

Women for Water Partnership

the climate and 'climate for women'

Annual Report 2020



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Message from the President, Mariet Verhoef-Cohen



Dear Friends,

'Water and climate change' was the theme of World Water Day in 2020, a theme close to the heart of Women for Water Partnership. After our close cooperation with SIWI during the Stockholm Water Week in 2019, we took on a new role and staged a programme through a grant of SEI, where we highlighted Women, Water and Climate: Tackling the Challenges with among others a series of webinars involving women, young water professionals, experts and partners.

'Members supported and assisted members' to carry out projects in the field of water, sanitation, agriculture mostly accompanied by vocational training. I am very grateful for this support, especially since funding for women's organisations is decreasing yearly. Regrettably, the lack of finances was the main reason not to organize a face-to-face Steering Committee meeting and General Assembly. Meetings in person are so important to remain connected and excellent opportunities to share experiences and ideas.

In 2019 the Steering Committee (SC) had to take the difficult decision to relocate the Secretariat to (the residence of) one of our SC members in the Netherlands and due to a lack of core funding we had to say farewell to our hardworking director, Annemiek Jenniskens. All tasks of the Secretariat (except for the bookkeeping) were transferred to members of the SC for the time-being so that we could continue WfWP, as our mission has certainly not yet been accomplished. We keep advocating for specific attention to what women contribute to the sector. In fact, women are managers of the majority of the world's water resources, however, this is not always recognized due to persistent stereotyping about what roles men and women play.

We continue to seek core funding for WfWP and are very appreciative of the received support from Passage, the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture in a changing Climate (FAO / WASAG), and the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) that made our participation in conferences and activities possible.

I would like to thank our entire Steering Committee team for the exceptional amount of work they took on mainly on a voluntary basis. I thank our members, partners, donors, collaborating governments and you all for your support and look forward to continuing our collaboration in 2021.

Alphen a/d Rijn, NL, May 2021

28 Members of Women for Water Partnership¹

Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment (AWHHE), Armenia
Black Sea Women's club (BSWC), Ukraine, Moldavia, Romania, and Georgia
The International Federation of Business and Professional Women (BPWI), Global
CoAguas SAS, Colombia (former CONSAM), Colombia
Earth Forever, Bulgaria and EECCA Region
Isenim: Uzbekistan
Katosi Women Development Trust (KWDT), Uganda
Medium and Sanitas, Romania
Mupan, Brazil
National Women's Movement (NVB), Suriname
Netherlands Council of Women (NVR), The Netherlands
NetWwater, Sri Lanka
Nile Basin Discourse, Uganda
Passage, The Netherlands
Soroptimist International Europe (SIE)
Soroptimist International, Global
Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) Tanzania
Tegemeo Women Group (TWG) Tanzania
Uganda Women for Water and Sanitation (UWWS), Uganda
Women and Labour Market Foundation (VAM) The Netherlands and ACP countries
Women of Today (Vrouwen van Nu), The Netherlands
Waterlution, Canada
Women Environmental Programme (WEP),Nigeria
Women Fund Tanzania (WFT), Tanzania
Water Mothers Myanmar (WMM), Myanmar
Women Farmers Advancement Network (WOFAN) Nigeria
Women Professionals in the Land Use Sector (WPLUS), Nepal
Women's Resource and Outreach Centre Limited (WROC), Jamaica

1. Introduction

2020, a year to remember; full of activities despite the lockdowns as a result of the COVID19 - pandemic. Of course, the main focus was on advocacy and knowledge exchange since a lot of local activities could not take place.

Chapter two is dedicated to the core activities of WfWP as far as WfWP is supporting or directly involved, however there are many more projects carried out by our members and some of them you will find reported on our website. Members enabled members to implement projects in Tanzania, Kenya, Brazil and Bulgaria. Next to other SDG's, these projects contribute mainly to SDG 5 and 6 (par 2.1). The Commission on the Status of Women and the virtual Stockholm World Water Week were again a highlight together with the Week for Water and Development (WW4D) that took place simultaneously, but WfWP participated in many other actions and events to advocate for a recognised, improved and visible position of women as sustainable water managers (par 2.2). In terms of knowledge development, the position paper commissioned to WfWP by FAO-WASAG, the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture, featuring strategies to include women in the work of WASAG was finalized end of the year (par 2.3)

¹ You can find more information about our members at the following link: <https://www.womenforwater.org/member-organisations.html> and see para 3.2



In terms of governance both the General Assembly and the Steering Committee showed decisiveness and commitment even though all discussions and decisions had to be taken via email consultation and Skype or Zoom meetings (par 3.1 and 3.3). We were pleased to welcome one new member, Nile Basin Discourse, but were sorry to bid farewell to our member (MAMA86) as you can read in par 3.2, leaving the total number at 28-member organisations. The group of partners went through some changes (par 3.4). Many efforts were made to raise funds for WfWP and some of these applications are still pending. (par 4.4). Facebook, Twitter, our YouTube channel including the website were, also in 2020, important means to communicate with the outside world (par 4.1). A summary of the main financial figures is presented in paragraph 4.6.

2. Core activities

The mission of WfWP is to position women as active leaders, experts, partners and agents of change to realise access to safe water for all - including gender responsive sanitation - for all uses; thus, contributing to all SDG's, but especially goals 5 & 6.

WfWP applies three strategies:

- 1.1 Providing access to water and sanitation via project implementation of our members
- 1.2 Influencing policy at all levels via lobby and advocacy activities
- 1.3 Knowledge development and sharing

WfWP's approach is seeking solutions at three levels simultaneously:

1. At the **grassroots** level, through its member organisations and in cooperation with strategic partners, WfWP enables local women's groups to address priority challenges in their communities related to water and sustainable development. Women groups are coached and supported to manage and supervise their own projects, lobby and advocate to influence local agendas and to become leaders or agents of change in their constituencies.
2. At the **national level** WfWP capacitates and supports member organisations to effectively contribute to the development and implementation of policies and programmes in their regions and countries.
3. At the **global level** WfWP and its member organisations use their collective voice for women in global agenda setting and contribute to international policy development through UN and other global processes. WfWP looks out for improving policies and keeping governments to their commitments.

