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GLOBAL WATERS

Towards a Water Secure Future for People and Ecosystems



WOMEN & THE LONG ROAD TO WATER

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Perspectives

Six Kilometers a Day

By Under Secretary of State Maria Otero



Photo Credit: 2006, Joydeep Mukherjee, Courtesy of Photoshare

AT LONG LAST: Three women finally reach their water source, a low water level lake in India.

Picture for a moment the life of Meliyio Tompoi, a 35-year-old mother of six children, who lives in the Narok district in southwest Kenya. Most of the area's water points are dry, and she must walk 25 kilometers to collect water. This takes six hours each day. Although her household requires about 40 liters of water a day, Meliyio can only carry 15 to 20 liters on her own. So sometimes her family can only eat once a day due to the lack of water.

Sadly, there are millions of women like Meliyio around the world. While nearly a billion people worldwide live without access to clean water, the crisis disproportionately affects women and girls. As nurturers and homemakers, women bear the overwhelming responsibility of finding and collecting water for their families.

The profound impact a lack of adequate water, sanitation, and hygiene has on a woman's sense of dignity and self-worth extends far beyond the physical hardships associated with the chores themselves:

- On average, women and girls in developing countries walk 6 kilometers (approximately 3.5 miles) a day, carrying 20 liters (approximately 42 pounds/20 kgs) of water. In some areas, it is common for this journey to take more than 15 hours a week.
- Where latrines are not available, women and girls seeking privacy will travel outside their villages after dark, exposing themselves to a greater risk of harassment and sexual assault.



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• Female school staff and girls who have reached puberty are less likely to attend schools that lack gender-specific sanitation facilities. Of the 72 million school-age children not attending school around the world, the majority are girls. As a direct result, more than half of the world's illiterate young people are girls¹.

But there is hope. Women are incredibly resourceful, resilient, and innovative, and when they are involved in developing solutions, they make decisions that enhance the lives and livelihoods of their families and communities. At ACCION International, I witnessed firsthand the remarkable changes that occur when women living in poverty are provided opportunities. A small micro-loan can make the difference between hunger and prosperity.

Similarly, when women and girls are involved in decisions about the use of water resources, they find innovative ways to create economic opportunities that can dramatically improve their health, access to education, personal empowerment, and living conditions for their families. In Meliyio's case, she participated in a needs assessment that identified water as the top priority for her community. As a result, a USAID-supported project excavated a shallow well

just one kilometer away and struck fresh water. It now takes Meliyio just 20 minutes to obtain water, and she and her friends use the time they once spent fetching water on village development activities.

The evidence is clear. If you want to reduce demand for water, you teach women, who bear significant responsibility for tending the world's farms, how to get more crop per drop. If you want to reduce waterborne disease, you give women access to credit and other resources to help them provide safe drinking water and sanitation for themselves and their families. In this issue of *Global Waters* you will meet African women like Meliyio who are doing just that:

- The women of the Green Belt Movement in Africa have taken Nobel Peace Prize Winner Wangari Maathai's lead to

“When women are involved in developing solutions, they make decisions that enhance the lives and livelihoods of their families and communities.”



DESPERATE MEASURES: A woman on a floating market boat must wash her dishes in the polluted river in the Mekong Delta region of Vietnam.



WAITING FOR HOPE: A worried mother waits for local municipality assistance as her infant son suffers from dengue fever in Kolkata, West Bengal, India. Due to the poor sanitation system, most of this portion of Kolkata City sinks after heavy rains, causing various types of malaria.

Photo Credit: 2008, Sandipan Majumdar, Courtesy of Photoshare

Photo Credit: 2005, Henrica A.F.M., Jansen, Courtesy of Photoshare



Photo Credit: 2008 Eberto Zanli, Courtesy of PhotoShare

DIMINISHING RESOURCES: A young woman gathers water to cook with in the High Volta region of Ghana.

begin planting trees, which provide multiple resources to their communities: water, wood, and fruit, as well as cover and shade.

