

Module B7

Political and Ideological Commitment

Target Group

Parliamentarians and Policy makers

Time

2 hrs

Material

The teaching aids required for the session are:

- Whiteboard
- Whiteboard markers
- Flipchart and markers

Examples/Handouts

International Examples

Examples from Pakistan

Note: depending upon the target group of participants either use the examples to illustrate training points or explain concepts or give these as a handout.

Guideline / Procedures and Main Training Points

1. Introduction to Module B7

Procedure

- Start the session by stating the topic and objective of the module

Topic: *Political and Ideological Commitment*

Objective: **To understand the role of political and ideological commitment in the process of gender mainstreaming within IWRM .**

- Introduce and state the main training points of Module B7

Introduction

- Without stated political commitment, reference to gender mainstreaming remains merely jargon. Ideally laws and policy ideas should have ‘ownership’ after going through a political process, reflecting debates and decisions in assemblies and citizens’ fora of both men and women.
- The mandates of political parties should reflect their positions or ‘policies’ on gender, water or gender and water together.
- Once elected, and armed with this mandate, the government should be in a position to develop policies and laws that reflect the gender and water interface. Through a formulation

process that should include technical inputs from relevant professionals and technical groups, and wide stakeholder consultations.

- Bringing some of the principles of IWRM into a water sector policy and achieving political support may be challenging, as hard decisions have to be made. It is therefore not surprising that major legal and institutional reforms are unlikely to take place until serious water management problems have been experienced. This is the time when lobbying can bring results and wrest commitments from governments.
- In the case of gender mainstreaming in IWRM, there first has to be a stated commitment to IWRM itself (through declaration, policy, budget allocation). In many cases countries, provinces, departments or agencies may already have gender policies and plans. Engendering IWRM can then be within the context of the existing gender policies.
- These examples show that the road has been cleared by women activists in many countries and blueprints are available for obtaining political commitments for gender mainstreaming in IWRM initiatives, even though some of these efforts may take time.

Main Training Points

1. A stated political commitment is needed for achieving the goal of gender mainstreaming in water sector.

2. Training Points

- 2.1 Training Point 1

A stated political commitment is needed for achieving the goal of gender mainstreaming in water sector.

Procedure

- brainstorm with the participants on training point 1 and write down the relevant responses on the whiteboard.
- ask 1 or 2 participants to summarize main training points on the whiteboard as you go along.

Training Points

- Bringing some of the principles of IWRM into a water sector policy and achieving political support may be challenging, as hard decisions have to be made. It is therefore not surprising that major legal and institutional reforms are unlikely to take place until serious water management problems have been experienced. This is the time when lobbying can bring results and wrest commitments from governments.
- In the case of gender mainstreaming in IWRM, there first has to be a stated commitment to IWRM itself (through declaration, policy, budget allocation). In many cases countries, provinces, departments or agencies may already have gender policies and plans. Engendering IWRM can then be within the context of the existing gender policies.

- National and International examples show that the road has been cleared by women activists in many countries and blueprints are available for obtaining political commitments for gender mainstreaming in IWRM initiatives, even though some of these efforts may take time.

3. Winding up

Procedure

- Wind up the module with a summary and thanks to the participants.
- If more than one session in the workshop, announce break and time to return for the next session.

Examples of Module B7

Political and Ideological Commitment

INTERNATIONAL EXAMPLES

Mobilizing Political Commitment

Without stated political commitment, reference to gender mainstreaming remains merely jargon. Ideally laws and policy ideas should have 'ownership' after going through a political process, reflecting debates and decisions in assemblies and citizens' fora of both men and women. The mandates of political parties should reflect their positions or 'policies' on gender, water or gender and water together. Once elected, and armed with this mandate, the government should be in a position to develop policies and laws that reflect the gender and water interface. Through a formulation process that should include technical inputs from relevant professionals and technical groups, and wide stakeholder consultations.

Bringing some of the principles of IWRM into a water sector policy and achieving political support may be challenging, as hard decisions have to be made. It is therefore not surprising that major legal and institutional reforms are unlikely to take place until serious water management problems have been experienced. This is the time when lobbying can bring results and wrest commitments from governments.

