



Guidelines for Strengthening River Basin Organisations

MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN RBOS IN SADC



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Purpose

The purpose of the SADC Guideline for Mainstreaming Gender in River Basin Organisations (RBOs) is to assist RBOs in the SADC region to effectively integrate a gender perspective into all aspects of their work, from planning strategic tools, developing normative standards, and designing and delivering thematic and basin programmes, to working through the project cycle. The ultimate goal is to strengthen RBOs' ability to promote an enabling environment for all stakeholders, both women and men, to contribute to, and enjoy, the benefits of sustainable water resources development and management. This should lead to sustainable and equitable development outcomes.

Table 1: Key gender concepts

Concept	Definition
Gender	The socially constructed differences between women and men, which can change over time and which vary within a given society and from one society to the next.
Sex	The biological difference between women and men.
Gender Equality	Women, men, girls and boys enjoy equal rights, and equal access to opportunities and outcomes, including resources.
Gender Equity	The just and fair distribution of benefits, rewards and opportunities among women, men, girls and boys.
Gender Mainstreaming	The process of identifying gender gaps and making women's, men's, girls, and boys' concerns and experiences integral to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all spheres so that they can benefit equally.
Gender Machinery	National structures with the mandate of executing and monitoring gender and related policies and programmes, in line with national, regional and international commitments.
Gender Management System	A network of structures, mechanisms and processes put in place within an existing organisational framework to guide, plan, monitor, and evaluate the process of mainstreaming gender into all areas of the organisation's work in order to achieve greater gender equality and equity within the context of sustainable development.
Gender Sensitive	Acknowledging and taking into account the specific gender needs of both men and women at all levels of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
Sex Disaggregated Statistics	The collection and separation of data and statistical information by sex to enable comparative analysis.

Commitments to Mainstreaming Gender in the SADC Region

The importance of gender mainstreaming as a development strategy was acknowledged at the inception of SADC in 2001. In line with the SADC Declaration and Treaty, Member States have acceded to and ratified international and regional gender and women's rights frameworks. These were consolidated into a Regional Strategic Implementation Framework on Gender and Development in 2005.

In 2007 the SADC Council of Ministers adopted the SADC Gender Policy and in 2008 the SADC Heads of State and Government signed and adopted the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. The Protocol consolidates and creates synergies among various commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment, producing one comprehensive regional instrument that enhances the capacity to plan, implement, and monitor the SADC gender agenda effectively.

International, AMCOW and SADC Commitments on Gender and Water

Various international and regional water sector strategic documents outline specific commitments to support equality between women and men and encourage using a gender perspective in all programmes and projects related to water and the environment:

- . The Dublin principles on Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) state that water development and management should be based on a participatory approach involving users, planners, and policy makers at all levels. The principles also emphasise that users at the lowest possible level should manage water, and that women play a central role in the provision, management and safeguarding of water;
- . The AMCOW Policy and Strategy to Mainstream Gender in the Water Sector in Africa seeks to support the implementation of gender and water commitments and to achieve gender equality in the water sector;
- . Within the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP), “gender has been defined as one of the ‘integration and development enablers’ and a ‘cross-sectoral intervention area’”. This definition requires that all sectors at national and regional levels integrate gender issues into their work;
- . In line with RISDP, the SADC Water Vision calls for “equitable and sustainable utilisation of water for social, environmental justice and economic benefit for present and future generations”. The targets to achieve the vision include:
 - Focusing on integrated, people-centred planning by addressing gender specific needs, working towards poverty alleviation, social justice, equitable access to water and provision of affordable safe water and sanitation for basic human needs.
 - Ensuring gender balance in management at all levels.
- . The SADC Water Vision is backed by the SADC Water Policy of 1995, which proposes that all SADC water institutions should implement the principles, goals and objectives of gender mainstreaming in their administration and implementation;
- . The SADC Regional Water Strategy of 2006 reinforces the commitments of the SADC Member States and facilitates the fulfilment of the gender related policy instruments through commitment to promote and facilitate involvement of women in decision-making in water resource development and management, and in monitoring and evaluating gender participation in water resources management.