WfWP has a 5-year Strategic framework 2016-2020 with the following strategic goals:



1. Advocate the link between women, water and sustainable development in policies and implementation;
2. Position women as agents of change, leaders, experts, and partners on equal footing with men in water and sustainable development programmes to achieve equitable access to water for all for all uses;
3. Advocate for women's access to financial investments and instruments and vocational training;
4. Use and promote gender disaggregated indicators and (citizens) data collection in the water sector;
5. Establish regional or national hubs;
6. Develop a knowledge platform for learning.

The strategic goals are still relevant, however, due to lack of funding for strategic goal 5 – the establishment of hubs has not been

implemented. see also:

https://www.womenforwater.org/uploads/7/7/5/1/77516286/20151027_final_strategic_framework_wfwp.pdf

2.1 Project Implementation:

Members help members contributing to strategic goal 2

Members of WfWP carry out projects to ensure access to water for all for all uses as well as safe sanitation. In all projects women are taking the lead, showing that they are experts, managers of the projects and the budgets, taking part in all decision-making processes concerned and achieving great results with often relatively small budgets. These roles are still exceptional for women in the water world and therefore good examples to shift perceptions and stereotypes. Besides, most of these projects take place in remote areas; areas often neglected by the main players amongst others due to higher costs and perceived higher risks: in general, the inhabitants of these areas are often left behind.

The members of WfWP and the partnership itself experiences that the budgets allocated to women and their organisations are decreasing every day: in 2017 less than 1 % of the total budget for development aid, according to the OECD². Despite this fact members supported members and other local women groups and we will mention three examples of projects, where there was direct involvement of the Steering Committee or the Secretariat. There are many more activities accomplished locally and reported on by the member organisations themselves (some examples are to be found on our website under the heading “membership”). No new on-the-ground projects were started under the umbrella of WfWP in 2020 due to lack of funding and / or the COVID-19 measures. The project of member Tegemeo Women Group in Tanzania is financed by member Passage and managed by the WfWP Secretariat. Member Soroptimist International funded two projects of members, one implemented by Earth for Ever in Bulgaria and the second one by Soroptimist International Europe and Africa in Kenya.

² [https:// www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/Aid-to-gender-overview-2018.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/Aid-to-gender-overview-2018.pdf). New data will be released in 2021

Tegemeo Women Group Tanzania (TWG) supported by Passage:
€ 45,000 2017-2020 (prolonged till 2021)



The women group lives high up in the mountains in the village of Mweteni of Same District. The road to the group is almost inaccessible and this impacts their lives but also their business plans. In the past a multi-year water and sanitation project was carried out and the women wanted to undertake the next step - setting up businesses - since clean water is available year-round. The Dutch Christian social women's movement Passage supported the women group in these endeavours and financed a three-year project, focussed on vocational training, capacity building and investments for establishing group- and individual businesses. In 2020 we have said goodbye to the volunteers of Passage Coby Meyboom and Ira Stam, who have supervised the project and have been on a mission twice to visit the group in Tanzania and have given workshops.

In 2020 the programme started in the summer, when the amount of the instalment of the third year was on the bank account and the last period of the project will be completed in 2021. The programme 2020 deals with the VICOBA loan programme; two training sessions, study tour and implementing a milling and packaging project.

VICOBA Program:

In 2020 TWG provided a loan to 13 of its members. VICOBA programme remained a solid source of capital among group members. The majority of the group members cannot access loans from financial institutions due to lack of collateral and guarantors. Therefore, having this group is a huge advantage to the members. The loan accelerates growth of individual's business and growth of capital at the same time. The number of individual businesses increased from 22 in 2019 to 47 in 2020 due to this program. TWG stands as role **model** group in Bwambo ward and Same district due to its efforts to uplift women's living standards.

Training sessions:

Bookkeeping training from 5-9 October 2020

This training took five days and involved 55 participants from TWG. The main topics of bookkeeping were covered: the cash book; the store ledger, procurement plan and inventory management (FIFO and LIFO)

Cooperative training from 12 -16 October 2020

This training was conducted by cooperative experts. The aim of this training was to build capacity to TWG members of cooperative key issues and practices. TWG want to operate as a cooperative society, therefore this training was very useful to their plan. During five days of training the following topics were covered: Meaning of cooperative; Cooperative principles; Roles of cooperatives and Cooperative management and marketing.



Study tour 20 October 2020

Tegemeo Women Group had one study tour in Meru Arusha region for the aim of getting more experience and exposure on the milling project and cooperative activities. 55 members from TWG were involved in the study tour. The group visited Kamero Women group which is a cooperative group running a milling project. This group was formed in 1992 with five women and currently the group has 46 female members. In 2007 the group adopted the cooperative model. The Kamero group produces 200 bags of 50 kg of maize flour a day and supply them to Arusha and Moshi market. TWG experienced how cooperative society works and its advantage. The group realised that in cooperative society all members are equal and decide on their matters. During this study tour TWG experienced on products manufacturing, supply and sales activities and how dividend is managed and divided among members.

The milling machine project:

Unfortunately starting a milling group business in 2019 was not feasible due to lack of and high costs of electricity and alternatives for electricity in the area. In 2020 TWP has solved the electricity challenges in collaboration with development partners which are Bwambo ward office, village office, three groups and individuals in Mweteni village.



TWG has bought two machines: a milling machine and a corn threshing machine. These machines have different functions as one is special for processing and producing maize flour, and the other one is for corn threshing. After the threshing process, the next process is milling, though not all maize flour undergoes threshing process. The group will start business in 2021.

[WeWash - Earth Forever Bulgaria supported by Soroptimist International:](#) € 60,000 May 2018 – November 2019/ 2020

Women Empowerment through Water, Sanitation and Health – in short WeWash – is designed to empower, to build capacity and leadership of women and girls living in rural communities to address their water and sanitation issues.