In the case of gender mainstreaming in IWRM, there first has to be a stated commitment to IWRM itself (through declaration, policy, budget allocation). In many cases countries, provinces, departments or agencies may already have gender policies and plans. Engendering IWRM can then be within the context of the existing gender policies. The Women and Water Network (WWN) of South Asia called for such a commitment from ministers present in the Ministerial Conference of the Third World Water Forum, Kyoto, 2003, and then pressurized their water ministries to take action on their commitments (Reported by WWN South Asia representatives to author in 2005).

Obtaining political commitments and then following up with the necessary policies on gender is not easy. It took the women activists of the Philippines four decades of concerted effort to have women's advancement, empowerment and gender processes established in the country (Gomez Y, Paper Outline, "Engendering Environment and Natural Resources Management: The Experience of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Mainstreaming Gender and Development).

These examples show that the road has been cleared by women activists in many countries and blueprints are available for obtaining political commitments for gender mainstreaming in IWRM

initiatives, even though some of these efforts may take time.

Clear Commitment from Governments

A. National Governments

Governments need to have a clear commitment to both incorporate water and sanitation programmes explicitly into their national development strategies, and to ensure that a gender perspective is mainstreamed into this agenda. Some suggested actions are outlined below:

Mobilize resources to improve access to safe water and sanitation:

Facilitate access to grants or credit on concessionary terms for women's groups for installation and maintenance of adequate drinking water supply and sanitation facilities; Allocate resources to civil society organizations and small-scale providers of water and sanitation services, particularly those that include women as full partners;

Provide micro-credit and creative alternative financing mechanisms to gender-sensitive organizations for improving or building community-based water and sanitation services.

Strengthen legislation and facilitate access to land and water for productive uses:

Recognize women's important role in agriculture, livestock and fisheries, assist them in gaining access to water for productive uses and accord women equal rights to land tenure;

Support and promote equitable land and tenure arrangements that enable female producers to become decision-makers and owners;

Improve women's productivity in using water for agriculture and small business through training, market linkages and access to information.

Promote access to sanitation:

- Ensure that the overall national sanitation framework is gender-sensitive;
- Earmark funds for hygiene education in school curricula and separate sanitation facilities for boys and girls;
- Commission research to identify, through gender analysis, where social and economic groups are chronically excluded from access to sanitation.

Develop capacity and encourage participation:

- Introduce affirmative action programmes for training women in technical and managerial careers in the water and sanitation sector;
- Ensure that a minimum percentage of women participate in decision making from the ministerial down to village levels;
- Provide assistance to facilitate research into gender considerations in water resource management;
- Allocate funds to the capacity development of women and girls;
- Encourage both women and men to participate in businesses involved in water resource management and sanitation schemes.

B. Regional/Local Governments

Encourage gender mainstreaming in local government and community levels;

Promote hygiene education messages through women's groups, schools and health clinics;

Design and implement capacity building to consider the needs of women and men in the design of water, sanitation and hygiene education programmes;
Remove internal gender biases and discrimination in public sector organizations;
Encourage gender sensitive budgets so that local governments can assess the economic value of policy commitments on gender equality.

NATIONAL EXAMPLES

Mobilizing Political Commitment

Bringing some of the principles of gender into a water sector policy and achieving political support may be challenging, as hard decisions have to be made. It is therefore not surprising that major legal and institutional reforms are unlikely to take place until serious water management problems have been experienced. Pakistan is in that phase now, so this is the time when lobbying can bring results and wrest commitments from governments.

Without stated political commitment, reference to gender mainstreaming in the water sector remains merely jargon. As yet there is no formal declaration of the part of the government of Pakistan or any provincial government about gender mainstreaming in the water sector. However references to water have been added in the chapter on women's development in the new draft Five Year Plan. The water policy remains in draft and has some references to women (but not a comprehensive vision of gender mainstreaming in the water sector as a whole). There is as yet no **separate budget allocation for women in the water sector**.

In terms of political commitment the mandates of political parties should reflect their positions or 'policies' on gender, water or gender and water together. Once elected, and armed with this mandate, the political leadership should be in a position to develop policies and laws that reflect the gender and water interface. However, only 3 political parties speak of women's rights and empowerment, and 2 speak of water, but not together.