The guiding principles for this guideline have been developed in line with the SADC Water Policy, and are informed by the Dublin principles of IWRM:

- i. Fresh water is a finite and vulnerable resource, essential to sustain life, development and the environment,
- ii. Water development and management should be based on a participatory approach, involving all kinds of users, planners and policy-makers at all levels,
- iii. Women play a central role in the provision, management and safeguarding of water, and
- iv. 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.

The second and third Dublin principles provide for the equal participation of women and men in decision-making at all levels and are a pre-condition for achieving gender equality and equitable outcomes in the development, management, and provision of water resources.

Thus, effective mainstreaming of gender in RBOs requires, firstly, that those responsible for managing water programmes and policies in the basin become aware of the power differentials in access to, and control over water by different groups of users, including men, women and other marginalised groups at all levels. Secondly, water management in the basin requires gender sensitive planning that makes it possible for both women and men, including vulnerable groups, to have access to water and to participate in decision making processes at all levels.



MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN THE SADC WATER SECTOR TRAINING OF TRAINERS WORKSHOP held from 24 – 28 November 2014. The training workshop was attended by 27 participants, comprising 23 women and 4 men from 13 SADC member states.

These guidelines for mainstreaming gender in RBOs have been developed on the basis of the Gender and Development (GAD) framework, which sees gender mainstreaming, not as an end in itself, but as a means to achieving gender equality. Within GAD a 'dual approach', is considered necessary:

- a) A strategy for making women's and 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;
- b) Gender-specific programming and targeted actions, commonly referred to as affirmative action, aimed at addressing significant forms of discrimination and at reducing inequalities among women or men, girls or boys through support to a particular group.

Furthermore, these guidelines are designed to assist practitioners to mainstream gender into their everyday work in very practical ways. Therefore, the recommendations made in this guideline are derived from concrete examples of good practice observed and documented in the SADC region.



Women and irrigation.

RBOs aspiring to effectively mainstream gender should consider effecting change in the different dimensions of their organisational work, including legal frameworks, decision-making structures, institutional processes, and attitudes and relationships.

Therefore, RBOs should consider following targeted actions:

- Creating an enabling environment;
- Raising awareness and building gender mainstreaming capacity within the RBO structures;
- Using a gender approach in executing the RBO’s key water resources management functions;
- Consulting and incorporating the voices of poor men and women in multi-stakeholder dialogue processes and in decision making; and
- Mainstreaming gender in the project cycle.

For each of these strategic actions, several considerations and methods are available and are presented in the sections below. In addition to these, it is important to draw on existing resources such as the SADC Gender Mainstreaming Resource Kit, the SADC Handbook on Mainstreaming Gender in the SADC Water Sector and other guides and tutorials on how to mainstream gender in Integrated Water Resources Management. These resources provide useful checklists, tools and methodologies for mainstreaming gender in policy, organisations, and the project cycle.

Targeted Action 1: Creating an enabling environment

Mainstreaming gender within a RBO requires a positive enabling environment. This includes political will, legal and administrative frameworks that are conducive to gender equality, and sufficient resources for programme implementation.

Possible Interventions	Considerations and / or methods available
1.1 Committing to inclusive goal setting	Securing buy-in and commitment from high-level policy makers within the riparian Member States of the RBO structures, such as basin commissioners, steering committees, and/ or technical advisory committees.
1.2 Reviewing institutional frameworks	Reviewing and incorporating a gender perspective into the institutional arrangements of the RBO. The gender audit is a useful tool to ascertain the use and effectiveness of gender approaches in the RBO’s work.
1.3 Engaging in a visioning process	Considering a ‘visioning exercise’ for the RBO’s basin commissioners, steering committees, and / or technical advisory committee, together with key stakeholder groups. Participants should jointly determine the shape of a gender inclusive multi-stakeholder process, and agree on the goals and actions needed to achieve this.
	TIP: For more equitable outcomes, this process should be guided by an independent facilitator and supported by gender experts.
1.4 Developing a gender sensitive institutional framework	Developing and adopting a Gender Equality Policy, Gender Strategy and a Gender Equality Results Framework to define expected results.
1.5 Developing a gender plan of action	Operationalising the gender policy and strategy through a gender plan of action. This entails developing gender specific strategic objectives for the achievement of the RBO’s vision, setting clear targets, drawing up a budget and defining the gender responsibilities and accountability of the different actors involved.
	TIP: Budgets are key management tools for ensuring that gender mainstreaming is taking place. They should reflect the commitment of the RBO to gender mainstreaming.