The project is executed in three villages of Stara Zagora District: Sulitsa, Hristiyanovo and Kalitino. A majority of the population is of Roma origin and a large number of women and girls are without jobs. WeWash focused on affordable alternatives for water and sanitation to meet the EU regulations because, especially in rural communities, water closets as well as central sewerage and conventional wastewater treatment plants are unaffordable.



A bottom up approach was designed to ensure community ownership, sustainable use and maintenance. All stakeholders were involved, such as mayors, community centres, schools, civil society groups, governmental health, environment and water institutions, labour authorities, water, sanitation and solid waste utilities, local and international NGOs and media. Community project groups were established to manage and implement the projects. The intervention strategy was made specific for each village, for example in Hristiyanovo and Sulitsa the quality of drinking water was a central issue because of microbiological pollution and flooding of water sources. In Kalitinovo the drinking water is permanently polluted with nitrates. Management of wastes was a big topic in Hristiyanovo as the water source is very close to the old dump site.

A main part of the project was dedicated to vocational training - learning by doing - since the majority of the participants are village women with low education or Roma women practically without formal education. Furthermore, attention was paid to awareness raising about new roles of women and girls in leading, constructing and maintenance of facilities, which is perceived as a man's job. Role models were used for inspiration. 20 Women were specifically trained on their rights, how to address the authorities responsible for the problems they face and how to submit complaints; they learned which authority is responsible for what to be able to cope with the various casualties that they face in their everyday life.



The adopted skills created opportunities for jobs and starting businesses in the alternative Wash sector. Best practices were taught on sustainable sanitation management and better hygiene for a healthy life. Women, 120 in total, now are able to construct, manage, monitor and market alternative sanitation planning. In addition, 80 women and girls gained the knowledge and skills to advise their community members and families on safe reuse of treated water and biological waste for natural agriculture

to feed their families. Thirty women are able to plan, implement and monitor small alternative sanitation projects and to run small-scale water and sanitation businesses. Trainees constructed a model alternative sanitation system at a local children's centre in Kalitinovo. The tools, tiles and glue were bought by the project. Building skills were also taught to renovate and maintain water and sanitation systems at household level, modernise decentralised toilets as well as building alternative wastewater systems.



Beginning of 2020 Mariet Verhoef-Cohen together with Diana Iskrevva visited the projects to evaluate the project impacts and to discuss a possible follow-up with the different groups. Due to the COVID-19 situation the future plans for Bulgaria have been postponed but we are now back in contact with WeWash and the Plovdiv area to see how we can start projects in this area. COVID hit hard, but made the rural communities aware of the importance of clean drinking water and sanitation. In 2021

we will further develop a proposal using the remaining funding, managed by Soroptimist International.

During the visit in 2020 we learned one of the young women - who was trained in the framework of WeWash to lay tiles - was able to do the tiling in their own home when renovating their house. This is a gypsy family and that makes it more impressive when they persisted that their daughter will study at university. The mother is confident that the daughter will be able to find tiling jobs during week-ends to financially sustain her studies further.

The awareness raising and capacity building programme that was implemented in this programme supported women to discuss local needs in depth. Skills training opened doors to jobs and career opportunities, establishing learning possibilities for entrepreneurship in small-scale alternative sanitation. There is still lots to be done to overcome the barrier of viewing water jobs as a predominantly male arena. With the WeWash awareness increased and the valuable role of women as experts and leaders in water, sanitation and food security programmes increased.

The construction of alternative sanitation solutions in the villages were highly appreciated. Ecological and hygiene developments allowed for sufficient wastewater treatment in households. This improved the health and wellbeing of community families. Inhabitants showed 100% readiness to building toilets if personal financial means allowed it; this is one of the significant impacts of WeWash. A change in attitude is clearly visible. Women understand they have rights to water and have learned how to claim these rights; becoming voices within their community. Some women have also gained plumbing skills and set up their own businesses.

[Soroptimist International Kenya supported by Soroptimist International:](#)
€ 250.000 December 2017 – December 2019/ 2020

The Mvihoko women live in a volcanic area in Nakuru County, characterised by dependence on subsistence farming, under-nutrition, poor market access and unreliable rainfall. During the programme Kilifi, Kisumu and Machakos counties were added with similar characteristics. Women make up 60% of the subsistence farmers producing 70% of food. Many of the men left the area to find jobs in the city. Due to drought farmers' capital base is decreasing as their animals and crops die. Next, excessive erratic rainfall causes dangerous floods resulting in gully's and soil erosion. Climate change is threatening these women and their communities.



Mvihoko Women Group was founded in 2005 and started to get access to safe water, a project supported and initiated by WfWP. A community project had dug a borehole where the women had to walk to the borehole to fetch water. The Mvihoko project-initiated installation of water pipes to support the community borehole by piping the water from the borehole to the community homesteads. This has saved time and energy spent fetching water from the borehole enabling especially the women to focus on other activities like farming and income generation. In 2020 additional water pipes were distributed to connect 17 more farms/homesteads impacting another 136 persons. The digging and construction were mainly done by the women. From the beginning of the project in Mvihoko

community, they now have 1678 persons in water piped households, compared to the previous 1542 reported. In 2021 we will see another 12 more households connected.

After this project, the women wanted a training centre of their own and raised the money to purchase 2.5 hectares of land through the Nakuru council. When the training centre was built, the women initiated a crop demonstration plot to improve their agricultural practices. At the end of 2017, a project was designed to educate, empower and enable 500 women farmers to get access to clean water, nutritious food and to increase their income by commercialisation of their farming practices. The women took leadership of the project: no decision was taken without them. During the whole process the women were encouraged to raise their voices. They learned how to negotiate with authorities, about their rights and responsibilities and how to get things done.

