

AMCOW POLICY & STRATEGY FOR MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN THE WATER SECTOR IN AFRICA

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PREFACE

The Africa Ministers Council on Water's (AMCOW) Strategy for Mainstreaming Gender in Africa's Water Sector 2010-14 is the result of a process that began during the Pan African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water (PANAFCON 2003). During the meeting it became clear that women and girls play a critical role in the management of water resources in Africa, especially at household levels. In spite of this realisation, however, no commitment was taken regarding the promotion of gender in the water sector in Africa. A landmark change in this direction was made during a side meeting held at the First Africa Water Week in Tunis in March 2005 when the actual commitment to develop the *AMCOW Strategy for Mainstreaming Gender in Africa's Water Sector* was born. During these discussions, it became clear that awareness in Africa in detecting and responding to gender issues in the water resources and sanitation sector was low and that as a result, there had been inadequate action. Gender issues needed to be better understood, articulated and addressed within AMCOW, by individual member states and by development banks and partners. It was observed that although there is a wealth of good practice implemented by governments and various sector agencies, knowledge was disparate and insufficiently shared, and there was an absence of tools to enable AMCOW to monitor gender at a regional level. It was agreed that much would be gained through enhanced knowledge generation, exchange of good practice and increased capacity for national and regional monitoring of gender impacts in the sector.

The key milestones towards development of the Strategy were:-

- **Addis Ababa, 2003 Pan African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water (PANAFCON):** Stakeholders vow to ensure that gender concerns are taken into account through a recognised consultation process with AMCOW. This was decided after the above meeting realised the significance of gender as one of the priorities for achieving the MDGs and WSSD targets.
- **Entebbe, November 2004 Fifth AMCOW Ordinary Session:** The incoming AMCOW Chair, Hon. Maria Mutagamba in her acceptance speech highlights the need to organise and sensitize women to take charge of water and sanitation issues as a God given mandate.
- **Tunis, 2008 1st Africa Water Week:** Hon Maria Mutagamba's representative in partnership with development agencies hold side meeting where renewed commitment is made to redress the imbalance of gender in management of water resources on the continent. A Task Force is formed who commit to work in partnership under the auspices of AMCOW

- **Entebbe, October 2008:** Ugandan Ministers and Parliamentary Committee representatives are joined by over forty senior technical officers from leading Non-Governmental Organisations, civil society, UN agencies and Nile Basin Initiative country representatives and draw up scope of work for the Task Force
- **Entebbe, March, June 2009:** Task Force formulates first version of gender mainstreaming Strategy
- **Mombasa, September 2009:** Twenty-five Ministry of Water, AMCOW Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Ministry of Gender and M&E focal points from English speaking African countries review and refine objectives of the draft Strategy
- **Dakar, September 2009:** Forty participants including representatives from AMCOW Technical Advisory Committee from Francophone speaking review and refine objectives of the draft Strategy
- **Johannesburg , November 2009:** AMCOW Ministers and the TAC endorse the draft and commission finalization of the Strategy, urging development partners to continue to work in partnership and with AMCOW member countries to ensure concrete implementation and reporting of progress on gender in future AMCOW meetings

Since Tunis, the initiative has realized momentum from an idea in a side meeting to endorsement and involvement of over 40 African countries- represented by Ministers, government departments, civil society and international support agencies joining hands to create a common program of action.

It is our hope that now the Strategy is finalized, over the next 5 years it will lead to tangible impact in the sector and ultimately on the lives of women, men and children accessing and managing water services in Africa.

*Honourable Maria Mutagamba
Minister for Water and Environment
Uganda*

FOREWORD

It gives me great pleasure as the new President of AMCOW to oversee the launch of the *Policy/Strategy for Mainstream Gender in Africa's Water Sector*, as a common framework for addressing gender in the sector. I am assured that initiatives such as this have the backing of the highest level of government on the continent. Evidence is that the Heads of State and Government of Member States of the African Union reaffirmed their commitment to the principle of gender equality as enshrined in Article 4(1) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union. Furthermore we as AMCOW have committed ourselves *'to ensure that gender concerns are taken into account in policy formulation in all sectors of water and sanitation, including harmonization of policies and laws and domestication of international treaties to create equity and equality.'*

These commitments are crucial because what we have seen is that in spite of their central role on water and sanitation issues in the African family, women often have very limited role in public and private decision making regarding water resource management and development. Women and men ought to have equal access and benefit to water for domestic and productive uses. This is a principle that can open up major new opportunities for rural and peri-urban women in Africa who often use and make decisions on water use for horticulture, irrigation, livestock, fisheries and small-scale enterprise, but who tend to be excluded from formal and informal water development for productive or multiple uses. Studies have shown that equitable involvement of men and women is positively correlated with improved sustainability of water supplies as well as improved transparency and governance in resources management. Sanitation is often low on family investments priorities, yet women and girls suffer more indignity as a result of non-access based on their need for privacy security. In primary schools, when toilets are inadequately developed and designed to serve the needs of the girl child this causes them to make the decision not to attend school during menses, and eventually exposes them to early school dropout.

Gender therefore takes priority for AMCOW - water is a sector that can have one of the biggest impacts on the condition and position of women in society. Sustainable, affordable services can lift women from a life preoccupied with basics and drudgery. Quality services

can improve their health and that of their families, improve their security and free them for social, economic, educational and political activity, thus improving their position in society as well. It is not however only about women, it is about both men and women, adopting an approach that ensures that sector programming realizes benefits for the good of all in society.

Moving forward the Strategy is anticipated to provide a framework for collaborative action and exchange, rather than a recipe. Through the *Strategy for Mainstreaming Gender in Africa's Water Sector* all countries will be encouraged to adopt and report on the broad 7 point Strategy to mainstream gender, and tailor objectives to specific needs and country realities. As a first step in the first year countries are urged to ensure the presence of ministry gender advisors or focal points, to work in partnership with national multi stakeholder groups. The role of National working groups is one of leadership, to ensure an enabling environment is created, tools for assessment and capacity building are available for the sector, implementation of action plans is facilitated and that feedback on progress is provided in country and to AMCOW organs at sub regional and regional level. A task of this magnitude is best done in partnership. Let us all partner to realize the vision of this Strategy which is '*An Africa where men, women and vulnerable groups are empowered to access and manage water resources and sanitation in an integrated, equitable and sustainable manner.*'

*Hon. Sonjica Buyelwa
Minister for Water and Environmental Affairs,
South Africa*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

AMCOW would like to thank those that have facilitated the various inputs that have resulted in this Strategy. Firstly we would like to thank the leadership provided by the Hon. Maria Mutagamba, Minister of Water and Environment in Uganda and AMCOW representative for the Strategy formulation initiative. Without her unwavering vision, the Strategy would not have reached where it is today. From within AMCOW guidance was provided towards securing endorsement of the Strategy within AMCOW which was provided in December 2009. For this thanks are extended to Charles Ngangoue, President of AMCOW TAC in 2009.