Example 1: ORASECOM's Commitment to Gender Mainstreaming

The Member States of the Orange Senqu River Basin Commission (ORASECOM) recognise the importance and the linkages of gender to water resources management. This became clear at national and regional consultative meetings of the ORASECOM IWRM planning process during 2014 and was confirmed during the ORASECOM regional consultation meeting in May 2014. At this meeting, member states endorsed the development of a gender mainstreaming strategy to form part of the IWRM plan for ORASECOM. The ORASECOM Gender Strategy provides a set of possible entry points as a contribution to effective and sustainable management of the Orange-Senqu River Basin, while contributing towards reducing gender inequalities within the basin.

Example 2: OKACOM's Visioning Process Prioritises Gender and Social Inclusion

In March 2015, the Cubango-Okavango Basin Commission (OKACOM) engaged in a multi-stakeholder visioning process, including state actors and civil society organisations, that culminated in a gender sensitive vision – “Economically prosperous, socially just, and environmentally sound development of the Cubango-Okavango River Basin”.

Through this visioning process, OKACOM committed to developing a gender equity strategy that actively involves both women and men in the Commission's operations.

The stakeholders also came up with one gender specific strategic objective for the achievement of the RBO's vision.

OKACOM committed to revisiting its existing initiatives to ensure alignment with the gender vision and objectives, and to establish annual plans and reporting systems to monitor and sustain progress. Such actions will translate the RBO's vision into tangible actions on the ground.

Example 3: Gender Mainstreaming in the Zambezi Watercourse Commission (ZAMCOM)

Social considerations have emerged as critical in the achievement of sustainable water resources development and management by the Zambezi Water Commission. For the riparian countries, it is an issue of national priority to increase the equitable economic and social benefits of development activities.

In March 2015, ZAMCOM appointed a consultant to support the RBO in mainstreaming gender in its identified priority areas. The consultant was requested to:

- review the ZAMCOM IWRM Strategy and Implementation Plan and to propose gender mainstreaming improvements.
- provide recommendations for mainstreaming gender in ZAMCOM National Stakeholders' Coordination Committees (NASCs) and the Basin Wide Stakeholders' Coordination Committee (BASC), and to
- formulate a Gender Strategy for ZAMCOM.

It is envisaged that these activities will strengthen the Watercourse Commission in promoting an enabling environment for all stakeholders, both women and men, to contribute to, and enjoy the benefits of, sustainable water resources development and management.

Targeted Action 2: Raising awareness and building capacity for gender mainstreaming within RBO structures

Possible Interventions

Considerations and / or methods available

2.1 Awareness raising and building capacity for gender mainstreaming at the policy and operational levels of the RBO

Raising awareness of gender mainstreaming within RBO structures. Provision of training at all levels of project preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. This should include sensitization, capacity building and leadership development. Capacity building, consisting of training courses on gender planning and gender analysis for River Basin Commission staff, basin commissioners or technical advisory groups and key technical staff, and managers implementing projects in the basin. At another level, pilot project training of project officers in gender analysis at a practical level, and gender training for a core of riparian officials in selected line agencies.

TIP: The SADC Mainstreaming Gender in the SADC Water Sector Capacity Building Plan can serve as a guide for the various training activities that an RBO can roll out. The plan also outlines various target groups and methodologies for training activities.