- In The Gambia, women have created an income stream for themselves by learning to sustainably harvest oysters through the TRY Association;
- Women in Nigeria, with the help of the Women Farmers Advancement Network (WOFAN), have mastered sustainable farming techniques, leading to empowerment through enterprise, literacy programs, and early childhood development programs;
- Three remarkable AWARD (African Women in Agricultural Research and Development) fellows—women scientists who, with grant dollars and support from USAID and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), are putting their research skills to use developing life-changing innovations to better the health and water quality for their communities.

On World Water Day, Secretary Clinton signed a Memorandum of Understanding among the State Department, the World Bank, USAID, and nearly two dozen other agencies in both the

public and private sectors declaring a mutual commitment to collectively address the growing water crisis and find long-term sustainable solutions to this daunting challenge.

This is an important step forward. But we cannot rest until we ensure that all people, from women in Meliyio’s village to communities in the mangrove forests of The Gambia, have access to the clean water and sanitation that they and their families deserve. Together, we can achieve a world in which clean water for everyone is no longer a luxury, but a standard.

¹ Statistics are from: “Women for Water ~ Water for All” Campaign Fact Sheet, WASH Advocacy Initiative, Spring 2011.



In Focus

AWARD Transforming Agriculture in Africa, One Woman at a Time

The people of Sub-Saharan Africa are trapped in a self-perpetuating cycle of extreme poverty, food insecurity, environmental degradation, inadequate rainfall, polluted surface water, and climate change. Forty percent of the population lacks access to safe drinking water, and water-borne illness is the leading cause of death in children under five.

“The issue in every town is basically water,” says Sarah Ayeri Ogalleh, an environmental scientist who works on water management and forest preservation with small farmers along the River Njoro in Kenya. “Everything gets down to water.”

Sarah is one of 180 fellows of the African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD) program, which functions as an incubator for African women in the agricultural and environmental sciences. Established in 2008, AWARD is a project of the Gender and Diversity Program of the Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research (CGIAR). It is funded by a partnership of USAID and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and is the highest-performing gender-in-agriculture project in their respective portfolios. The program develops both the scientific and leadership skills of African women, from the doctorate down to the bachelors level, where the dropout rate is greatest. “These are high-potential, highly-productive women whose talents and energy might be lost,” says Haven Ley, the program officer for AWARD at the Gates Foundation. “We’re funding one of our theories. If you get sufficient numbers of accomplished, determined women working in the rather barren, institutional landscape of agricultural development, the institutions will ultimately respond to their needs and the needs of women farmers.”

For Sarah Ogalleh, who grew up in Kenya, the greatest need was to preserve the trees, which had been a source of solace to her grandmother. “She was a small farmer with no education,” Sarah remembers, “but under the trees, she would sing to me: ‘Sarah will be a professional. The men cannot solve the problems of the village, but Sarah will do it.’”



Photo Credit: Karen Homer

A BETTER TOMORROW: Carolyn Tyhra Kumasi conducts sampling on polluted feeder streams, Kumasi, Ghana.

Sarah earned a master’s degree in environmental sciences from Egerton University in Kenya. Her current research is on how small farmers in the Njoro watershed are adapting to climate change. “The season for rains had become short, and farmers were planting near the river because they wanted to get out of hunger. But this was a maladaptation; the tree clearing led to environmental degradation.” The farmers tried to regrow some of the trees, but the seedlings died every time there was a drought. Sarah provided them with certified seeds, hose pipes, a large water tank, and supported their water resource users associations to help manage the river sustainably. The river communities are now selling high-quality seedlings to commercial growers, agricultural research institutions, and other small farmers.

Sarah also started a tree planting project in the primary schools. “We give each child two seedlings – the first tree belongs to him/her and is named after the child; the next tree is named after the school. Every child is responsible for keeping their trees alive.”



Photo Credit: Mike Goldwater

IN ACTION: AWARD Mentor and Associate Professor, Mary Abukutsa-Onyanga meets with a university student.

“Every AWARD fellow is paired with a leading scientist who serves as her mentor, guiding her research plan and professional development.”