Vocational training was a main part of the project and the training was not provided for free. Some women who were not able to contribute cash money, but they could devote extra time to the project -for example work at the demonstration plot - and this time was calculated as their own contribution to the course. The training was provided by a university and specifically adapted to the level and needs of the women. The training was not a one-off event but followed up in working conferences to share gained knowledge and experiences. Next to training at the university, women farmers were educated in sustainable farming such as clean seed production, conservation agriculture, greenhouse training and multi-story gardening at the training centre of the Mvihoko Women. This training centre was equipped with appropriate technologies and income generating tools were developed to continue the centre after the project. A greenhouse was erected to promote water smart farming and pest control. This could however not prevent unions and tomatoes crops being infected and lost, a wise lesson.



The group of farmers was divided into subgroups and received extension services after the capacity of the agricultural extension services was built to work with women. This resulted in increased and better-quality interaction between female farmers and these services and is also a way to ensure continuation of these services after the project. Since groups usually have a stronger position on a market compared to individuals, they are buying their supplies collectively. Selected farmers were provided with seeds and fertilizers, contributing 20% of the costs themselves.



Centre farming activities: Land Preparation of the grounds at the centre were done early and onions, sweet peppers, vegetables, potatoes, maize, beans, cassava and bananas were cultivated in the demonstration plot. The women were very happy with the maize harvest because they were able to sell at least 15 bags of maize at Kshs. 2,000.00 each, which was good income for them and plenty left for consumption. The beans didn't do too well and the cassava and bananas will be harvested this year since they take a year to mature.

The quality of the soil improved by tree planting. The yields of smart farming tripled. With these yields the food security increased and more healthy food is served in the participating households. Women were trained on how to preserve and cook their (traditional) vegetables. The surplus is being sold on neighbouring markets resulting in more income for the women and making them economically independent. Market access has been a challenge for the women because of the remote location of the centre. They are not able to reach urban markets which would get them much better pricing for their farm produce.

With new marketing skills they learned what kind of vegetables are in demand on the market and what the prices are. The sweet peppers, vegetables and potatoes were harvested and sold to the surrounding community realizing some sales for the women group. There was lots of waste of the sweet pepper due to lack of market since the local community in the area do not consume much of this crop.

In addition, 20 schools and institutions received a 10,000-liter water tank to facilitate access to clean water reaching 6,871 persons. To gain a more reliable and safe access to water 328 households were supported with rainwater harvesting tanks, gutters and taps. Tools and utensils such as a fireless cooker and an energy saving stove were provided – not for free to make the women less dependent of donations and creating a spirit to get things done by themselves. The energy saving devices reduced indoor pollutions, healthcare expenses and improving the health of the inhabitants. With the solar lanterns a space is created to read and write when it is dark outside. In total 341 women were trained in energy saving technics such as the construction of energy saving stoves and smoke-free cookers as well as solar lantern management. In 2020 construction of the centre kitchen began. A kitchen and pantry room has been constructed and the women are now able to cook in the kitchen whenever the centre is in use. They are very happy with this development.



Due to the lockdown, the low fuel smoke free cooker is yet to be installed in the kitchen since the experts were unable to travel to the centre.

In July 2020 Project Management Group procured experts to conduct a one-day COVID-19 training at the Mwioko Centre. The topics covered were: What Corona is & its genesis, symptoms of Corona, Prevention of Corona (Dos and Don'ts), Corona & Nutrition, Corona Management (Hospital Vs Home), Agriculture Extension – Food Security, availability and nutrition.

During the training, the women were given food packages, soap and masks to mitigate the effects of the pandemic.

[International federation of Business and Professional Women \(IFBPW\):](#) ["Água Boa de Beber"](#)

Apart from all other activities done by IFBPW ^{chapters} / members, we are highlighting one example from their /our members in Brazil. This initiative closely connects with our efforts to incorporate more citizens data/ science.

BPW Brazil supported the initiative of The Brazilian Public Prosecutor's Office, in its permanent role as defender of democracy, legal order and the public interest, defending the right to safe drinking water. Guided by social and educational goals, the Public Prosecutor leads a partnership which launched the "Água Boa de Beber", or Safe Water tool which provides data on water quality. The tool can be accessed from any computer or mobile device. It provides a user-friendly way to access big data from the Brazilian Ministry of Health's Water Quality Monitoring System supported by input from water and health professionals across the country. The "Água Boa de Beber", or Safe Water tool, provides citizens with information on the risks that substances found in water may pose to their health and to the environment"

(https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oa7OrEZIxN1apDSR_C_n7GbLn_1xNnG/view)

2.2 Lobby and advocacy

WfWP participated in many international events to advocate for positioning women as experts and leaders in the water world and not only as vulnerable groups or beneficiaries. This message is not new but needs to be repeated consistently. One of the reasons is that stereotypes about the role of men and women are persistent and often (unconsciously) play a role in doing research, collecting and analysing data, designing programmes and projects, managing companies, organising (inter)national meetings events and the like. Most people are aware of the fact that men and women need to be treated equally, but do not know that budget and expertise need to be specifically allocated to realise this. Many policies and international declarations such as Dublin Principle 3 (accepted in 1992) state that women play a central role in the supply, management and safeguarding of water. There is a huge gap between these (international) policies and practice on the ground. This gap needs to be bridged for instance by paying more attention to and facilitating of the managers, advisors and implementers to actually have the ability to translate policy into action.