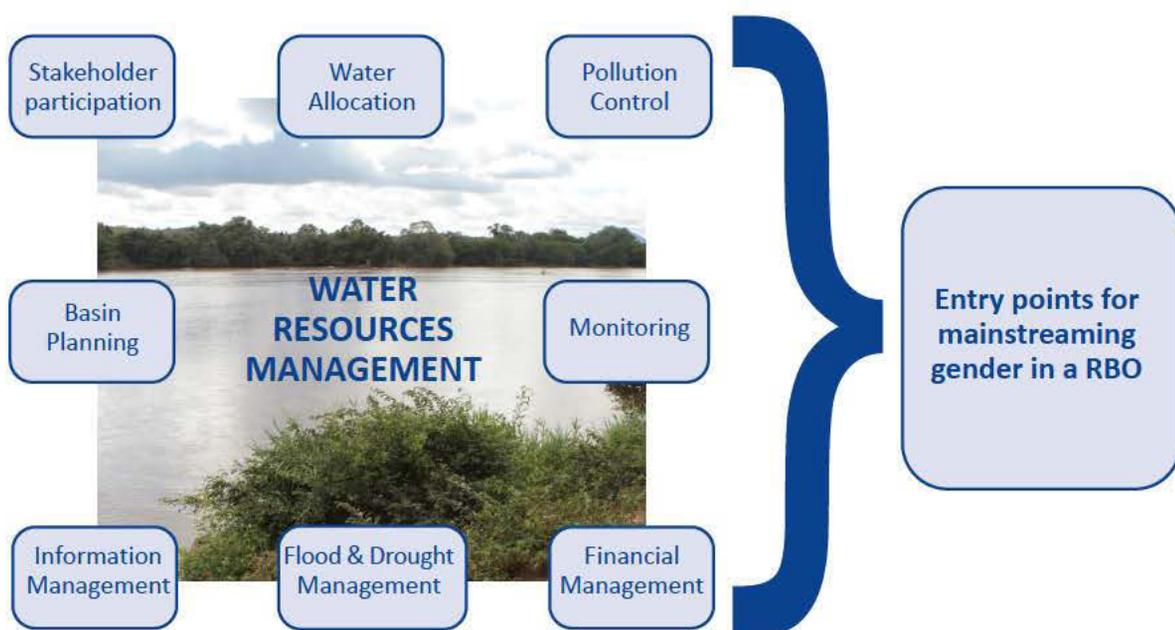


Women and water management.

Targeted Action 3: Using a gender approach in executing the RBO's key water resources management functions. Each water resources management function presents opportunities for an RBO to mainstream gender, as shown in the schematic diagram below.

Possible Interventions	Considerations and / or methods available
<p>3.1 Executing key water resources functions using a gender approach</p>	<p>Collecting gender-sensitive data and using a gender and empowerment approach to understand how both men's and women's roles affect water resources.</p> <p>Working with local women and men, and other stakeholders, to find creative solutions that are good for both people and for the basin's resources. Using gender analysis and participatory methods to determine who participates in water programmes and institutions, who benefits, who is negatively affected, and how.</p> <p>Analysing who benefits from investments in water services, who pays for the benefits, and who is left out.</p> <p>Making gender-sensitive investment decisions and technology choices based on consultations with different kind of users and beneficiaries. Promoting transparent information systems that report gender-based data, and promote participation of women and men in the management of water resources.</p> <p>Encourage self-empowerment by using management systems that recognise, respect, and use the skills and expertise of both women and men.</p>