The Nairobi-based director of AWARD, Vicki Wilde, designed the program to overcome one of the key obstacles to women’s success in science – the exclusion from professional networks, which impedes their ability to receive grants, have their research published, and define the problems that need to be studied. Every AWARD fellow is paired with a leading scientist (almost half of which are men) who serves as her mentor, guiding her research plan and professional development. “There are also a lot of issues around children and family,” said Meredith Soule, the USAID Manager who oversees AWARD and sits on its Steering Committee. Vicki Wilde, the director of AWARD, elaborated. “We invite nursing mothers to bring their babies and toddlers along to AWARD’s training courses, and we provide childcare.”

One AWARD fellow who is making a dramatic difference in her community is Jean Mtethiwa, an irrigation and water management specialist from Malawi. Water was so scarce in her village that fights would break out among the women queuing for water in the early morning. “The water committee would call them in for discipline,” said Jean. “If a woman continued to start fights, she would be expelled from the water point.” Jean earned her degree at the University of

Malawi, and worked as an irrigation and land conservation officer in the Ministry of Irrigation and Water Development before becoming an AWARD fellow. She is currently head of the 50-member Training and Program Department at the Natural Resources Council of Malawi, where she trains graduate students who work directly with farmers on natural resource and environmental management.

Another fellow, Carolyn Tyhra Kumasi, is on a research attachment in Ethiopia. Tyhra spent her childhood in northern Ghana, and knows what it is like to live with food insecurity, environmental degradation, and polluted surface water. “I was about 10 when I began to ask myself, is there any way to prevent people from having to drink contaminated water?”

At Ghana’s Kwame Nkrumah University for Science and Technology (KNUST), Tyhra’s research focused on the Barekese reservoir, which supplies water to two million people. “The water in the reservoir was polluted. I monitored the reservoir and all feeder streams, and found that it was coming from the communities—the communities were polluting their own water sources.”

The problem could be partially solved, Tyhra found, through total community-led sanitation (TCLS). But the deeper issue was that people had lost their land during the dam construction and had not been compensated, “so some of them had decided to deliberately pollute the feeder streams and the reservoir.” Upon discovering this, Tyhra made several recommendations to the government. One was to create a conservation park by the reservoir and give communities a share in tourism revenues. Another was to assess the welfare of nearby communities after dams have been constructed. She also recommended that the reservoir be regularly cleaned, and its operation be governed by a management strategy.

Clearly, the value of the AWARD program extends far beyond the stories of Sarah, Jean, Tyhra, and the program’s many other grant recipients. “We are in a very interesting position of building the best information that’s ever been put together,” said Vicki Wilde. “The story of these women is the story of agricultural transformation in Africa.”

D. Davis

For more information, visit:

<http://www.awardfellowships.org/>



In Focus

TRY Association Aims High to Improve The Lives Of Gambian Oyster Women

When Ms. Fatou Janha Mboob hears women’s voices coming from the mangrove wetlands of The Gambia, she hears the sound of progress. As coordinator of the TRY Oyster Women’s Association, Fatou knows many of the women who collect oysters from the mangrove roots and sell them along the Banjul-Serekunda highway in this coastal area.

Before the Association was established, the women struggled independently to make a living in poor working conditions. In 2007, Fatou and 50 of the women oyster harvesters joined together to form TRY and have been moving forward ever since to achieve a common goal: to become self-sufficient through improved cultivation techniques and marketing of the oysters they collect in the Tanbi wetlands near the capital of Banjul. In 2009, USAID lent its support to the program, providing much needed funding and management to help the women move that much closer to realizing their goal.

USAID supported the TRY Association as part of the five-year Gambia-Senegal Sustainable Fisheries Project, or Ba Nafaa, which means “benefits from the sea” in the local Mandika dialect. With USAID/Ba Nafaa support, TRY expanded training programs for women in both aquaculture and business management. As a result, Association members now learn fishery management and oyster cultivation techniques, such as how to build racks and floating baskets to improve yields.

They participate in community meetings to learn their roles in, and responsibilities for, managing the fishery. They help develop co-management plans and learn techniques to resolve conflicts among oyster harvesters and other resource users. Ba Nafaa is



ON THE MOVE: Marching together are the members of the TRY Oyster Association, Women of The Gambia.



FRUITS OF LABOR: A local woman sits near her basket of recently harvested oysters in hopes of selling her wares.

also working with the TRY Association to develop credit and savings schemes for its members and to help the Association with fundraising and business strategies.