Working alongside AMCOW officials and the Hon. Mutagamba of Uganda, was an interagency Task Force that provided support in pivotal ways and at different times in the past 2 years, as well as an excellent example of effective and fruitful cross agency partnership. Membership of the Task Force comprised of the Global Water Partnership Eastern Africa, the Water and Sanitation Program Africa, the United Nations Environment Program, the Gender and Water Alliance, and the Nile Basin Initiative.

Representatives from AMCOW's Technical Advisory Committee, government ministries and international agencies gave direct contributions to the content of the Strategy. Strategy formulation workshops were held to ensure the Strategies' relevance for stakeholders at the country level. The Strategy has been peer reviewed by a wide range of individuals and institutions who provided extremely useful comments, suggestions and inputs.

AMCOW Executive Secretary,

Bai Mass Taal

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	African Development Bank
AMCEN	African Ministerial Council on Environment
AMCOW	African Ministerial Council on Water
ANEW	African Civil Society Network on Water and Sanitation
ANBO	African Network of Basin Organizations
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
EAC	East African Community
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EPG	Eminent Persons Group
FEMA	Forum for Energy Ministers of Africa
GMS	Gender Management System
GWA	Gender and Water Alliance
GWP	Global Water Partnership
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IRC	International Resource Centre
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
MAP	Methodology for Participatory Assessment
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NBI	Nile Basin Initiative
NGO	Non government organization
PANAFCON	Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water
PSO	Private Sector Organisation
REC	Regional Economic Community
RBO	River Basin Organization
SADC	Southern African Development Community
STC	Specialized Technical Committees
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
UN	United Nations
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
WCW	World Conference on Women
WGDD	Women and Gender Development Directorate of the African Union
WHO	World Health Organization
WSP	Water and Sanitation Program
WSS	Water and Sanitation Sector
WSSD	Water Sanitation Sector Development

CHAPTER 1: THE AMCOW GENDER POLICY

1.1 Background

Ministers responsible for water in 41 African countries met in Abuja, Nigeria in April 2002, and decided to form an African Ministerial Council on Water (AMCOW) to promote cooperation, security, socio-economic development and poverty eradication through the better management of water resources and the provision of water supply services. AMCOW's mission is to provide political leadership, policy direction and advocacy in the provision, use and management of water resources for sustainable social and economic development and for the maintenance of African ecosystems. AMCOW is actively engaged in keeping the state of Africa's water under review and in promoting actions of common interest to African stakeholders.

At their second Extraordinary Session in 2004, the African Union (AU) Heads of State and Governments declared their support for AMCOW and its role in developing plans and policies related to the management of all water resources in Africa. AMCOW's objectives are:

- To keep the state of Africa's water under review and promote desirable actions of common interest to Africa; facilitate regional and international cooperation through the coordination of policies and actions among African countries regarding water resource issues;
- Support transnational cooperation on water related issues through the development of common positions on matters of global concern, and cooperation in implementation of relevant conventions and international agreements;
- Encourage mechanisms that promote best practices in water policy reforms, integrated water resource management, food security, water supply and sanitation;
- promote participation in regional studies regarding climate change, develop observation networks, encourage information exchange on and set up strategies for the management of water resources during droughts or floods;
- Develop policies and strategies for arresting the water crisis in Africa; and
- Review and constantly seek to strengthen water sector financing in Africa.

AMCOW's major functions are to facilitate regional and international cooperation through the coordination of policies and actions among African countries regarding water resources issues; review and mobilize additional financing for the water sector in Africa; and provide a mechanism for monitoring the progress of implementation of major regional and global water resources and water supply and sanitation initiatives. As a Specialized Technical Committee (STC) of the AU, AMCOW does not implement any activities. It provides a forum for dialogue on water issues with UN agencies and other partners, and it promotes government participation in regional studies regarding climate change and development of observation networks. It also facilitates information exchange and aims to develop policies and strategies to address water issues facing the continent.

1.2 International and Regional Commitments on Gender and Water

African member states have made commitments to support equality between women and men and to use a gender perspective in all programmes and projects, including those related to water and the environment. Specific commitments include:

1. The results of and follow-up to the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (1981-1990) were discussed in consultations in New Delhi in 1990. Although these consultations were limited on the discussion of gender issues, there was a clear call for an increase in women's decision-making and management of water resources.
2. The *Dublin Statement* (1992), endorsed by over 100 countries, recognizes that women play a central part in the provision, management, and safeguarding of water resources. It recognizes the pivotal role of women as providers and users of water and guardians of the living environment and for this reality to be reflected in institutional arrangements for the development and management of water resources.
3. Principle 20 of the *Rio Declaration* (1992) states that "Women have a vital role in environmental management and development. Their full participation is therefore essential to achieve sustainable development". *Agenda 21* (1992) contains a chapter on women and sustainable development (Chapter 24) and a chapter on water management (Chapter 18).
4. The *Beijing Platform for Action* (1995) highlighted environmental issues as one critical area of concern - "gender inequalities in the management and safeguarding of natural resources and in the safeguarding of the environment". Three strategic objectives were

agreed: (1) To involve women actively in environmental decision making at all levels; (2) To integrate gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programmes for sustainable development; and (3) To strengthen or establish mechanisms to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women.

5. The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), para 25(a), includes agreement by governments to: "... support capacity building for water and sanitation infrastructure and services development, ensuring that such infrastructure and services meet the needs of the poor and are gender-sensitive."
6. In December 2003 the General Assembly proclaimed (resolution 58/217), the period 2005 to 2015 as the International Decade for Action, 'Water for Life', and called for a focus on the implementation of water-related programmes and projects, "whilst striving to ensure women's participation and involvement in water-related development efforts ...".
7. The Millennium Development Goals, which have the same time frame as the 'Water for Life' Decade, include 2015 targets on gender equality and empowerment of women, as well as on safe water and sanitation.
8. The African Water Vision 2025 calls for an "equitable and sustainable use and management of water resources for poverty alleviation, socio-economic development, regional cooperation, and the environment"¹. Targets to achieve the vision include the mainstreaming of gender in water resources management, with the vision calling on women to take on key positions and functions in decision-making on water issues and for stakeholder involvement in water resources management by particularly women and youth in water resources management.² The vision encourages 30% gender mainstreamed national water policies by the end of 2005 and 100% gender sensitive national water policies by 2015.
9. During the Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water (PANAFCON), held in December 2003, African Water Ministers committed to ensure that gender concerns are taken into account, through a recognized process of consultation with AMCOW, in policy formulation in all sectors of water, sanitation, human settlements, agriculture and food security including harmonization of policies and laws and the domestication of international treaties, to create equity and equality by 2005³. This commitment relates to the target set in the African Water Vision 2025.
10. On 28 July 2010, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on the human right to access to clean water and sanitation. In the key provisions of the Resolution the General Assembly "Declares the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights."

