

# Partnership Platform for Capacity Building on Transboundary Water Governance

Concept Note – prepared by Global Water Partnership

## I. Context – Why?

Good governance around transboundary waters is critical for water security, regional socio-economic development, and peace and stability in many parts of the world. However, inadequate capacity for effective and coordinated management of transboundary water resources and cooperation across borders is a major challenge faced by national governments, regional economic bodies and organizations globally. To address this challenge, capacity development in transboundary water governance provides essential tools that enable more efficient, sustainable and equitable management, as well as enhanced understanding of possible shared benefits and ways of collaborating to establish effective governance mechanisms between and among countries.

GWP has been conducting capacity building trainings with focus on International Water Law (IWL) and Water Governance with freshwater resources management as a primary target. These trainings were targeted to practitioners of transboundary waters and conducted at continental levels in Africa, Latin America and Asia, creating an opportunity for cross-learning among transboundary water practitioners from various basins within the continent. Through conducting these trainings, following gap/needs have been identified:

- a. Cases illustrating how to apply key principles of international water law and governance is critical.
- b. Needs and interest in replicating IWL and water governance trainings. Currently, trainings and materials are dependent on facilitators, and there is no place to ‘pool’ all the available materials that can be used for replication.
- c. Trainings are often dependent on the personal connections between trainees and experts. Currently there is no place for facilitators and training organizers to ‘meet’ and find each other’s expertise
- d. Online resources (training manuals and MOOCs) are only available on certain topics; and existing manuals and resources are fixed (as PDFs, and pre-recorded seminars) not allowing to integrate emerging topics of importance.
- e. Continental level trainings have created informal network and contacts among transboundary water practitioners across basin who expressed interest in being part of informal networks of transboundary water practitioners.

In order to address these challenges, GWP, as a ‘hub’ of network of IWRM practitioners, proposes to its partners in establishing the online *Partnership Platform for Capacity Building on Transboundary Water Governance* to promote greater capacity building, shared information, cooperation, and a network of actors.

## II. Outcomes and Objectives

The main objective of the Partnership Platform is to promote capacity development in transboundary water governance and to address the gaps/limitations of current trainings and online materials. This will be achieved through four secondary objectives: (i) facilitate replication of trainings; (ii) provide comprehensive and interactive resources for trainings; (iii) use case studies to illustrate principles in practice; and (iv) build a network of experts and practitioners.

Existing Gaps/needs	Suggested measures/expected outcomes
Case studies are critical for practitioners to understand how to apply key principles of IWL and water governance.	Structured ways of collecting case studies that can be used for better understandings/training purposes. As a result, TBW practitioners gain greater understanding of principles and learning from shared experiences
Needs and interest for replication of trainings. Trainings and materials are dependent on facilitators.	Facilitate replication of training by structured sharing of training resources
No place for facilitators and training organizers to ‘meet’ and find each other’s expertise	Online profiles for facilitators and case study contributors.
Online resources are available on certain topics, and most of them are ‘fixed’ (does not allow incorporation of emerging topics)	A live platform and comprehensive resource on transboundary water governance, allowing constant updating.
Interest by trainees in part of informal network of TBW practitioners	Network between and among TBW practitioners and experts facilitating exchange of different management practices on transboundary water governance, and South-South learning