Through visionary leadership and skillful fundraising, Fatou has led TRY from a single community organization of 50 women into a model of coastal co-management in West Africa that includes over 500 members from 15 communities.

In describing the challenges she faced in developing the Association, Fatou points to the difficulty of organizing women from different backgrounds and often marginalized communities, to work together. But she also credits those women with having the vision to organize the Association and the dedication to make it work. “Although they lack formal schooling, these women are very intelligent and receptive to new ideas and technologies,” she said. “When given the opportunity to participate in the Ba Nafaa project, they quickly embraced it with conviction and dedication. Now they are realizing the economic and social benefits from their activities.”



Photo Credit: TRY Oyster Women's Association



RIVER LIFE: Association members prepare for a day of oyster harvesting.



BANNING TOGETHER: Association members learn about aquaculture methods.

Photo Credit: TRY Oyster Women's Association



CATCH OF THE DAY: A Local woman shows how she collects and grows oysters on the roots of mangroves.

Photo Credit: David Haberlah

Those benefits include better equipment for oyster harvesters and an increased capacity to manage a profitable fishery. With expanded access to credit, the women have been able to purchase canoes, gloves, and life jackets, allowing them to safely harvest oysters. They also bought processing and storage equipment to diversify oyster products and transport them to regional markets.

The Ba Nafaa/TRY Association partnership also provides environmental benefits by maintaining the ecological integrity of the Tanbi National Park mangrove ecosystem and associated fisheries. Mangrove trees provide a critical habitat for oysters, which grow on their roots. With Ba Nafaa support, TRY members are developing an oyster fishery management plan that will include community-managed, exclusive-use zones for oyster harvesting.

“These women are in tune with nature and realize that their livelihoods depend on conservation of the mangroves,” said Fatou. “So they’ve stopped chopping down the trees.”

Sponsored by the USAID/West Africa Regional Mission, Ba Nafaa aims to develop sustainable artisanal fisheries through an ecosystem-based management approach that includes local citizens and stakeholders in decision-making processes. In this way, Ba Nafaa seeks to provide economic and social benefits to local communities, while maintaining the integrity of the coastal ecosystem. The Ba Nafaa project is implemented through a cooperative agreement with the University of Rhode Island’s

“Although they lack formal schooling, these women are very intelligent and receptive to new ideas and technologies... Now they are realizing the economic and social benefits from their activities.”

Coastal Resources Center and the World Wide Fund for Nature’s Western African Marine Eco-Region programme, in cooperation with The Gambia Department of Fisheries.

USAID hopes the project will serve as a model of co-management that empowers women to directly manage their own fishery, while protecting the mangrove ecosystems of coastal West Africa. As for Fatou, she hopes that each TRY Association oyster woman will build a house of her own and send her children to university. In order to make these dreams come true, Fatou will continue to work together with other Gambian oyster women to speak in a single voice that raises the standard of living for all people across coastal West Africa.
S.Nelson

For more information, visit:

<http://www.try-oysters.com>



Real Impact

Green Belt Movement Revives Watershed in Kenya

In the Chania watershed on the eastern side of the Aberdare forest in central Kenya, Grace Wanjiru waters a seedling in the Githakwa PLWAS (People Living with AIDS) Needy Guardian Self Help Group nursery. Her simple act of planting trees with the Green Belt Movement is having an enormous impact on the degraded ecosystem, the water supply for bustling Nairobi, and the place of women in the community.

Since 1977, Nobel Peace Prize Winner Wangari Maathai has led small groups of women to address their lack of firewood and access to clean water by growing trees on their farms, often with USAID support. The growing movement gave women a reason to come together and become involved in resolving their communities' challenges. Today, 90% of the members are women.

The women of the Nyeri in the central province have established more than 316 tree nurseries, with a combined production of 1.5 million seedlings per season since USAID began supporting the Aberdare Reforestation Project in 2008. Now, more than

“When women are supported, we can do big, amazing things.”



Photo Credit: Amy Gambrell

CELEBRATING TREES: Grace Wanjiru, (second to the left) Chair of the Githakwa PLWAS (People Living with AIDS) Needy Guardian Self Help Group, and fellow group members sing and dance when a seedling is planted.