¹ http://www.netssafututorial.com/fileadmin/DATA_CD/05_Step5/SF28._African_Water_Vision_2025.pdf

² UN Water/Africa (2000). The Africa Water Vision for 2025: Equitable and Sustainable Use of Water for Socioeconomic Development.

³ UN Water/ Africa, (2004) Outcomes and Recommendations of the Pan African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water (PANAFCON), Addis Ababa, December 8-13 2003

This AMCOW Policy/Strategy to Mainstream Gender in the Water Sector in Africa is based on all the above commitments. The Policy and Strategy are essential not only to support water ministers to implement international gender and water commitments, specifically, those made during the PANAFCON, but also to achieve gender equality in the water sector.

1.3 Rationale for the Gender Mainstreaming Policy

A third of all African nations are suffering from water scarcity⁴ and water stress⁵ (between 1000 and 1500 cubic meters per capita). The quantitative and qualitative manifestations, of this fact are emerging as major development challenges for many countries (ECA, 2006). More specifically, fourteen countries in Africa are already experiencing water stress; another 11 countries are expected to join them by 2025 at which time nearly 50 per cent of Africa's predicted population of 1.45 billion people will face water stress or scarcity⁶. It is estimated that nearly 51 per cent (300 million people) in sub-Saharan countries lack access to a supply of safe water and 41 per cent lack adequate sanitation. Nearly 330 million of these people live in rural areas. Consequently, rural populations, are burdened to a greater extent by preventable water and sanitation-related diseases, suffer greater deprivation from women and children not attending school or engaging in economic activities due to time and effort needed to fetch water."⁷ In almost all rural communities in Africa, it is primarily women and girls, who collect water, protect water sources, maintain water systems, and store water. Women spend a significant amount of time with these activities and they also determine the use of water. Although women make decisions at the household level that has direct impact on the health of children and other family members, they are denied the same opportunity to do so in the public sphere.

A quick gender analysis of the water sector in Africa shows that women play a key role with regard to the multiple uses of water in and around households, in the use and management of water, in agriculture, and in small-scale activities that allow both men and women to

⁴ Water scarcity describes the relationship between demand for water and its availability, whereby demands for water for domestic, agriculture, and industry purposes exceed its availability.

⁵ Water stress is a symptom of scarcity which may manifest itself as a decline in service levels, crop failure, food insecurity, increasing conflict over sectoral usage, etc.

⁶ <http://assets.panda.org/downloads/waterinafricaeng.pdf>

⁷ Africa Development Bank Strategic Plan 2003 - 2007

grow more crops, vegetables and to rear livestock. It should be noted that women's water requirements extend beyond domestic needs. Productive uses of water at the household level include a range of small-scale activities that enable poor men and women to grow subsistence food, fruit and vegetables, rear livestock and undertake informal micro-enterprises. Without access to sufficient and reliable water for productive uses in and around the household, people are excluded from a range of options that would otherwise enable them to secure their sources of food and income. The Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)⁸ approach recognizes water is an economic, social, and environmental good that should be equally distributed to both men and women. Water supply services and infrastructure are economic activities; women's lack of rights to land and water, as well as on development efforts, often negatively affects their livelihoods.

The global commitment to "water for all" made gender empowerment so crucial that in 1999, over 100 nations endorsed the Dublin principles. Many African countries subscribe to the Dublin principles, and have adopted IWRM as their vision and approach to water resource management (SADC, 2005; World Water Council, 2006). These basic rules affirmed water not only as an "economic good," but also as finite and essential to life. They put priority on privatization, water pricing, and cost recovery. Both the Dublin principles and the Environmental Summit in Rio reinforced the role of women as central to the provision, management, and safeguarding of water. However, the gap between these economic goals and the challenges of water distribution as it relates to gender inequality are yet to be fully addressed. However, though women are defined as essential providers and users of water, the social and cultural roles of women have not been adequately analyzed while their ability to pay for water is often assumed but seldom validated.

Women's control over natural resources is limited because of societal values and practices that determine men as the 'guardians' of property, the 'heads of the household' and the decision makers in the public sphere. Control over resources further depends on factors such as ethnicity and socio-economic class, despite realizing that control over natural resources is limited for women, particularly in Africa. As a result of women's limited

⁸ IWRM is a process that promotes coordinated development and management of water, land and related resources in order to maximize the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of the vital ecosystems.

participation in decision making, valuable knowledge and expertise is lost and decision making processes are likely to result in failure of policies and programmes. In order to have an overall increase in efficiency, impact and sustainability in the water sector, women need to take part in all levels of decision making and make use of their knowledge. Women play a central role in the provision, management and safeguarding of water resources and they make great contributions in the water sector, yet “women are absent from the mainstream of decision making processes that relate to water management” (Agrawal 1991; Fortmann and Nabane 1992).

During the first Africa Water Week in Tunis in March 2005, AMCOW noted that it had become increasingly clear that awareness and capacity in Africa to detect and respond to gender issues in the water sector was low, resulting in inadequate action. It was also agreed that gender issues need to be better understood, articulated and addressed within AMCOW, by individual member states and by development banks and partners. Although there is a wealth of good practice implemented by governments and various sector agencies, existing knowledge and information is disparate and insufficiently shared. This is further compounded by an absence of tools and mechanisms to enable AMCOW to monitor gender actions at a regional level. As such, this policy seeks to facilitate a process where women and men and their communities are empowered to determine their destiny within the context of water resources management to:

1. address specific gender issues in integrated water resource management, transboundary waters, and water and sanitation;
2. determine gender differentiated access to, use of, and control over water resources and;
3. address perceptions on the effectiveness of existing institutional arrangements to enhance equitable access, use and management of water resources by and for women and men while recognising that, in most communities, water is treated as an economic good only when it is being controlled by men but as a social one when it is used and managed by women (Agrawal 1991).

