

Reflections on the Formulation and Implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management and Water Reforms in Southern and Eastern Africa from a Gender Perspective

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The Gender Question

- In the formulation and implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management have women's interests, needs and development been neglected or included in the formulations and implementation of IWRM?
- I followed the water reform process in Zimbabwe and carried out research during this time in Zimbabwe 1995-2000
- I resumed research in 2009 to examine the changes around gender.

What happened to Dublin Principle 3?

- IWRM is made up of the 4 Dublin Principles

Principle No. 3 - Women play a central part in the provision, management and safeguarding of water. It then goes on to state:

This pivotal role of women as providers and users of water and guardians of the living environment has seldom been reflected in institutional arrangements for the development and management of water resources. Acceptance and implementation of this principle requires positive policies to address women's specific needs and to equip and empower women to participate at all levels in water resources programmes, including decision-making and implementation, in ways defined by them.

Principle 3 continued

- What have been the difficulties faced in recognizing the importance of women and supporting their domestic, livelihood, and productive water-related activities? Why has Dublin Principle 3 disappeared?
- The research as you have learned moves between different levels or scales – the international, regional, national and local (catchments or basins)

Principle 3

- Dublin 3 really speaks to women's empowerment and inclusion
- We have found from our current research that the pivotal role of women as providers, storers and users of water are ignored at policy levels and most often in the differing levels of formal institutions of water governance. Examining the understanding and implementation of IWRM in selected catchments in Mozambique, Tanzania, South Africa and Zimbabwe we have found that insufficient attention has been paid to the multifaceted roles that different categories of women play.

IWRM in context of other international instruments and agreements

- All countries are bound by a series of regional instruments perhaps the most important of which is the SADC Gender Protocol and the SADC water policy
- In addition are national policies to move toward gender equality
- In general these approaches have been labeled gender mainstreaming – for example the AMCOW Policy for Mainstreaming Gender in the Water Sector.
- Mainstreaming is a process: The goal of mainstreaming is women's equality.
- South Africa is the only one of the four countries to have formulated policies to include women.

Will such principles make a difference?

- Common to all these documents is the view of gender equality as a fundamental right based on non-discrimination of civil, political, economic and social rights. Article 18 of the SADC Protocol pertaining to access to property and resources, categorically states that “state parties shall by 2015 review all policies and laws...to end all discrimination against women and girls with regard to water rights and property such as land and tenure” (2008:16). Similarly the AMCOW policy on mainstreaming gender in the water sector seeks to “ensure that gender concerns are taken into account in policy formulation in all sectors of water....”(2010:5)

CEDAW

- The water sector doesn't seem to use other human rights instruments which apply to women, especially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women which would provide support for women's participation, equality, empowerment and nondiscrimination.

Stereotyping

- Stereotyping as a block to equality: We have not found any national government policy and plan to address the gender stereotyping of women as domestic providers, domestic carers, and storers of water. The divide between productive and domestic water remains highly problematic.
- We have not found policies or programs to encourage or facilitate men to share the burdens of water fetching, storage, cleaning, etc. although in some circumstances the classic gender division of labor is broken down.

The future...

- It remains to be seen if IWRM will continue to maintain its hegemonic position in water governance as water security increases its presence combined with climate change resilience and adaptation.
- However, whether it is IWRM or water security there needs to be a major change in the understanding and support of recognizing the water rights and water access for the millions of small-scale multiple needs water users. It is not just clean drinking water, or water for small-scale agriculture, or water for pastoralists' cattle but how to shift the thinking and practice underlying water governance.

Not just women...

- For women, not increasing their rights and access to water will jeopardize families' health and a weakening of human rights. The promise of IWRM to have greater integration especially with land has not met its promise. Accessing water through land which is dominant in rural Africa will become far more difficult if current trends continue.