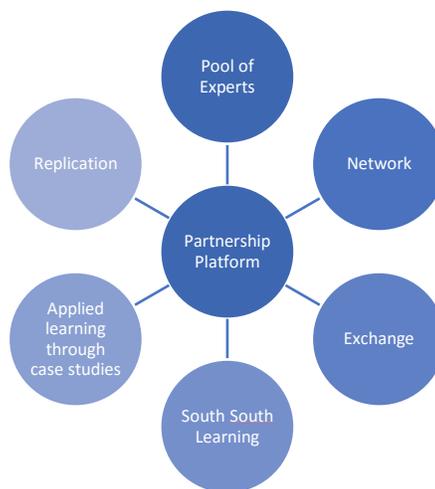
The expectation is that the Partnership Platform will facilitate and scale up the sharing of knowledge and experiences surrounding transboundary water governance. In concrete, there are four estimated results. Firstly, the Partnership Platform will scale up the number of practitioners trained in transboundary water governance, by facilitating the replication of trainings. Secondly, the use of case studies will promote greater understanding of governance principles and learning from shared experiences. Third, the interactive nature of the platform will keep resources up to date and relevant as well as facilitate exchange of knowledge and ideas. Finally, the online/interactive nature of the Platform will create a network of stakeholders and experts in the field of transboundary water governance. This will enable the matching of experts and trainees as well as promote collaboration and exchange of management practices, and South-South and South-North learning.

## III. Concept – What it is and how it works

The *Partnership Platform for Capacity Building on Transboundary Water Governance* is an on-line platform where partners can provide inputs and share resources that support building capacity to facilitate transboundary water cooperation. The platform will be facilitated by GWP and its partners with inputs from practitioners in transboundary water management globally.

In the initial stage, the on-line platform will showcase a Facilitators Training Guide, and an online Network of Partners and Experts.

The online **Facilitators Training Guide**, aims to assist people in arranging and moderating International Water Law and Water Governance trainings. The guide, that can be regarded as a toolbox, will include the following key components: (1) an overview of key subject areas and key learning objectives; (2) case studies that describe how the key subject is applied or discussed on the ground; and (3) teaching resources such as materials for trainings, explanations of legal documents, sample role plays, and links and references to other online materials. With a content rich guide, the goal is that “anyone” could arrange a training. Therefore, the guide allows wider replication of trainings conducted by GWP and its partners on international water governance and law. For more detailed information regarding the Facilitators Training Guide, see **Annex 1**.



The Partnership Platform also aims to create a network of transboundary waters practitioners. The **Network of Partners and Experts** is an online platform bringing together experts and practitioners. *Experts* and experienced facilitators of trainings will contribute to the Facilitators Training Guide and potentially be available for capacity building trainings. In return, they will have their profiles featured and presented to practitioners within the far-reaching GWP network. *Partners* will contribute their own knowledge and experience in the form of case studies. The *Network of Partners and Experts* aids the objective to promote collaboration and cooperation around shared waters, promote South-South and South-North learning, and to catalyse the arrangement of trainings so they can occur more often and in more/different places.

#### IV. Target Audience – Who?

The Partnership Platform aims to facilitate good water governance through strengthening technical and institutional capacities of agencies and individuals that have the potential to influence and advise decision-makers on negotiation, adoption and implementation of legal

frameworks for water management, multi-track water diplomacy/stakeholder engagement, and implementation of SDGs.

The primary users of this platform include: key personnel from ministries of water, environment and foreign affairs, water regulatory and management authorities, legislation agencies, who have management responsibilities over transboundary waters or implementation of relevant SDGs (SDG 6.5 and SDG 17); staff from Regional Economic Commissions and River Basin Organisations with a mandate to work on transboundary waters; civil society actors who have direct input to the governance of transboundary waters; and members of academic and research institutions.

There are partners and networks that may be interested in contributing to and being the user of this platform. They are listed in Annex II

## **V. Approach – How?**

### **Technical and Regional Expertise**

GWP will partner with technical and regional champions in the field of International Water Law, International Water Governance, and Multi-Stakeholder Processes. Champions will provide written content based on their areas of expertise. In turn, champions will be featured on the portal, be recognized for their skill-sets, and become valued members of the learning platform.

### **Partner Contribution and Collaboration**

Case studies can be submitted to the Partnership Platform by a multiple partners and contributors. These partners include various members of transboundary water Community of Practice (CoP). Based on the keywords (topics), and regions selected, the case study will be matched with one (or multiple) of our experts for review. GWP will work with its global network of professionals and volunteers to provide technical and regional quality control. “Guidelines for the Preparation of Case Studies” will set expectations for content, layout, and help provide uniformity of case studies.