By addressing these issues, this policy is intended to assist Governments and Ministries of Water to integrate a gender perspective in the design, development and implementation of national strategies and programmes that are aimed at sustainable management of water resources (IUCN 2005).

1.4 Purpose of the AMCOW Gender Policy

The AMCOW gender policy is developed in the context of the African Union’s efforts to support gender mainstreaming within its organs and in Africa’s development sectors including water and sanitation. The policy serves as a framework for AMCOW, AU member states and other stakeholders on mainstreaming gender in sector policies, programmes, actions and investments. It provides stakeholders with support on actions and approaches to incorporate the diverse needs and concerns of women and men, and thereby lead to equitable access, use and management and use of water resources in Africa. The gender policy is based on international and continental commitments to achieve gender equality in the water sector and seeks to assist member states to meet these commitments. The policy will address the following aspects:

- i. Institutional strengthening for gender mainstreaming in the Africa Water Sector at the continental, national and sub-national levels
- ii. Recommend actions for implementation and achievement of the AMCOW gender commitments;
- iii. Strengthened partnerships for an AMCOW action plan of mainstreaming gender issues in water sector plans;
- iv. Enhanced sensitization on the importance of mainstreaming gender in water management at all levels (regional, basin, national, local).

1.4.1 Policy Vision

The vision of the *AMCOW Strategy for Mainstreaming Gender in the Water Sector in Africa*, (the Strategy) as adopted by AMCOW from Africa Water Vision 2025, is “an Africa where

there is equitable and sustainable use and management of water resources for poverty reduction, socio-economic development, regional cooperation, and the environment”.

1.4.2 Policy Goals

1. Achieve gender equality and equity as an integral part of AMCOW’s socio-economic development and environmental sustainability goals.
2. Enhance efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability in water resources management, transboundary and sanitation management in Africa.

1.4.3 Strategic Objectives of the Policy

1. To promote implementation of the African Ministerial Commitments on gender and water (PANAFCON 2003);
2. To initiate policy dialogue aimed at developing concrete action plans for mainstreaming gender in all activities developed in national water sector plans
3. To create awareness for the importance of mainstreaming gender in water management for improving women’s lives and sustainable development.
4. Guide member states on the development and implementation of a national Gender Management System (GMS) that is relevant to the water sector.

1.4.4 Policy Principles

Following are principles of IWRM which have been adopted by AMCOW in the development of this Strategy:

1. Freshwater is a finite and vulnerable resource, essential to sustain life, development and the environment.
2. Water development and management should be based on a participatory approach, involving users, planners and policy-makers at all levels.
3. Women play a central role in the provision, management and safeguarding of water.
4. Water has an economic value in all its competing uses and should be recognised as an economic good, taking into account affordability and equity criteria.

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 The Historical Framework of Gender

Women and Gender approaches in development have evolved over past decades. Until the early 1970s, development policies addressed the needs of poor women entirely in the context of their role as wives and mothers. Known as the 'welfare' approach, the focus was on mother and child health, childcare, and nutrition. It was assumed that the benefits of macro-economic strategies oriented towards modernization and growth would trickle down to the poor, and that poor women would benefit as the economic position of their husbands improved. Women were passive recipients of benefits. Water and sanitation services were defined in the context of health care and hygiene, which were seen as women's responsibilities.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the Women in Development (WID) approach aimed to integrate women into the existing development process by targeting them, often in women-specific activities. Women were usually passive recipients in WID projects, which often emphasized making women more efficient producers and increasing their income. Although many WID projects improved health, income, or resources in the short term, they did not transform unequal relationships, and a significant number were not sustainable. A shortcoming of WID projects was that they did not consider women's multiple roles.

From the late 1980s on, the Gender and Development (GAD) approach was developed with the objective of removing disparities in social, economic, and political balances between women and men as a pre-condition for achieving people-centred development. Much of the work in the water sectors today is informed by this approach. However, there are many perspectives in this approach and no single blueprint for enabling equality and equity in water resources management. Both WID and GAD approaches are still in use. In recent years, a gender and empowerment approach has attempted to transform existing gender relations by stressing women's self-empowerment.

2.2 The Gender Management System

In the 1990s, the United Nations agreed on gender mainstreaming as the approach that the development community should use to achieve gender equality. Accordingly, member states are expected to implement this **Strategy**, building on their national policies and strategic plans, where applicable. The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) has identified gender mainstreaming as being relevant in three linked spheres: in structures, policies and procedures of member states; their programmes; and in the impact of their work towards increased gender equality in the respective countries (Shalkwyk et al. 1996. p 3). The implementation of this Strategy should be informed by all the steps (identified in the spheres) and incorporate findings from the gender analysis into policy and programme decisions so as to contribute to equality of outcome for men and women in member countries. In addition advocacy, networking and knowledge management will remain central cross-cutting approaches.

The gender mainstreaming approach focuses on the fact that women and men have different life courses and that development policies affect them differently. It addresses these differences by integrating gender considerations into development planning at all levels and in all sectors; focusing less on providing equal treatment for men and women (since equal treatment does not necessarily result in equal outcomes), and more on taking whatever steps are necessary to ensure equal outcomes. It recognizes that the empowerment of women can only be achieved by taking into account the relationships between women and men (GMS Handbook, p 18)⁹. Ideally, member states should have in place a conceptual framework to guide, plan, monitor and evaluate the process of mainstreaming gender into all areas of their work, in order to achieve greater gender equality and equity within the context of sustainable development.

To achieve gender equality and effectively institutionalise gender mainstreaming in regional and national development, the African Union's Gender Policy encourages the establishment