Next to the main message mentioned above - in fact, strategic goal 2 -, the lobby and advocacy activities contribute to three of our strategic goals:

Goal 1: Advocate the link between women, water and sustainable development in policies;

Goal 3: Advocate for women's access to financial investments and instruments;

Goal 4: Use and promote sex-disaggregated indicators in the water sector

One of the vehicles WfWP uses for its lobby and advocacy work is to be a member/partner of international organisations of influence such as ECOSOC, HLPF, CSW, UNEP, UN Water, and UNESCO, where WfWP is accredited with consultative status. WfWP is actively involved in three taskforces of UN Water: taskforce on World Water Day 2021, Taskforce on agenda 2030 and Taskforce on regional/ national support. WfWP lobbies also via contributing to working groups such as the World Water Quality Alliance (WWQA) and especially the Stakeholder engagement Platform, hosted by UNEP, by contributing to reports such as the annual World Water Development Report, by attending meetings and (co) organising events. WfWP has accredited representatives to the organisations mentioned above and in /to most of the main seats of the UN and they contribute on a regular basis to meetings and conferences. By being a member of for instance the Women Major Group caucuses we raise our voices collectively in meetings and prepare messages jointly for the CSW, UNEA, High Level Political Forum – in charge of the agenda 2030 and the SDGs - etc.

In Europe, through its membership of European Pact for Water, WfWP was intensively involved again in the follow-up to the successful campaign #standup4water. Together - with Water Europe and EU Water Alliance – we had discussions with the cabinets of the European Commissioners. In 2020 at least 5 conversations were held with cabinets of the commissioners. More talks will take place in 2021. Main aim was and is to make it clear that water is crosscutting to almost all issues, is a gender issue and should always play a role in the plans that are made. These activities are crucial to enhance and maintain the water issue on the agenda of the EU / EC and dedicate sufficient budget (the budget has to triple to achieve SDG 6) – also in the negotiations between EU missions and developing countries on the budget for water in the broadest sense. Moreover, WfWP was one of the co-convenors for a capacity building conference “EU Water and Beyond” , designed to inform the new parliamentarians and officials of the European Commission about the topic water and the connection to their portfolio (the conference had to be postponed to January 2021 due to the COVID_19 pandemic). Women for Water Partnership also joined the MEP Water group of the European Parliament again.



The 64th session on the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW 63) took place in New York in March 2020, but was limited to one very short formal session. Basically, all events were cancelled due to COVID-19 measures. WfWP send in a written statement.

The United Nations and member states as far as possible staged all kinds of events in 2020 “celebrating Beijing 25”; we were actually crying. How can you celebrate something that has not been

implemented enough? As Ms. Georgieva, managing director of the International Monetary Fund (and formally World Bank) said very recently that macro decisions have micro consequences and added we should get money into the hands of women. The Secretary –General Gutiérrez also made a similar statement very recently.

WfWP, in close coordination with members Soroptimist International and BPW International highlighted the crucial role of women and girls in reaching safe access to clean water and sanitation for all.

The theme of World Water Development report 2020 and World Water Day was “water and Climate”.

Apart from our contributions to the WWDR, WfWP organised a series of webinars and a conference “Women, Water & Climate” in October / November 2020, with support of SEI.

Here we highlighted what women do on the ground - in this case especially focused at Asia. Videos and presentations of the webinars are available on our website.

Our outcome paper ‘The Way Forward’ which calls for a fundamental and systemic change by installing a gender cognisant socio-institutional model, needs the collective strength of champions from all sectors behind it. More specific recommendations can be found here

(https://www.womenforwater.org/uploads/7/7/5/1/77516286/wwc_final_final_wayforward_feb_2021.pdf) but do include: 1. Urgently seeking increased direct investment in women’s involvement in the climate and water sector; 2. Supporting inclusion and meaningful participation of women at all levels of decision-making; 3. Asian women water professionals as a critical conduit for awareness and advocacy; 4. The role of social auditors and community mediators; 5. A need for sex-disaggregated data; 6. An enhanced role for Young Water Professionals; 7. Equal access to capacity-building and control of resources; 8. A role for citizen science in generating supportive data; 9. An enhanced role for the private sector; 10. The importance of the role of champions.

Of course, we took part in the Stockholm World Water Week running simultaneously with the World Water for Development week in August 2020. WfWP staged 3 sessions and contributed to another three sessions. (<http://www.worldwaterweek.org/programme/schedule>). Main issues were innovation (women innovating for climate, WASH and FSM), Water quality and women’s contribution to that, social engagement (WWQA), water integrity and gender.

Other examples of lobby and advocacy activities are inter alia:

- WfWP is a steering committee member and contributes to the *#ClimateisWater campaign*³
- WfWP is a steering committee member of the Butterfly Effect NGO coalition with a large focus on the World Water Forum (2022 in Dakar)
- WfWP still participates and contributes to the OECD Water Governance Initiative and promotes and uses the OECD Water Principles⁴

³ http://www.climateiswater.org/content/uploads/2016/10/CIW_Flyer2019_COP25.pdf

⁴ <http://www.oecd.org/cfe/regionaldevelopment/oecd-principles-on-water-governance.htm>

- WfWP together with SI and IFBPW made a statement in August 2020 to the Human Rights Council (Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development Economic, social and cultural rights) (https://www.womenforwater.org/uploads/7/7/5/1/77516286/20200822-statement_si_wfwp_45th_session_hrcv_20_august_2020.pdf)
- Paid attention to the EU gender action plan III: (https://www.womenforwater.org/uploads/7/7/5/1/77516286/20201205_women_for_water_applauds_eu_gender_action_plan_but_also_urges_on.pdf)
- Co-signed the women major group statement for the HLPF (https://www.womenforwater.org/uploads/7/7/5/1/77516286/20200529-wmg_hlpf_2020_paper.pdf)
- Co-signed the letter of Un Water on COVID-19 to the UNGA
- Contributed to and co-signed the call for acceleration (of financing) for Water:

In Appendix A you can find an overview of events the Steering Committee of WfWP and some of our members on behalf of WfWP attended or contributed to in 2020. Our appreciations go to the hosting organisations that in many cases made our participation financially possible.

2.3 Research, Knowledge development, exchange and learning

Knowledge exchange and learning activities contribute to WfWP's strategic goal 6: Develop a knowledge platform for learning.