2,000 women members of the Tetu constituency learn about local trees, collect seeds, and grow seedlings in community nurseries. “The community can see the trees as resources: wood, cover, shade, fruit. And because of Green Belt’s efforts, the communities appreciate a tree,” said Professor Karanja, CEO of the Green Belt Movement in Nairobi, Kenya.

Green Belt provides the community groups with environmental education, training in proper planting techniques, and advice on where to plant: on farms, at schools, and in public spaces. Member groups can earn as much as \$5,000 per year from Green Belt compensation and the selling of tree seedlings directly to conservation NGOs, private companies, and farmers. Since 2008, nearly two million trees have been planted along riparian areas, public lands, and on farms, improving 1,700 hectares of previously degraded land.

Because of the deforestation, natural springs that fed the Chania River dried up, making the river’s water levels very low. The reforestation efforts of the women in the watershed have led to the rejuvenation of 65 springs. And the microclimate is enhanced in the planted areas: “We have noticed more rain since we planted the trees. When I came in 2008, you could walk across the river; now, it is almost back to historic levels,” said Joyce Nyambura, a Green Belt Movement Extension Officer.



Photo Credit: Amy Gambrell

WATERSHED RESTORED: The Chania River flows at higher levels because Green Belt women’s groups began reforesting the watershed.



Interview with Chairwoman Grace Wanjiru, Githakwa Nursery

USAID-Supported Gakanga Reforestation Site
Tetu Constituency, Central Kenya

Photo Credit: Amy Gambrell



EMPOWERING WOMEN: Interviewee, Grace Wanjiru (left), oversees the work of Green Belt groups and educates them about trees, water, and food.

How did you get started with Green Belt Movement?

In 2006, four groups joined together—widows, guardians of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS, and people living with HIV/AIDS. We saw fit to join together because we had issues and problems that were similar. The group has 25 members.

I am one of the guardians in our group. I look after children who were left behind by my brother and his wife. In the initial stage, we started meeting in my home, and that's where the Green Belt Movement idea came from. Green Belt Movement mostly works with women's groups, and since we were already established, we decided to join. In 2008, we decided to start tree nurseries to help us with our challenges.

Where do you plant the trees?

We grow them in our nursery first, and then we plant them in the public forest. I have also gone to secondary schools to start up tree nurseries. There are already 2,000 seedlings in the nursery at St. Paul's School. And now we want to go to primary schools to preach the three ideas: trees, water, and food. We tell them the importance of doing the three things at one time.

How does Green Belt Movement help women?

Green Belt Movement helps us come together. Green Belt Movement restores our environment. The compensation from Green Belt has greatly helped our households because we can also get help from other donors. It has empowered women. I can raise seedlings in my own house.

Now I am able to attend the public *barazzas* -- meetings with the chief. I have to present Green Belt. I would not go to these meetings if I weren't in Green Belt.

We mostly deal with people who have financial difficulties. The women have the knowledge, but they don't have people to boost them. People can do a lot of things if they have the motivation. It's just financial constraints that affect them.

What does your group do with the compensation?

We realized we could help needy children. We were able to pay for medicine for those who had given up on taking their HIV medicine or stopped taking it. And now we have added food security initiatives and water harvesting at the household level. We are planting arrowroot along our house so the rainwater that comes off the roof isn't wasted. We advocate for growing organic, indigenous foods because they are healthier for women who are sick. Whatever we do on our demonstration farm can be repeated on all farms locally.

Have you noticed a difference in the amount of water available since Green Belt Movement came here?

We noticed that since we planted trees on public lands, we see water in the form of rains. There was a time that was very dry, especially 2008. The rivers had dried up that year, so at least now we are starting to see the changes after planting trees there.

How are women and water linked?

Women have problems when it comes to water. Women waste a lot of time and energy in search of water, and that affects women's work in the home and other duties she might have. When women are supported, we can do big, amazing things.
A. Gambrell

For more information, visit:

- <http://greenbeltmovement.org/>
- <http://kenya.usaid.gov/node/204>



News From The Field

The Walk to Water in Conflict-Affected Areas

Photo Credit: UN Photo/Albert Gonzalez Farran



WORKING TOGETHER: Women collect water from a tank installed by the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) near UNAMID's team site in Khor Abeche, South Darfur.

