a common vision and produce urban water development plans that benefit everyone, and that take a gender-sensitive approach. We will develop frameworks to explore urban water cycle linkages, including sanitation and urban drainage, and develop and implement approaches that recognise the relationships among different water users.

Ecosystems and water security

Freshwater ecosystems and rainforests are the world's most biologically diverse terrestrial environments. They play an essential role in sustaining the global water cycle, the carbon cycle, and nutrient cycles. Conserving these ecosystems must be at the heart of an integrated approach to water management and sustainable development. Ecosystems provide benefits to society and economies and render multiple services essential for increasing water security. They provide natural freshwater storage, regulate flows, purify water, replenish groundwater, modulate climate,

protect soils, and reduce the risks of water-related disasters. They provide water for crops and fisheries, employment, and support navigation, recreation, and tourism.

But ecosystems continue to be degraded and lost as populations grow and the demand for water intensive goods and services increases. This impacts on both water availability and water quality.

We need to better understand the role that ecosystem services play in supporting sustainable economic growth and development. We must take into account their real value when assessing trade-offs between food, energy, cities and industry, and nature, especially when water is scarce and the climate is changing.

In partnership with key agencies we will continue to advocate at all levels that natural ecosystems are a vital and integral part of sustainable economic growth and development. We will support countries to identify and evaluate policy and management options for sustaining ecosystem services (harmonising them with human needs), and help build capacity to sustainably manage these invaluable resources.



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Delivering the Strategy



Our six-year Strategy runs from 2014 through to the end of 2019. It will respond to emerging challenges and serve our Network by building on our strengths in building and sharing knowledge; facilitating policy development processes; building institutional capacity; working in partnership with key sectoral players; and promoting investments in institutions, information, and infrastructure.

Our three strategic goals of catalysing change in policy and practice, sharing knowledge, and strengthening partnerships will focus our activities. We will establish a number of new programmes within the six thematic areas addressing the links between water security and key development concerns. Each of the GWP regions will develop work programmes to address their regional priorities within the framework of the GWP Strategy.

Delivering on our strategic goals will require us to pay close attention to social equity issues linked to water, particularly those affecting women and young people; strengthening network capacity; monitoring and evaluation; and securing financial resources.

“ Our three strategic goals of catalysing change in policy and practice, sharing knowledge, and strengthening partnerships will focus our activities ”

Gender and youth

We actively support the Dublin Principle that women play a central role in providing, managing, and safeguarding water. Guided by our new gender strategy, we will ensure that the interests and needs of both women and men are taken into account as we design, implement, and monitor the impact of policies and programmes on water resources management and related development challenges. We will encourage and support women's organisations to actively engage in GWP partnerships and processes at all levels. We will ensure that our institutional capacity is adequate to address the gender dimension of water management, and will build on the Gender Focal Points that many of the Regional Water Partnerships have already developed. All of our knowledge products will be gender sensitive and take into account different social and cultural circumstances.

Our youth strategy guides our partnerships with youth organisations and our support for young water professionals and entrepreneurs. This was developed in consultation with groups and networks of young people, as well as with our Regional and Country Water Partnerships. The goal of the strategy is to empower young people to become agents of change. Our Regional and Country Water Partnerships are tasked with including the voice of young people in their governance structures, to coordinate communications and activities that target young people, and to develop 'youth action plans'.

Strengthening network capacity

Building the capacity of our Network of Partners is a cornerstone of our Strategy. We will continue to strengthen our organisational and governance structures in order to meet the challenges in delivering this Strategy. We will cultivate a dynamic and responsive Network through our global secretariat and Regional and Country Water Partnerships. Institutional policies will be put into place that encourage broad dissemination of programme results, and create incentives to foster teamwork and a culture of communication, learning, and institutional innovation. We will deepen our skills in areas such as facilitation, mentoring, networking, and online media in order to support multi-stakeholder platforms that facilitate interaction and promote learning for change.

The challenges of achieving a water secure world are enormous, and can only be overcome with the collaboration and support of all agencies working towards the same vision.

Monitoring and evaluation

We will apply rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures to enable us to critically assess progress towards our goals. We will follow a robust planning framework at both global and regional levels, which combines qualitative objectives with quantitative targets. The framework defines what our Network plans to do and the impact we intend to achieve. We will monitor direct outputs, and assess how the work influences the behaviour of key actors and water governance processes. We will include relevant indicators for gender equity and youth participation. Our reporting structure and the results will enable us to undertake extensive analysis to enhance our learning and adaptive capacity and strengthen organisational planning.

Securing financial resources

We gratefully acknowledge the efforts of our Network Partners who have volunteered their time to help achieve our vision. Nonetheless, we are a growing organisation and we will need to find innovative ways of attracting and using additional financial resources in order to implement our Strategy. Over the next six years we will look for new funding sources and sustainable financing models, including ways of working with the private sector, that enable us to invest in our people, our Programmes, and our Partners. Sources will include development foundations and corporate social responsibility mechanisms. We will also assist our Regional and Country Water Partners in developing effective funding proposals.

Contributing to the global development agenda

GWP is already mobilising political will and raising the profile of water on the development agenda. We are using national stakeholder consultations and working with key strategic partners to establish the Global Dialogue on Water Security and Sustainable Growth platform. Once the Sustainable Development Goals are defined, we will support countries to progress towards the targets and indicators. Our Network of Partners at both regional and country levels will be instrumental in ensuring that stakeholders' voices are heard at the global level, and that sound data and evidence on water resources support sustainable development policies at all levels. Through our global reach and local actions, we will play an active role in the sustainable development agenda.





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