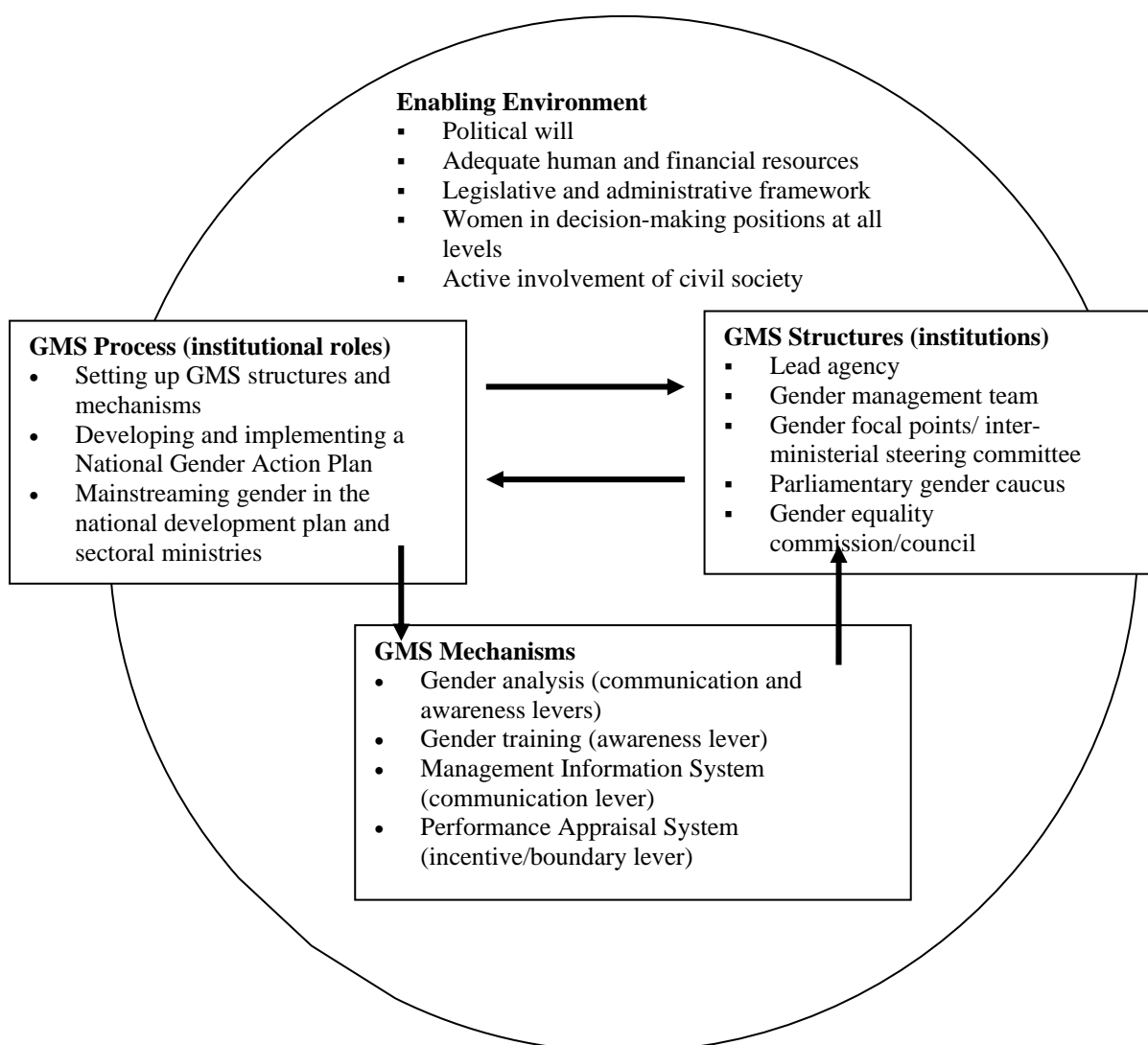
⁹ The.commonwealth.org/gender

of a working Gender Management System (GMS)¹⁰ (AU Gender Policy, 2009. p 4). The GMS is an integrated network of structures, mechanisms and processes designed to make governments more gender-aware, increase the number of women in decision-making roles within and outside government, facilitate the formulation of gender-sensitive policies, plans and programmes, and promote the advancement of gender equality in the broader civil society. The function of a Gender Management System is to advance gender equality and equity, by promoting political will, forging a partnership of stakeholders including government, private sector and civil society, building capacity and sharing good practice.

As of February 2009, seventy percent of member states had developed gender policies, yet few of them had been implemented. Some states are in the process of implementing declarations and have developed action plans, and strategic plans to implement their commitments. A few of them have established Gender Management Systems, (AU Gender Policy, 2009. p 5). To effectively mainstream gender in regional and national development, the AU Gender Policy, under its objective 4, seeks to develop a Gender Management System (GMS) within the AU and promote its adoption within other AU organs, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and member states (AU Gender Policy, 2009. p 9). The GMS adopts a stakeholder approach to gender mainstreaming and is based on the recognition that the state is not the only player in efforts to achieve gender equality and equity, and must work in partnership with other social partners/stakeholders. As such, the GMS is based on three broad principles: empowerment, integration and accountability, all of which apply to the four pillars of gender mainstreaming, as shown in figure 1.

¹⁰ The Gender Management System was developed by the commonwealth secretariat to guide Commonwealth governments to implement the 1995 Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender and Development. It is aimed at ensuring that nation states establish national structures and processes that support gender equity at national level across sectors.

Figure 1: The Gender Management System Structure



In adopting the use of the GMS, this Strategy seeks to contribute to the 2025 water vision for Africa. In so doing it will:

- (i) Create a consensus on common strategies and standards for achieving MDGs in a gender responsive way;
- (ii) Support an enhanced capacity of member states to guide the quality and impact of regional and national implementation towards MDGs and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Plan on Implementation;
- (iii) Support international, continental and national political commitments for achieving AMCOW goals on gender; and
- (iv) Support member states to establish required mechanisms for mainstreaming gender in pursuit of the MDG targets relating to water, sanitation and the WSSD Plan on Implementation.

CHAPTER 3: THE AMCOW GENDER MAINSTREAMING STRATEGY

Gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels (global, national, institutional, community, household). It is a Strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality by transforming the mainstream.

This Strategy sets out the guiding parameters for stakeholders within the water sector in Africa. It allows stakeholders to design their own gender priorities based on existing strategies and action plans to meet the overall objective of the Strategy. It is expected that this Strategy will catalyse improved gender responsive water governance through: strengthened and more gender sensitive government policy and planning systems and financial frameworks, including social delivery in the water sector; strengthened capacities of women and men to participate in policy planning, reporting, monitoring and evaluation of water sector programmes and projects and lastly, promote greater availability and use of gender relevant data to achieve the above.

3.1 Strategy Objectives

The Gender Strategy has identified seven objectives that are mutually reinforcing and should be pursued concomitantly by member states and water authorities:

1. Policy positions on gender in the water sector in Africa supported and strengthened through policy formulation and implementation;
2. Adequate human and financial resources allocated to gender mainstreaming through strategic resource mobilisation activities;
3. Gender approach to implement project interventions at all levels within the water sector developed and adopted;

4. Strategic research and collection of operational information on gender undertaken, produced, shared and used by stakeholders to inform evidence based responses;
5. Human and institutional capacity developed to support gender equality interventions at all levels;
6. Mechanisms to promote cooperation and coordination to mainstream gender in the water sector strengthened;
7. Monitoring and Evaluation system and indicators to support gender equality interventions in the water sector developed and implemented.