Figure 1: RBOs' key water resources management functions



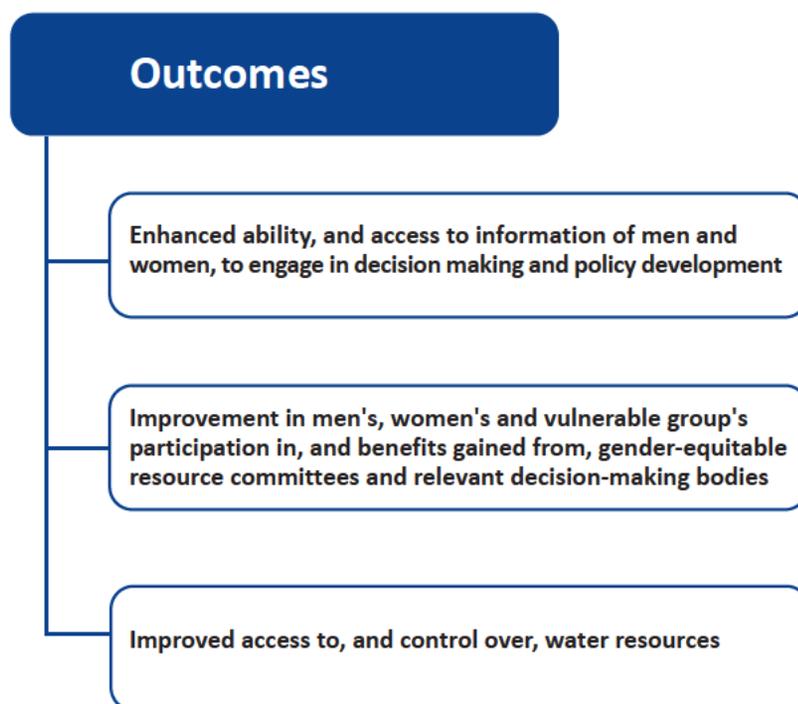
Targeted Action 4: Consulting and incorporating the voices of poor men and women in multi-stakeholder dialogue processes and in decision making

Participatory processes do not automatically recognise inequalities and differences between women and men. Gender mainstreaming will enable planners and water managers to take into account the different perspectives, needs, priorities, and concerns of men, women, and marginalised groups.

Possible Interventions	Considerations and / or methods available
4.1 Conducting gender and stakeholder analysis	Stakeholder and gender analysis are useful instruments to identify the needs and priorities of marginalised groups and to provide information on power imbalances among stakeholders. This can be done through participatory methodologies such as interviews or focus group discussions. Paying attention to power imbalances in communities, intra-household and intra-family relations, different constraints to participation, different abilities to participate and perceived benefits of participation.
4.2 Creating opportunities for all stakeholders in water management policies and activities	Identifying barriers and opportunities to effective participation of the genders with particular attention to vulnerable groups. Soliciting the priorities, concerns, and opinions of the most vulnerable groups and creating an enabling environment integrating them in the dialogue process.
4.3 Building capacity in promoting inclusive structures	Developing the capacities of local communities so they can meaningfully engage in dialogue and decision making processes. TIP: The SADC Guideline on Stakeholder Participation for RBOs, and related basin stakeholder participation roadmaps, will be useful resources to support the fourth targeted action.

Creating opportunities for all stakeholders to engage with water management policies and activities is an important step towards ensuring equitable representation of poor men and women, and other disadvantaged groups, in SADC’s multi-stakeholder dialogues (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Key outcomes of mainstreaming gender in basin dialogue processes



Text Box 2: Assessing Impacts of Hydropower Development Using a Gender Lens

While hydropower development often brings significant benefits to host communities, regions and countries, it can also involve significant ecological impacts and resulting socioeconomic consequences. Impacts are often distributed unequally, not only among different communities and stakeholder groups, but especially between men and women. Alterations in water availability, for instance, will affect women who are in charge of ensuring the water supply of their families. If they have to spend much time collecting water, women's ability to participate in community life or to earn an income through other activities is constrained.

Similarly, an increase in water-borne diseases due to changes in a river's flow regime affects women most, as they are primary caretakers of their families' health.

The World Commission on Dams (WCD) has highlighted that the 'gender blindness' of most hydropower projects has increased gender disparities by imposing a disproportionate share of the social costs on women, without giving them a fair share of the benefits.

Targeted Action 5: Mainstreaming gender in the project cycle

Each stage of the project cycle needs to be viewed with a gender lens to ensure gender sensitive planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting.