Of course, WfWP paid attention to the activities around the COVID-19 pandemic especially by some of our members and created a dedicated webpage:

<https://www.womenforwater.org/women-water--virus.html>

A second activity is the assignment WfWP got from FAO WASAG – a Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture – to produce a position paper on gender issues and the role of women in water scarcity in agriculture as well as to provide each of the six WASAG working groups with strategies to include women in their work and benefit from their services. The themes of the respective working groups are migration, drought preparedness, sustainable use of water in agriculture, finance, saline agriculture and nutrition.

On a regular basis WfWP takes part in expert groups / taskforces of UN Water and contributes where possible to research where expertise on women's participation and gender issues is sought (see also above under advocacy).

WfWP is a member of the Water and Gender working group of UNESCO World Water Assessment Program.⁵ Inter Alia we contributed to the revision of the Toolkit on sex-disaggregated data and gender mainstreaming. Work on a new action plan has been finalised and will be published in 2021.

WfWP is a member of the Strategic Advisory Committee of the World Water Quality Alliance (WWQA) and the Social Engagement Platform of WWQA (starting 2020)⁶.

⁵ <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/water/wwap/water-and-gender>

⁶ <https://communities.unep.org/display/WWQA/World+Water+Quality+Alliance>

Furthermore, as an open source, WfWP monitors the release of publications and documents and makes them available on the website.

3 Governance, members and partners

3.1 General Assembly

The General Assembly (GA) is the highest governing body of WfWP and it consists of one delegate per member organisation. During the year 2020 all decisions were made via email or online meetings e.g. for the annual plan and budget 2020 as well as the annual report and annual accounts 2019. No elections were held / necessary. WfWP held a General Assembly on 28 September 2020. 18 members were present (some partly due to technical problems). Overall there was quorum and decisions were taken with additional 4 members voting in written form.

3.2 Member Organisations

The members are the core of WfWP.

In 2020 WfWP welcomed one new member NBD and sadly had to see MAMA86 leave because of lack of funding.

The current number of members is still 28. The member organisations are diverse, have wide ranging aims and themes and together reach approximately 1 to 1.5 million women.

3.3 Steering Committee

The Steering Committee held 8 meetings online in 2020. The SC devoted 3657 voluntary hours to WfWP. In the absence of paid staff – except for the administrator / bookkeeping - SC members took on some operational tasks for the time-being until our financial situation improves again. All decisions on finance and contracts are discussed with the full steering committee for comments and approval; they are recorded and made available to the General Assembly

Position	Name	Start Term	End Term	Term	Eligible for re-appointment
President	Mariet Verhoef-Cohen	1 April 2014 1 April 2020	1 April 2020 1 April 2023	2 nd 3 rd	No
Vice President	Margarida Yassuda	1 December 2016	1 December 2022	2 nd	No
Hon. Secretary, combined with	Marjon Verkleij	1 April 2015	1 April 2021	2 nd	No
Treasurer as off 1 July 2018	Marjon Verkleij	1 July 2018 1 July 2021	1 July 2021 1 July 2024	1 st 2 nd	No
Advocacy	Lesha Witmer	11 February 2015 11 February 2021	11 February 2021 11 February 2024	2 nd 3 rd	no
General member	Kusum Athukorala	18 April 2019	18 April 2022	1st	yes
General member	Rose Mwangi	18 April 2019	18 April 2022	1st	yes
General member	Ulla Madsen	18 April 2019	18 April 2022	1st	yes

3.4 Partnerships and collaboration

In essence, for each activity we try to find one or more partners both amongst other women's organisations and networks and in the water sector to jointly work on different issues. WfWP has a huge range of different types of partnerships, with agencies such as the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Food agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the Global framework on water scarcity in agriculture (WASAG) and Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI).

We are part of networks such as, the Major Group Women and NGO/CSW for the Commission on the Status of Women, MGoS HLPF coordination mechanism, OECD Water Governance initiative, World Water Council, UN Water, World Water Quality Alliance and (starting 2021) the Alliance for Water Stewardship and Human Right 2 Water. We are founders and facilitators of the Butterfly Effect NGO coalition, the #ClimateIsWater campaign and the European Pact for Water. We work together with a range of different partners such as BORDA, Simavi, Aquafed, IWRA and UNESCO-WWAP.

WfWP is very active in these networks and contributes as steering committee member of WWQA and core member of the Stakeholder engagement Platform taskforce; steering committee of the Butterfly Effect, vice-chair / steering committee of WASAG; Member, International Advisory Committee for the 2nd high-level Conference on the International decade for action "Water for sustainable development, 2018-2028", to be held in June 2022, Dushanbe, Tajikistan; action group member 2E for the World Water Forum in Dakar, etc.

In December 2019, we started a new partnership with Nile Basin Discourse, a network of civil society organisations with over 600-member organisations throughout the Nile Basin, influential in a main part of Africa; they proceeded in becoming a full member in 2020.

Apart from this WfWP is often asked to join others because of its reputation and expertise in the field of water and women. For more information: see our website.

4 Operations

4.1 Communication

Basically starting in March 2020 all our communication with members and partners was online. The website (www.womenforwater.org) and Facebook/Twitter and YouTube channel (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNke_sr5IBWCR2HZ2tJf5Mg) are our main means of communication at the moment with the outside world. On the website we communicate about important events and we update the item publications regularly, making the site a valuable source for our virtual knowledge platform. Facebook covers our activities and many links to relevant interesting information. Due to the lockdowns the need to work more online grew, so we invested in professional subscriptions to Zoom to hold our meetings (incl. the general Assembly) and webinars. Communicating mainly by way of ICT is not easy for a number of reasons: we have to cope with very different time-zones, not all our members have access to fast and good enough connections / internet and all have to learn yet again how to use a different platform and software. We are appreciative and thankful to the two volunteers that kept our website updated. However, the website does need a make-over and update and this is planned for 2021 in the frame of our new communication strategy 2021-2025.

4.2 Planning and monitoring

Due to lack of capacity it was not possible to monitor the achievements of our members in 2020 in our usual extensive way.