As the custodian of the Strategy, AMCOW will provide political direction and leverage required for implementing and coordinating the interventions efforts of various partnerships within the continent (as described further in section 3.2.3 “Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders”, below). Actions identified for each strategy objective are elaborated below:

Strategic Objective 1: Policy, Legal and Administrative Frameworks Strengthened

Actions for achieving this objective:

- (a) Secure high level commitments to gender equality and water at all levels:
 - Build capacity of stakeholders including governments and media around gender and water issues;
 - Raise awareness of and advocate for gender responsive water management;
 - Advocate for inclusion of gender in high level natural resource management institutions’ curricula.
- (b) Support a gender responsive policy, legislative and administrative framework for the water sector:
 - Review policies, legal and institutional frameworks in the water sector and ensure gender perspectives are incorporated therein;
 - Establish mechanisms that enable vulnerable groups/people to have a voice in policy formulation;
 - Strengthen human and financial resources of the executive secretariat and the member countries of AMCOW to ensure better advocacy and monitoring of actions through policy makers.
- (c) Promote the participation of women in decision-making positions in the water sector:

- Develop and support leadership training programmes for women;
 - Develop and support technical training programmes for women.
- (d) Actively engage and coordinate with all stakeholders in the water sector:
- Organise study / exposure tours to provide relevant stakeholders with exposure on good practices in gender and water issues;
 - Organise stakeholder /consultative forums on water management;
 - Undertake networking initiatives.

Strategic Objective 2: Adequate Human and Financial Resources Allocated

Actions for achieving this objective:

- Develop country-specific gender mainstreaming requirements broken down to levels that will enable the development of initial or zero-budgets, to act as a basis for resource mobilisation;
- Undertake participatory and gender inclusive resources mobilisation;
- Ensure technical capacity of stakeholders engaged in gender mainstreaming;
- Training on Gender Responsive Budgeting.

Strategic Objective 3: Gender-Responsive Programme Development and Implementation Undertaken

Actions for achieving this objective:

- (a) Undertake gender analysis as an integral part of planning, design and implementation activities (communication and awareness lever):
- Conduct gender assessments/analyses;
 - Conduct baseline surveys.
- (b) Conduct gender training (awareness lever):
- Organise study /exposure tours to provide relevant stakeholders with exposure on good practices in gender and water issues;
 - Provide relevant stakeholders with training on business skills in the water sector;
 - Train civil society, media, AMCOW organs and other stakeholders on their role in gender mainstreaming in the water sector;
 - Engage children in educational gender activities in the sector.
- (c) Promote economic empowerment interventions (communication and awareness levers):

- Develop and support programmes for equal access to water for productive purposes;
 - Develop pilot projects aimed at equal access to water for productive purposes;
 - Document lessons learnt and good practices in economic empowerment of women in the water sector programmes;
 - Replicate, scale-up and institutionalise good gender practice at all levels;
 - Develop guidelines for integration of gender in water for production.
- (c) Develop and implement Gender & Water Action Plans that:
- Undertake community action plans on water projects that are gender responsive;
 - Mainstream gender in the national and lower level water sector plans;
 - Design water programmes and interventions that are gender responsive;
 - Establish country-specific guidelines for mainstreaming gender in the water sector.

Strategic Objective 4: Gender and Water Research Undertaken and Supported

Actions for achieving this objective:

- Develop and promote adoption of a research framework to guide water sector stakeholders on generating sex-disaggregated data;
- Allocate adequate financial and human resources to gender and water research;
- Coordinate joint research activities within Africa;
- Develop tools and methodologies to support strategy implementation of similar activities in transboundary or regional block;
- Conduct research to create new knowledge on gender and water;
- Disseminate and share knowledge on mainstreaming gender in the water sector.

Strategic Objective 5: Capacity Strengthening Undertaken and Supported

Actions for achieving this objective:

- (a) Support lead agency, gender management team, gender focal points/ inter-ministerial steering committee, parliamentary gender caucus and gender equality commission/council to:
- Advocate for establishment of structures and mechanism for coordinating, monitoring reporting on progress of implementation of the Gender Strategy

- Recruit male and female eminent persons / champions to advance the Gender Strategy.
- (b) Set up GMS structures and mechanisms to implement gender actions in national water plans (as per the structures noted in Figure1 and described further in section 3.2 “Institutional framework and mechanisms for implementation”, below).

Strategic Objective 6: Partnerships and Networks Created or Strengthened

Actions for achieving this objective:

- Establish strategic partnerships for gender strategy implementation;
- Develop gender mainstreaming learning platforms at regional and national levels;
- Establish twinning programmes at the regional and national levels;
- Organise study /exposure tours to provide relevant stakeholders with exposure on good practices in gender and water issues.

Strategic Objective 7: Monitoring and Reporting Undertaken

Actions for achieving this objective:

- (a) Establish/Strengthen Gender Management Information System (communication lever):
- Improve existing databases;
 - Develop an effective communication system at all levels.
- (b) Establish/Strengthen Performance Appraisal System (incentive/boundary lever):
- Develop checklist of tools;
 - Develop an M&E system for gender that provides input into the AMCOW reporting framework;
 - Identify key indicators and develop minimum standards for gender mainstreaming in the water sector;
 - Provide training on M&E and report writing.

3.2 Institutional Framework & Mechanisms for Implementation of the Strategy

3.2.1 Proposed Structure of Implementation

The AMCOW Gender Mainstreaming Strategy has adopted the broad guidelines outlined in the AU Gender Policy with regard to the institutional framework to be used to implement

this Strategy. The AU Gender Policy recommends that AU organs, Regional Economic Commissions (RECs) and member states consider establishing GMS to suit the operational practices of member states. Recommended structures include the executive management level for political leadership, gender management teams, water sector lead agency, gender lead agency, departmental/sector focal points, extra-mural focal points, public sector training and research institutions, gender technical commissions/expert committees/working groups/task forces.