## **VI. Value added – what makes this concept unique?**

While there are several training manuals available, *Partnership Platform for Capacity Building on Transboundary Water Governance* has several unique factors including (i) the live nature of the adding/modifying resources; (ii) an extensive portfolio of case studies; and (iii) the resulting network of experts and practitioners allowing for south-south learning.

To keep the relevancy of the guide, GWP intends to adopt an online platform rather than a printed one, such as PDF. In that way, the guide will not be a fixed product but a resource under continuous development, allowing the addition of new materials and updates at any time by partners. The constant updating is achieved by the collaboration of experts and partners. Partners will primarily contribute with case studies on how principles and theories on

international water governance and law have been applied in their different contexts and share their various experiences from good water governance.

The collection of an extensive list of case studies is another unique element of the Partnership Platform. The Facilitator Training Guide will highlight case studies from various parts of the world. Case Studies are a useful tool for illustrating the principles and mechanisms, of International Water Law and Governance. As a result, the trainings arranged on the basis of the Facilitator Training Guide, will be more hands-on than current available manuals can provide.

**Annex 1: Facilitator Training Guide**

**Sample Page from the Facilitator’s Training Guide**

<p><b>Topic (example): Equitable and Reasonable Utilization: International Water Law</b></p> <p>i. Overview and explanation of topic</p> <p>ii. What are principles?</p>			
<p><b>Key learning objectives and examples of teaching methods</b></p>			
<p><b>Teaching Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Teaching manuals</li> <li>○ Online MOOC</li> <li>○ Other references</li> </ul>			
Case Study A	Case Study B	Case Study C	Case Study D
Case Study E	Case Study F	Case Study G	Case Study H
<p><b>Key words:</b> #substantivenorms #proceduralnorms</p>			

**Annex II: Partners and networks that may be interested in contributing to and being the user of this platform**

- TBW experts in GWP partner network
- IW Learn partners
- University Network for Water Diplomacy
- CapNet

- Source to Sea Platform Partners
- Partners to existing and potential future GWP trainings: UNECE, Geneva Water Hub, UNESCO-IHP, WWF, IUCN, ANA, Xiamen University, Yunnan University
- Students: Master and PhD, particularly on case studies. High quality students can also be a potential gatekeeper or to help with quality control/peer review

**Annex III** List of initial topics that can be covered in the facilitators’ guide (derived from GWP’s past trainings as well as participants’ interests).

Legal Topics	Non-legal topics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to International water law               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What is International water law?</li> <li>○ Why do we need international water law?</li> <li>○ Definitions and scope within transboundary water treaty arrangements.</li> <li>○ Defining the scope of international watercourse agreements – towards IWRM?</li> <li>○ Water related international law regulations on environmental protection, human rights and international trade and investments</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Substantive norms in international water law</li> <li>• Procedural norms under international water law</li> <li>• Institutional and legal arrangements for interstate cooperation on transboundary waters</li> <li>• Dispute Resolution settlement in International water law,</li> <li>• Regional and basin level interstate treaty arrangements</li> <li>• Implementation of International Water Law in a domestic/national context or the role of national law and institutions in implementation of transboundary water arrangements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutional arrangements for transboundary water cooperation               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Challenges and opportunities for joint institutional arrangements.</li> <li>○ Stakeholder participation in transboundary water management</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Equitable benefit sharing – case studies</li> <li>• Water Diplomacy and Negotiation skills training</li> <li>• Regional approaches to transboundary water cooperation or Regional Cooperative Arrangements in Africa (SADC, ECOWAS, EAC, CISCO protocols)</li> <li>• Transboundary water conflict and cooperation – case studies</li> <li>• Ground water management and transboundary aquifers</li> <li>• SDGs and Transboundary Water Agreements exercise</li> <li>• The right to water in international law: A Perspective from Africa, Asia, South America</li> <li>• Investment in transboundary waters (non-legal aspects)</li> </ul>