Constituting a majority of the world's poor and at the same time bearing responsibility for half the world's food production and most family health and nutrition needs, women and girls regularly bear the burden of procuring water for multiple household and agricultural uses. When water is not readily accessible, they become a highly vulnerable group. Where access to water is limited, the walk to water is too often accompanied by the threat of attack and violence.

In conflict-affected areas, access to water for any part of the population can become an even more challenging and complex issue. Social fragility, violence, and conflict can be both a cause and a consequence of inequitable and difficult water access. In these settings, access to water for both genders may in part be determined by the underlying circumstances of conflict or instability, which interact with the already complex social, political, economic, and environmental factors affecting resource access. As a key step in supporting long-lasting solutions to persistent vulnerabilities, especially for women and girls, USAID and its partners are seeking to broaden the discussion beyond the issue of vulnerability to attack. The objective

is to enhance understanding of the linkages between violence connected to water access and the wider conflict context in which the challenge is embedded. From dusty stretches of southern Sudan to the densely forested eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, from the mangrove swamps of southwestern Colombia to the rice paddies of Cambodia, USAID staff have witnessed firsthand the connections between gender, water, and violence in conflict-affected countries. Yet, the results were disappointing when USAID's Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation (CMM), in partnership with the Woodrow Wilson Center's

Environmental Change and Security Program, looked for systematic research on these links and guidance on effective responses. Too little research has focused on parsing out and clarifying the connections between the well-established vulnerabilities of women and girls around water collection and the broader contexts in which that violence is situated.

In their ongoing collaboration through the Resources for Peace Project (RFPP), CMM and the Wilson Center are seeking to better understand the underlying causes of that heightened vulnerability and its explicit connections with conflict. "With this new research we hope to establish a

"Employing a holistic view of both gender dynamics and the context of conflict will help ensure that interventions to improve water access are conflict sensitive."



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broader frame of reference,” states Cynthia Brady, a USAID Senior Conflict Advisor at CMM, “in order to help address not only the victimization of women in these environments but to simultaneously improve our understanding of the root causes and consequences of that vulnerability by analyzing the connections with the dynamics of conflict and instability.” She further explains that “this includes careful consideration of the range of factors driving risk of attack. The research will also identify what opportunities may exist through water-related programming to reduce the underlying sources of conflict. Our goal is to proactively shore up community resiliency and build stability.”

There is an immediate need for focused analysis of the connections between women, water, and conflict to complement the significant, but mostly anecdotal evidence that already exists. In particular, research needs to be done to interpret the very different kinds of potential violence and vulnerability associated with women and water in light of broader conflict dynamics. For example, issues range from the exposure of women as they travel to gather water to direct conflict over access to limited water resources by people of different groups (and its potential to grow into greater inter-group violence). Other issues for closer study include the secondary or tertiary violence stemming from water-related social and demographic disruptions and the possible specific targeting of water-seeking women for political ends.

As an initial step under the RFPP, water and conflict expert Sandra Ruckstuhl of Group W, Inc. has begun to frame the issues and offer guiding questions for addressing the research shortfall. Ruckstuhl finds that “the potential for women’s victimization and vulnerability associated with water access is not a phenomenon that can be isolated from the larger context of the system in which it occurs.” She suggests: “It would be constructive to move analysis and intellectual discussion beyond the limited focus on the vulnerabilities of women and girls to consider gender dynamics and resilience-building opportunities within the system as a whole.”

This preliminary inquiry is aimed at spurring applied policy research to deepen understanding of the connections between water access, gender-based vulnerability, and conflict, and to devise methods for addressing underlying causes. Some initial steps stand out. Staff working at the project-level can better understand the issues by asking how violence around water



Photo Credit: David Haberlain

IT TAKES A VILLAGE: Women work together to build a viable water source in South Darfur.

access connects to wider conflict dynamics. For example, who experiences the risk or reality of harm? Who is the perpetrator of harm, what means do they use, and what are their objectives? What are the issues in the conflict, and how (if at all) do they involve water supply and resources – directly or indirectly? How do gender roles/impacts associated with water access change over time?