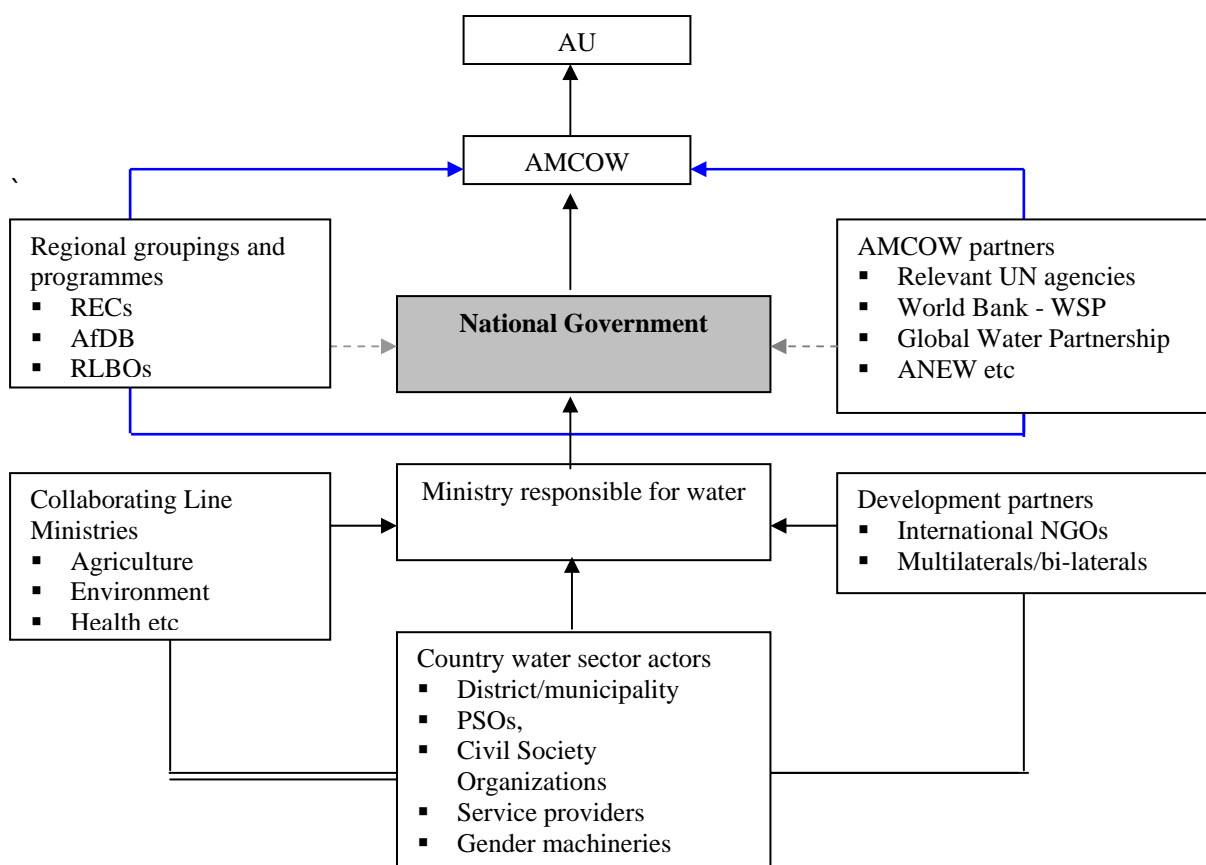
In this regard, the implementation of the AMCOW Gender Mainstreaming Strategy calls for close collaboration with the Women and Gender Development Directorate (WGDD) of the African Union Commission. The WGDD will provide technical support to assess progress and evaluate the performance of gender mainstreaming in the water sector. In addition, AMCOW, as the relevant specialised technical committee of the African Union and the ministerial body responsible for preparing action plans and reports on the water sector, will provide overall policy guidance for gender mainstreaming in liaison with other specialised technical committees such as the African Ministerial Council on Environment (AMCEN), the Forum for Energy Ministers of Africa (FEMA) and the ministerial forum on Agriculture.

3.2.2 AMCOW Institutional Structure

The Strategy for Mainstreaming Gender in the Water Sector in Africa will take advantage of the existing AMCOW structures to enhance coherence and coordination and promote knowledge and learning on gender issues in the water sector in Africa. The institutional structure of AMCOW is made up of several political and technical entities at the regional and sub-regional levels, working together to achieve the objectives of AMCOW. The Governing Council serves as the principal inter-governmental body on water issues and is composed of all 53 African Ministers responsible for water affairs in the continent. The Executive Committee (EXCO) comprises the President of the Council and 15 other members—three members elected from each of the five sub-regions of Africa on a rotational basis. The members are selected by the sub-regions.

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) comprises 25 technical experts, five (5) each from the five sub-regions of Africa, who serve on a rotational basis. The sub-regions decide which countries and experts are to become members of the Committee. The Sub-regional Committees consist of a Ministerial committee and technical experts responsible for ensuring that arrangements are in place for sub-regional coordination on AMCOW matters as well as providing inputs for the deliberations of the TAC. The Secretariat is responsible for the day-to-day running and follow-up actions on the decisions of the Council. The Strategy Unit provides the knowledge-base for informed deliberations and decision-making of the Council. The implementation framework provides an innovative means of leveraging existing resources while improving coordination of gender mainstreaming interventions in the sector as outlined in Figure 2:

Figure 2: Proposed Structure of Implementation



Source: AMCOW TAC gender strategy formulation workshops, Mombasa and Dakar, September 2009.

The structure provides vertical and horizontal linkages between regional, national and sub national levels. A Gender Focal Point System should be established and/or strengthened to support the implementation of initiatives identified in this Strategy. Gender Focal Points will be identified by national governments to work at sub regional and regional levels who will be responsible to track gender actions and provide guidance and coordinate the interventions of various stakeholders and development actors that are committed to gender responsiveness in water policies and practice. A network organization that works on water and sanitation issues will be identified and tasked to coordinate gender actions and work with the focal points and Gender Working Groups in member states, as required.

This Strategy will support horizontal linkages at the regional level by promoting opportunities for joint activities and cross learning between RECs. It will also promote the involvement and collaboration of other stakeholders such as the private sector, civil society organizations and development partners. Gender Focal Points at the sub regional level will track progress towards implementing the Strategy, consolidate the information and report back to the regional level. At the national level, the Gender Focal Points will be responsible for the implementation of interventions highlighted in this Strategy. They will collaborate closely with multi-sectoral Gender Working Groups (GWG), which includes sub-national actors in the water sector.

3.2.3 Monitoring and Evaluation Institutional Arrangements

This Strategy will utilize AMCOW's current institutional arrangements for reporting water actions to report also on gender actions¹¹. AMCOW's monitoring framework is based on the use of national, sub-regional and regional structures and resources to implement interventions. Institutions, programmes and initiatives at the local, national, sub-regional and regional levels are required to provide a single report in order to inform the report that AMCOW submits to the AU. Actors undertaking gender actions highlighted in this Strategy will use the same format and frequency of reporting which address the requirements of AMCOW.

