

**WfWP with partners NetWwater and Soroptimist International** reflected on the outcomes of the virtual conference in late 2020, "Women, Water, Climate: Tackling the Challenge to foster regional cooperation and policy dialogue that promotes sustainable development in the face of climate change" and the outcome document "Our Way Forward". Increasing spending on water supply, sanitation, climate adaptation and gender equality is not seen as attractive. The miniscule, almost insignificant support of the 0,05% ODA cannot support the 51% of humanity. International cooperation is emphasizing the importance of women and girl's empowerment, but the money meant for such programs is diverted to "more urgent" activities and not increased.

Our keynote speaker Dr. Uschi Eid reiterated: I ask my former colleagues in government:

- Are they too distant from the daily problems, the "normal" citizen has to cope with facing growing water risks?
- Are politicians insulated in capitals, not recognizing and caring of practical challenges on household and community level?
- Is the focus of training and empowerment more on bureaucrats than on women in rural areas, in agriculture, in local governments?

Although Women and girls are disproportionately affected they are resilient and more adaptable to climate change and water scarcity, proving that they can rise above challenges. The ability to adapt, innovate and succeed is directly tied to an individual's physical, mental and emotional resilience. Women are not victims; they are change-makers and experts! But they lack a voice in decision-making processes by virtue of their reduced access to resources and restricted rights.

Speakers – men and (young) women - from business, academia and women's organisations - stressed the needed change of mindset. Their conclusions: Empowering and/or Capacitating Youth and local women in building climate disaster risk resilience is a must! It is of high importance for community-led initiatives for raising awareness for risk management, training for evacuation by local governments, schools, employers? Improving governance coordination is critical to improve the water sector performances. Policy need to include mitigating corruption, clientelism or gender-based violence for receiving public goods and services.

We must investigate more gendered impacts caused by lack of good governance.

We need to stop seeing women as victims but as strong catalysts for change in reaching the SDGs and persuade donors to support community and especially women's engagement, access to modern information and other technologies. Unless this situation is redressed we will not be able to meet and implement the SDGs.