Empowering women and girls has become a centerpiece of U.S. diplomatic and development efforts. Employing a holistic view of both gender dynamics and the context of conflict will help ensure that interventions to improve water access are conflict sensitive (minimizing negative impacts and maximizing positive ones). At the same time, interventions should harness opportunities to reduce conflict, build community resilience, and address humanitarian concerns, such as the vulnerability of women and girls. Building on the broad experience and insights from those working in the field and expert analysis, USAID and partners will continue to work on effective and sustainable development approaches to mitigate risk and promote local resiliencies around the intersection of gender, water, and conflict. *C. Brady, G. Dabelko, L. Herzer, J. Patton*

For more information, visit:

http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/conflict/



News From the Field

WOFAN Provides Empowerment Through Education in Nigeria

In 1993, Hajiya Salamatu Garba had a chance meeting with a pregnant woman on a visit to her native region of Kaduna, Nigeria that had a profound effect on her. “She saw herself as being a ‘reproductive machine,’ always either pregnant, nursing a child, doing household chores, being obedient and loyal to men, etc.,” Salamatu explained. During a subsequent visit, Hajiya searched for the woman, but learned she had died in childbirth. That experience inspired Salamatu to begin working on behalf of the women in the area by founding the Women Farmer’s Advancement Network (WOFAN) with support from USAID.

“I thought I could assist fellow women from my region with some awareness programs on general issues that affect the well-being of women,” she stated recently. WOFAN’s primary mission is to relieve hunger and poverty and to educate rural women, children, and youths in northern Nigeria and several neighboring countries to improve their food security, enhanced income potential, and overall well-being.

Focusing on northern Nigeria, WOFAN provides a wide range of services, including education about health issues, literacy training, economic empowerment, micro-credit for farmers, childcare development, leadership skills, and HIV/AIDS awareness. One of its primary goals is teaching women about soil, water, and agro-forestry conservation. WOFAN achieves its goals by organizing gender-specific groups of 10-20 people each and training the group members, who must be together at least six months to benefit from WOFAN’s programs, on a variety of topics, including encouraging good gender relationships and discouraging social exclusion. Women’s groups account for 75% of the total, while 25% consist of young men or children. There are currently 60 functioning groups registered with WOFAN.

WOFAN has established an 18-month partnership with USAID to improve access to clean water in 48 communities located in the states of Bauchi, Kano, and Sokoto. To date, the partnership has helped to build and operate hand pump boreholes, rain catchment systems, ventilated pit toilets, and hand washing stations. They have trained 340 people – many of them women – to maintain and repair the hand pumps. WOFAN also added



Photo Credit: WOFAN

GETTING INVOLVED: Representatives of USAID and WOFAN distribute hygiene and sanitation materials to schools in Liman Katagum of Bauchi state.

“WOFAN has established an 18-month partnership with USAID to improve access to clean water in 48 communities...”

information about sanitation and water usage to its weekly radio broadcast that informs women about new farming technology.

One of the partnership’s greatest successes was providing two blocks of 16 toilet facilities and 24 water outlets to the Special Education Centre in Bauchi. The school educates approximately 700 students who are deaf or blind. “We hope that this will improve learning and good health for all the students,” said Salamatu. “The school’s principal, Mallam Maikano, noted to me that parents are now more willing to allow their children to attend the school,” she added. At the Special Education Center, as at all beneficiary schools, WOFAN helped to establish school gardens which utilize hand pump spillage water for irrigation and teach students good agricultural practices.

In the Ningi area of Bauchi state, the partnership’s slogan is “Our Health is in Our Hands.” Their efforts empower residents to improve their own health and hygiene – in addition to enhancing educational opportunities and fighting poverty in the region.