The elements of our current planning and reporting system are:

- A strategic framework 2016-2020, translated into annual work plans and budgets
- Annual reporting and accounting
- Monitoring decisions taken by the GA and the SC
- Financial reporting to follow up budget expenditure
- Reports of / and regular (on-line) SC meetings, to monitor progress and financial matters
- Back to office reporting of (SC) members after participating in external events
- Special reports to funders to account for the budget received such as the funding of FAO, SEI and Passage.

All our official reports are accessible through our website (official publications).

4.3 Hubs

As in previous years, strategic goal 5 – the establishment of regional or national ‘hubs’, was put on hold due to the lack of finance. The SC makes now an inventory among its members if this idea will be part again of our new strategy 2021 and beyond.

4.4 Fundraising

Also, in 2020 WfWP actively searched for funding for member projects, global projects, advocacy and core funding. Examples are:

- Together with European Pact for Water, WfWP submitted a new proposal for funding of the work of EPfW; this proposal to GiZ is still pending.
- We submitted a programme proposal to GIZ / BMZ to follow up on the preparatory study to women inclusive governance in the water sector, the women Blue fund and mentoring. Looking at the current negotiations a contract will be signed for a substantial grant around June 2021;
- A proposal to GWP on gender expertise in the field of IWRM was not accepted
- A proposal together with “Human Right 2 Water” and other organisations on “leaving no one behind” and water security was unfortunately not awarded
- Together with NetWwater and Soroptimist International we applied to organise an Asian Regional Conference on Leave No one Behind at Stockholm Environmental Institute (SEI) Women, Water and Climate. This proposal was approved and the main work was done in October / November 2020 and was very well received. All material is accessible on our website; Facebook - #WomenWaterClimate; Twitter - @Climate_Water and YouTube (and see below).

We received funding from:

- The Stockholm Environmental Institute gave a grant of 42,318 in total for the Women, Water and Climate project encompassing several webinars and an online conference mainly aimed at activities in Asia. Due to the COVID-19 lockdowns not all activities could be done in 2020; an agreement was reached on activities in 2021 with the remainder of the budget
- In Nov 2019, an agreement was signed between FAO and WfWP with the objective to produce a position paper in 2020 on the role of gender in activities of the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture and each of its six working groups. The budget 2020 was \$ 30,000/ €26,366. The project has been carried out and finalised in 2020.
- Passage supported a project of Tegemeo Women group for a period of three years of in total 45,000 euro; in 2019 15,000 euro was spent; some of the work is still pending because of the COVID restrictions and the remaining budget has been moved to 2021. SC members donated, did not ask for reimbursement of out of pocket costs and various third parties contributed to travel- and accommodation costs mainly in-kind for a total amount of € 3,413.60 excluding some small discounts and smaller donations we received.

A substantial part of the work of WfWP is done by volunteers, in kind contributions. In kind contributions are those contributions that do not involve money transactions through the WfWP bank account, such as work or expertise provided by members pro bono to contribute to the core

business of WfWP, lobby and advocacy work and governance. To capitalise these hours the agreed rate is € 67.50 per hour.

Since January 2016 WfWP introduced a membership fee and members have the choice to pay in cash or in kind.

Because of COVID-19 pandemic there were less activities and we have not collected the data of our members yet for 2020.

WfWP response to SDG 6 of clean water and sanitation: Impacts of Mwihoko Water Project

In 2010, WfWP in conjunction with Eureka Achema Foundation funded a water project in Ndibai village, Nakuru County, Kenya. The project target 22 women belonging to Mwihoko Women Group who lived in a semi-arid area where water was scarce and the available water had unacceptable high levels of salts and fluorine. The project included provision of 5,000 litres and 10,000 litres water tank for rain-water harvesting for each household and school, respectively. At the end of the project 80 households and 4 schools had benefitted from the funding due to savings by procuring on wholesale prices and the beneficiary contributing some finances, labour and materials. A total population of 2,520 in the Ndibai village was primary beneficiaries accessing 407,000 litres of clean and safe water.

In 2018, with support from SI which is a member of WfWP, the Mwihoko Project was upscaled and expanded to cover more women across 5 more counties in dry areas of Kenya. The project also included components of food security and green energy as well. The beneficiaries were 329 households and 20 schools. The project provided a total of 1,852,000 litres of water storage targeting rainwater harvest as a means of expanding water availability to household and schools. The projects were meant to increase water availability by encouraging harvesting rainwater. But look what happened:

Because the project was procuring large numbers of water tanks, we procured tanks at wholesale price Kshs 28,000 (Euro 280) instead of the retailing price of Kshs 37,500 (Euro 375). And this was inclusive of delivery of the tanks to various homesteads and localities. What a saving! What a bargain.

The Company allowed project implementers to retain its price of Kshs 28,000 (Euro 280) even after completion of the project allowing many more women to access tanks at that discounted price. Over 20 households benefitted from this arrangement. The project increased our networking capacity with providers of water solutions.

Some women later connected their tanks to the main community water lines. Their tanks became storage for also tapped water as well. Source of water to the tank had expanded. When there was no rain and also tap water run dry, women grouped together to order for water through water tankers, they had sufficient storage! Constant use of water tanks extended.

And some innovative women even became entrepreneurs. They became water vendors. They sold water from their tanks at Kshs 10 per 20-litre jerrycan during normal times and hiked prices to Kshs 30 when water is scarce, taps are dry. Those who buy this water don't want to walk long distances in search of water. Water tanks became water vending shops!

The school children no longer carry water in small jerrycan to school. The schools with support of parents buy water delivered water tankers and fill their tanks. This has boosted their water sanitation especially during the Covid pandemic. Water tanks became a tool to fight Covid pandemic.

Who doesn't want a water tank? Beneficiaries are happy! More women who did not benefit from the project keep praying the project will be continued. Water project can still be upscaled.

We smile - one group of determined women, one simple project, and several women experts willing to lend a hand has worked wonders! We have contributed to addressing SDG 6 of clean water and sanitation.