¹¹<http://www.africanwaterfacility.org/fileadmin/uploads/awf/governing-council/Executive%20Summary%20-20AMCOW%20Framework%20for%20Reporting%20Water%20Actions%20Nov%202009.pdf>

At the country and sub-regional levels, ministries and units responsible for water already exist in RECs and Regional Basin Organizations (RECs), and these should be the hub around which gender mainstreaming issues are handled. Reporting on gender actions will be submitted to the Secretariat using AMCOW’s reporting mechanism. Figure 3 shows the institutional arrangements for reporting water actions.

Figure 3: AMCOW’s Institutional Arrangements for Reporting Water Actions¹²

	Country Level	Sub-regional Level	Regional Level	International Level
Outputs from reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports on Country actions • Updates on emerging issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sub-region overviews • Trans-boundary gender and water actions • Regional projects • Regional financing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Region overviews • Financing [portfolios, requirements] • Progress on Gender mainstreaming strategy • Update on emerging issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global updates • Tracking of MDGs • Global financing for gender
Responsibility	Ministries responsible for water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sub-regional AMCOW • Regional Economic Commissions • River and Lake Basin Organisations • Sub-regional initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AMCOW Secretariat • AfDB • WSP Africa • UN Water Africa • GWP • ANEW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU • AMCOW Secretariat • AfDB • UN-Water • G8, OECD • EU Water Initiative
	↓	↓	↓	↓
	A M C O W			

Adapted from AMCOW Action Plan and Framework for Reporting to the African Union (2009)

In order to support the functioning of the gender monitoring, reporting and evaluation system, the following steps are recommended:

1. Establishment of a Gender Management Information System (GMIS) to ensure that proper knowledge management of gender mainstreaming actions in Africa;
2. Development of an implementation plan that spells out specific activities for the period of the Strategy and assigns priorities for gender mainstreaming actions based on available resources;
3. Development of a monitoring and evaluation plan, tools, and methodologies that can be generally applied across member states. The M&E plan should also include performance indicators to track progress towards results;

¹² Ibid

4. Establish consensus on the content of reports and reporting arrangements; and
5. Continued knowledge management, periodic reviews, and review of information generated for use in decision making, to translate the underlying principles into a culture of practice.

3.2.4 Key Institutions and Stakeholders in the Water Sector

The Strategy shall be implemented in partnership with key institutions and stakeholders according to their specific institutional and social mandates. A brief overview of the key institutions is provided as follows:

- *African Union Commission* - represents Africa's political leadership, with a commitment to accelerating progress towards Africa's water security. The Commission ensures the annual water sector reports are submitted to the Heads of State and Governments at their Summits.
- *AMCOW* - coordinates the regional water agenda and to re-port annually to the AU on the implementation of the actions.
- *AMCOW Member Countries* - design national strategies and action plans, implement the actions and report to AMCOW on achievement on annual basis.
- *National Civil Society Organisations* – provide both water and sanitation delivery facilities and they serve as advocacy groups in pushing the agenda for the sector.
- *Regional Economic Commissions* – such as the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) provide knowledge on economic problems and advise countries and regional organisation on economic and technological development.
- *Regional Economic Communities* - foster greater co-operation in the development of trans-boundary water infrastructure and report on achievement in their regions to AMCOW for regional consolidation.
- *Development Partners* – mobilize resources for the implementation of actions and report on achievements. They provide support to countries and regional organisations to prepare strategies and action plans to support resources mobilization efforts.

- *River Basin Organisations* - operationalize transboundary co-operation commitments, implement development projects and programme and manage to ensure sustainable benefit generation. They also provide reports of activities in pursuit of the agenda of regional co-operation in trans-boundary water infrastructure development.
- *Other Active Actors* – include multilateral and bilateral financing institutions; as well as regional Civil Society Organizations such as ANEW and ANBO.

3.2.5 Roles and responsibilities of Key Institutions and Stakeholders

Implementation of strategy actions will be based on three levels of activity – country, sub-regional and regional levels. A brief overview of the roles and responsibilities of the identified stakeholders and partners is provided as follows:

Roles and responsibilities at continental level

The following stakeholders will directly support the implementation of this Strategy in their respective capacities:

1. The Minister responsible for water will champion gender mainstreaming and will liaise with the AU Commission. AMCOW-TAC will localise AUC policy and guidelines on gender for national application;
2. The Regional Working Group (comprised of GWP, WSP, UNICEF, UNEP, UN-Habitat and GWA) will support TAC to prepare succinct performance reports for AMCOW and the AUC, which will in turn endorse the water sector gender performance indicators, track progress and take note of challenges;
3. TAC, with support from the Regional Working Group will prepare reports and mobilise counterpart funding; TAC/Regional Working Group will prepare performance reports for AMCOW; Regional Economic Commissions will undertake assessments and peer reviews, undertake case studies, and document good practises;
4. The AMCOW Region’s Executive Committee Chair, TAC Chair, REC secretariat departments are responsible for championing gender mainstreaming and coordination with partner organisations;
5. All the RECs (ECOWAS, SADC, EAC, IGAD, ECCAS, Arab Water Council) and NEPAD will implement the Strategy as part of their existing partnerships with AMCOW.

Roles and responsibilities at national level

1. The Minister responsible for water will drive policy implementation and lead resource mobilisation;
2. TAC will form multi-agency national working groups, prepare the Gender Action Plan, maintain a list of stakeholders, and prepare and disseminate progress reports;
3. TAC and working groups at the national will organise learning platforms and leverage funds.
4. National Governments and Ministers of Water will institutionalize the GMS structures and mechanisms for implementing gender actions in the water sector.

Roles and responsibilities at sub-national level

1. TAC will support preparation and implementation of gender action plans and programs with the appropriate organs, for example, district councils, technical officers, water utilities, and catchment committees.
2. ANEW, a regional networking body of African civil society organisations (CSOs) with over 150 members is actively involved in the field of sustainable water management, water supply and sanitation. ANEW has a membership of more than 200 WSS CSO organizations and networks from East, West, North, Central and Southern Africa and is officially recognized by AMCOW and its partners as an organization which represents African Civil Society Organizations working on water and sanitation issues.
3. AMCOW, Global Water Partnership (GWP) and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) have created structures at sub-regional levels to consolidate outputs from their collaboration in water issues.

Roles and Responsibilities at the local level

1. TAC & working groups at the national level will prepare indicators and criteria for selection of pilot interventions at the local level;
2. The Minister will publicise gender accountability and recognize water management authorities or other organizations at the local by awarding them a trophy for best performance;
3. District council(s) will support and review gender performance for lower level project implementation.