A. Pruitt

For more information, visit:

<http://www.wofan-ng.org/>



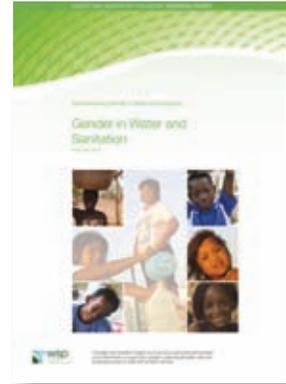
Resource Center

In Print

**Gender in Water and Sanitation Program:
Working Paper, November 2010**

Gender is a constant driver on how a society constructs its roles, activities, and determines what behaviors are acceptable for men and women, which can create significant gaps in gender inequalities. These, in fact, can perpetuate systematic favoritism towards one gender and promote discrimination towards the other. Several case studies from various countries are presented in this Working Paper that focuses on how different principles have been applied successfully and highlights the approaches used to redress gender inequalities in the water and sanitation sector.

For more information, visit: <http://www.wsp.org/wsp/sites/wsp.org/files/publications/WSP-gender-water-sanitation.pdf>



On Video

Water is Life: Women and Water in the Kibera Slum

Meeting the global water shortage is becoming increasingly challenging for rural and urban populations. Finding this critical resource falls disproportionately on women – especially young girls as early as age 11. This brief film discusses the challenging and dangerous conditions that women, especially girls, face when looking for water in the Kibera slum of Nairobi, Kenya. Particular focus is paid to a group of women at the Kibera Girls Soccer Academy, the only free, all-girls high school in the region.

For more information, visit: <http://pulitzercenter.org/video/kibera-slum-kenya-water-girls>



Online

Tackling the Water Crisis: Providing Sustainable Innovation

Hundreds of communities in Africa, South Asia, and Central America have seen dramatic impacts made by Water.org, and the organization's efforts to provide access to safe water and sanitation. Co-founded by Gary White and Matt Damon, the non-profit works with local partners to deliver innovative solutions that translate into sustainable, long-term success. Its mission is to attract global attention to the world's number one health problem – unsafe and inadequate water supplies. By developing high quality, viable water projects and enabling donors to invest wisely, Water.org can continue its work to help fight this global epidemic – one community at a time.

For more information, visit: <http://water.org/2010/11/tackling-the-water-crisis/>





Recent & Upcoming Events



RECENT EVENTS

Clinton Commemorates World Water Day 2011 with MOU Signing Between World Bank and U.S. Government March 22, 2011 | Washington, DC

To mark World Water Day, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and World Bank President Robert B. Zoellick signed a Memorandum of Understanding to affirm the commitment between the U.S. Government and the World Bank to work together to address global water challenges. The agreement brings the U.S. Government and the World Bank together with the support of 17 U.S. Government agencies and departments under USAID's leadership to actively address issues such as the lack of safe drinking water and sanitation, diminishing aquifers, drought, flooding, and climate change impacts.

For more information, visit: <http://www.state.gov/g/oes/158770.htm>

UPCOMING EVENTS

World Environmental & Water Resources Congress: Knowledge for Sustainability

May 22 – 26, 2011 | Palm Springs, California

Hosted by the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) and the Environmental Water Resources Institute (EWRI), this year the World Environmental & Water Resources Congress focuses on "Bearing Knowledge for Sustainability." Interactive plenary sessions and technical presentations will be provided by the Congress, and attendees will have the opportunity to present their project or research, display an exhibit, or enjoy co-sponsorships, and much more.

For more information, visit: <http://content.asce.org/conferences/ewri2011>

Singapore International Water Week 2011

July 4 – 8, 2011

Themed "Sustainable Water Solutions for a Changing Urban Environment", Singapore International Water Week 2011 provides a global platform for water solutions that brings policymakers, industry leaders, experts, and practitioners together to address challenges, showcase technologies, discover opportunities, and celebrate achievements in the water world. It also reflects a broader focus beyond urban water solutions and other issues that affect the urban environment, such as climate change and the management of watersheds and river basins.

For more information, visit: <http://www.siww.com.sg>

6th Rural Water Supply Network Forum

November 29 – December 1, 2011 | Kampala, Uganda

Examining the myths of the past and looking to the future of rural water supply in the 21st Century will be the theme of the 6th Rural Water Supply Network Forum. Organizers include Skat, UNICEF, the Water and Sanitation Programme of the World Bank (WSP), IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), WaterAid, and the Ministry of Water and Environment in Uganda. **Call for Papers Deadline: June 30, 2011**

For more information, visit: <http://www.rwsn.ch/documentation/skatdocumentation.2011-03-16.6757623395>