Reflections by Rose M. Mwangi, 24 April 2021

4.5 Staffing

Due to lack of funding WfWP moved our Secretariat last year from The Hague to the honorary Secretary's address and for UN matters to a PO box from one of the SC members. Annemiek Jenniskens who left WfWP as per 1 November 2019 was luckily available (under government rules) to assist with our assignment for WASAG and returned as a senior advisor only in that capacity for a few months. Some of the out of pocket costs of SC members were reimbursed. One of our SC members got paid for some additional work (not SC/ governance related) to also fulfil part of this assignment. Our freelance controller Diantha Brackel remained on board.

The main tasks of the Secretariat were handled by different SC members on an agreed division of tasks. A big thank you and compliments should be extended to our SC members, who took on operational tasks for the duration and managed and were willing to get an enormous amount of work done even with the lack of paid staff.

4.6 Finance

For the first time ever, the annual accounts for 2019 were evaluated by an (internal) audit committee, consisting of two experts of two members organisations, instead of an external accountant – this has been the case for 2020 as well. Our appreciation goes out to the expert volunteers who did the work. Looking at the (kind of) funding we received, there was no need to go to an external accountant. If the situation changes, we will of course hire a new accountant. Our bookkeeping is still done by a qualified administrator.

The total income of WfWP in 2020 was € 328,566 including the in-kind voluntary contributions. However, this is excluding the in-kind contributions of our members, since we did not manage to get all the reporting done. In terms of cash the income was € 81,718 and the expenditure is € 75,130. That gives a result of € 6,588. A complete financial overview is presented in our annual accounts.

Appendix A: 2020 Events Participation of WfWP

Numerous meetings were cancelled, moved to 2021 or changed into online events due to the Covid-19 measures. The number of webinars and events WfWP participated in are extensive and the overview below is not completely showing all the work done and participation by WfWP SC and members.

Event	period	venue
OECD WGI	9-10 Jan.	Paris
We Wash, Earth Forever	13-17 Jan.	Bulgaria
UN Water	28-29 Jan.	Rome
2 nd IAC "Dushanbe" intern. Water conference and GEMI/ monitoring coordination	30 Jan.	Rome
OECD environment, gender and women empowerment conference	5-6 March	Paris
Workshop Women & Water for Change in Communities	6 March	IHE, Delft
Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, UNECE region	19 March	online
WASAG strategy meeting	postponed	
Protocol Governance committee Hydropower sustainability assessment	31 March	online
UNEA/ UNEP committee meetings	April	online
WASAG webinar	12 May, 15.00 hrs.	Online
WWQA call	27 May, 14.00 CET	Online
"Women and Resilience in the Water Sector", IWRA	27 May, 15.00 CET	Online
IHE Delft's 6th International Symposium on Knowledge and Capacity Development: From Capacity Development to Implementation Science.	27-29 May	online
EU Development Days	moved to 15-16 June 2021	Brussels/ hybrid
"empowering women communities in Asia"	June/July	Sri Lanka
Water Innovation Europe session 3 on the Farm to Fork strategy: A Water Smart Society to provide healthy food for EU citizens	22 – 24 June; 24 June 10.00 am session 3	Online
HLPF	7 - 17 July	Online
workshop UNECE transboundary	28-29 July	Geneva
Meeting with Commissioner / vice president European Commission Ms. Suica, (democracy and Demography) - Cabinet	22 July, 11.00 am	Online
UNESCO Webinar "COVID-19 Implication on Water Management in Megacities"	23 July	Zoom
Meeting with EC Commissioner Margrethe Vestager Executive Vice-President for Europe Fit for the Digital Age – cabinet	24 July, 11.00 am.	Online
Stockholm WWW	23-27 August; 25 August, 18.00 hrs.	WWW@home
Stockholm water week: stakeholder platform WWQA	27 August, 11.00 CEST	www@home

Water Week4Development	28 August, 12.15 and 13.00	Online
Meeting with EC commissioner Janusz Wojciechowski, Agriculture	22 September, 10 am.	Online
HL water meeting, UNGA	Sept.	online
WWDR2022 – ground water	14 September, 14.30-18.00 CEST; 17 September 14.30-16.15 CEST	Online; zoom
GA WfWP	28 Sept., 4 pm. CEST	Zoom
UN Water	29 Sept. 14.00 CEST	Online
(en)gendering transboundary Water Governance, IHE	29-30 Sept. 14.00 hrs. CEST	Online
UNGA Beijing 25+ summit session	1 October	Online
Human Rights Council (item 3)	October	
Women, Water Climate webinar series	6, 8, 13, 15, 20, 22 Oct.	online
Asia-Pacific Water Summit	19-20 Oct..	Kumamoto, Japan
Global Commission on Adaptation (GCA) Climate Adaptation Summit		NL
2020 GWP Network Meeting	21-22 October	Online
Meeting with EC commissioner Gentiloni, ECFIN	20-21 Oct.	Online
OECD WGI	2-3 Nov.	online
Women, Water, Climate: Tackling the Challenges	2-3 Nov.	Online
Race-to-zero dialogues	9-19 Nov.	online
Meeting with EU commissioner Gabriel cabinet	18 Nov. 14.00 hrs.	Online
G20	20-21 November	Riyadh; virtual
SISWP Virtual Conference of Clubs 2020	20-23 November	online
high-level event EC and German Presidency: <i>“Towards a gender equal world – The EU Gender Action Plan III and its contribution to Beijing +25”</i> ;	25 Nov. 13.30-15.00 hrs. CET	Online
Alliance Water Stewardship Forum	25 Nov. at 9-10 AND 17.00-18.00 CET	online
UN Water – evaluation online meeting	2 Dec. at 15.00hrs. CET	Online
Webinar humanright2 water	10 December, 15.00 CET	Online
OECD: women as drivers-recovery-growth	16 December, 17.00 CET	Webinar
Meeting with Cabinet commissioner Dalli, EC, DG JUST	17 Dec. at 11.00 hrs. CET	Online