



## **MEDIA RELEASE: SADC GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE WATER SECTOR CLINIC**

Johannesburg, 3 April 2019 - The Southern African Development Community (SADC), with support from the Global Water Partnership Southern Africa (GWPSA) organised the Gender Mainstreaming in the Water Sector Project Preparation and Financing Clinic on 25 March 2019 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

The objective of the Clinic was to create a platform for financiers, project developers/promoters and project implementers to discuss practical issues with regards to gender mainstreaming during project preparation and mobilising financing processes.

The SADC Water Sector has made significant progress in mainstreaming gender in Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM). IWRM highlights women's central place in water governance and use for economic efficacy, and with this comes the need to mainstream gender in water sector policies, programs, actions and investments.

Gender mainstreaming (GM) in the SADC Water Sector is realized through instruments such as the Revised SADC Protocol on Shared Watercourses, the SADC Regional Water Policy, the SADC Regional Water Strategy and the Southern African Vision for Water, Life and Environment in the 21st Century. The SADC Regional Water Policy and Regional Water Strategy have been developed and implemented through the Regional Strategic Action Plan on Integrated Water Resources Development and Management (RSAP), which is currently in its fourth cycle, i.e. RSAP IV (2016-2020). Efforts to implement the gender mainstreaming policy pronouncements have been articulated in the RSAPs, specifically RSAP III and IV through the implementation of the SADC Transboundary Water Management (TWM) program.

In line with the SADC's commitment of ensuring gender integration in the water sector a systematic capacity building program, has been conducted through a series of workshops and knowledge sharing events since 2017. The workshops have primarily targeted Gender Focal Points (GFPs) within the SADC water ministries and representatives of the gender ministries, with the aim of equipping them with the understanding, skills and tools for encompassing gender considerations into the design and delivery of water projects. The workshops aligned with key SADC and River Basin Organisations (RBOs) dialogues, ensuring GFPs participated both in targeted gender-focused knowledge sharing events and wider regional discussions.

The recent SADC Gender Mainstreaming in the Water Sector Project Preparation and Financing Clinic marks the final workshop under the SADC Transboundary Water Management programme support to RSAP IV. The Clinic was convened on 25 March 2019 in Johannesburg, South Africa during the month of the International Women's Day and the World Water Day, commemorated on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> March respectively. The Clinic built on the skills and knowledge acquired by the GFPs and the gender machinery on Gender Responsive Budgeting and Gender Mainstream Action Plans, focusing on tools and approaches for identifying and addressing gender considerations in project preparation and mobilising finance activities toward improved project designs.

The workshop provided a platform for stakeholders to share experience and gain understanding on the use and resource requirements of gender assessment and mainstreaming tools for project preparation processes and the available funding opportunities for gender sensitive water projects. Case studies and lessons learned from project funders and implementers on the design, delivery and impact of gender sensitive projects were also shared during the Clinic.

Ms Linet Miriti-Otieno, Principal Gender Specialist at the African Development Bank (AfDB) highlighted how the Bank has embraced gender equality as a central part of its inclusive growth mandate, one of the key objectives of the Bank's strategy for 2013-2033. "Gender plays an important role in shaping life, chances and roles in the household and how it translates into inequalities in human capital and economic opportunities. The Bank believes gender equality is a moral and ethical imperative, pivotal in economic growth, hence it is embedded into the Bank's rules, procedures, and practices," she said, adding that the Bank views gender mainstreaming as a promoter of equal opportunities, rights and resources for both males and females.

According to WaterAid's findings from successive evaluations, there is often a notable gap between plans and actions - prompting the need for confidence in transferring knowledge and principles into communities in a way that is context-appropriate and culturally acceptable. "Gender mainstreaming is not a one-day process but one which requires continuous conscious efforts. For gender mainstreaming to be effective there is need for creating an enabling environment whilst providing clear guidance coupled with ongoing and consistent capacity development. Through various women empowerment projects, we have realized that there is need for inclusion of women on water management committees and facilitation to engage with local authorities and that building capacity of women groups in communities is key for economic empowerment." noted WaterAid's Ms Chilufya Chileshe.

Throughout the day, participants voiced similar challenges around translating high-level gender commitments into tangible changes to the way in which projects are conceptualized, designed, financed, implemented and operated. Consensus was reached on the need to maintain dialogue amongst donors, development partners, practitioners and regional and national entities, with the aim of sharing best practice approaches, tools and experiences.

In the long journey of gender mainstreaming that commenced in phase 1 what have been achieved? The major outcome of the SADC Transboundary Water Management – Gender Mainstreaming in the Water Sector Phase 1 was the SADC Handbook on Mainstreaming Gender in the Water Sector, an adaptable, evolving, guiding resource for gender mainstreaming in the water sector. The book provides tools that ensure a gender-aware project cycle, gender sensitive participation, process facilitation, knowledge, understanding.

The SADC Gender Mainstreaming in the Water Sector Project Preparation and Financing Clinic forms part of the outcomes of Phase 2 of the SADC Transboundary Water Management – Gender Mainstreaming in the Water Sector which came into effect in 2017. Other key results were engagement of Gender Focal Points in regional processes, development of action plans including the Gender Action Plan (GAP), Gender Responsive Budgeting and promotion of development of gender sensitive water projects. The Gender Action Plan is the key milestone that will be used as a reference plan for motivating projects for implementation by the member states. The Gender Focal Points have been provided with adequate knowledge for mobilizing funds both internally through the respective member state government treasury and external sources.

Through the subsidiarity principle of SADC, Global Water Partnership Southern Africa (GWPSA) has been mandated to support the implementation of stakeholder engagement activities. These activities include gender mainstreaming as part of the SADC Transboundary Water Management program implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) with delegated authority from Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ) (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development), Germany, and Department for International Development (DFID), UK, on behalf of the SADC Secretariat.

**For more information, refer to the attached:**

*Concept Note on “Gender Mainstreaming in the Water Sector Project Preparation and Financing Clinic”*

*Workshop Programme*

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**About SADC Water Division**

The SADC Water Division falls under the Directorate for Infrastructure and Services and is responsible for coordinating and facilitating the implementation of regional water-related activities in close collaboration with the member states of SADC under the guidance of instruments for water cooperation, which include the Revised Protocol on Shared Watercourses (2000), the Regional Water Policy, adopted in 2005; the Regional Water Strategy adopted in 2006 and Regional Strategic Action Plan on Integrated Water Resources and Development Management which was first approved by SADC Summit in August 1998 to run in five-year phases.

URL:<http://www.sadc.int/sadc-secretariat/directorates/office-deputy-executive-secretaryregional-integration/infrastructure-services/sadc-water-sector/>

**About the Global Water Partnership Southern Africa**

The Global Water Partnership Southern Africa (GWPSA) is one of the 13 regional networks of the international network – The Global Water Partnership is created to foster an integrated approach to water resources management and solutions to water-related problems (such as climate change and urbanisation). GWPSA manages activities and programmes with stakeholders in the SADC Region and at Pan-African level to bring about solutions that are both tailored to local conditions and informed by local experiences and good practices from across the continent.

URL: <http://www.gwp.org/en/GWP-SouthernAfrica/>

SADC Dialogue: <https://www.gwp.org/en/GWP-SouthernAfrica/TWM/background/programmes/stakeholder-engagement/9-sadc-dialogue/>