Possible Interventions	Considerations and / or methods available
5.1 Conducting gender analysis	Selecting appropriate methodology for gender analysis. Methodologies can include desk studies, consultations, or in-depth research such as community surveys, and field assessments. TIP: Use gender assessment tools to collect information about issues such as women's and men's interests and perceptions of problems related to water, their control over, and access to, improved water resources and water supply systems, and their needs, demands, practices and motives with respect to infrastructure.
5.2 Formulating programme/project objectives	Addressing the needs and concerns of women, men and vulnerable people and including a broader commitment for changing institutions or institutional structures and mechanisms, attitudes or other factors that hinder gender equality.
5.3 Formulating programme/project outcomes	Focusing on tangible change introduced by the programme/project.
5.4 Formulating programme/project outputs	Ensuring that expected outputs are consistent with the needs of the specified gender groups.
5.5 Formulating programme/project activities	Considering what financial and human benefits each option will bring to men, women, and vulnerable people. It is important to understand stakeholders' perceptions of the options in terms of their costs, benefits, acceptability, and practicality.
5.6 Identifying assumptions and risks	Identifying gender barriers to women's, men's and vulnerable peoples' full participation in the programme/project. The project management team should consider any risk of increasing, unintentionally, gender inequality, imbalances, or discrimination to one of the sexes. Where gender risks are identified, the project management team should design counter measures to eliminate or mitigate the impacts.

Possible Interventions	Considerations and / or methods available
5.7 Implementing programmes	<p>Ensuring full participation of women and men at all levels; i.e. the involvement of all in implementation activities and in sharing responsibilities of key management positions.</p> <p>TIP: Women's participation should not happen at the expense of increasing their workload and / or compromising their health. Equally, participation is not merely about increasing numbers. Women should be able to actively influence decisions about the management of a project or programme.</p>
5.8 Monitoring	<p>Developing sufficient capacities for gathering gender-sensitive information and conducting gender analysis.</p> <p>Collecting sex-disaggregated data and using the data as means of verification (using participatory assessments including the use of interviews and focus group discussions to collect data).</p>
5.9 Evaluation	<p>Assess the positive and negative changes brought about by the participation of both women and men.</p>
5.10 Reporting	<p>Review institutional reporting arrangements and integrate gender in reporting formats for all levels.</p>

Example 4: Gender Approach in Mangrove Protection, Tanzania

On the Tanga coast of Tanzania, men were engaged in fishing as well as planting crops such as coconuts and cashew nuts that could be sold for cash. Women on the other hand, gathered small shrimps and planted rice. Up until 1996, women were among the poorest people in the villages studied by a team commissioned by the government of Tanzania and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The study was part of an effort to help local people find more sustainable ways to use their coastal environment and protect the mangroves, which are vital for protection of freshwater resources.

The study showed that women did not attend meetings. As a response, special meetings were held with women to analyse both the consequences and the causes of their lack of participation. A number of reasons for their absence came up, the main one being that generally their contributions were not valued. Therefore, women had no incentives to engage. The second reason was the timing of the meetings, which often took place at unsuitable hours. The women also complained that they were not properly informed about the meetings.

As a follow up to this enquiry, meetings were convened with both women and men to build awareness on the importance of engaging both men and women in meetings and public enquiry platforms to identify lasting solutions to mangrove destruction. This resulted in women engaging in planning, monitoring and evaluation activities, and their active participation in the formulation of a fisheries management agreement.

Illegal mangrove cutting and destructive fishing practices, including dynamite fishing, has declined through the enforcement efforts of the villagers themselves, and through a voluntary mangrove replanting and weeding programme.

In the pilot villages, both environmental committees and village management committees are more gender balanced today. Levels of gender awareness, participation, and motivation have increased women's self-confidence, and some are now actively participating in typical male dominated activities such as village patrols. The change is attributed to the targeted training courses, workshops, and study tours, which involved both women and men.

The secretariat of an RBO has primary responsibility for promoting, coordinating, and monitoring implementation of the RBO's gender mainstreaming strategy and plan of action, mainly through coordination and facilitation of resources for the various activities. However, Member States of each basin also have a responsibility to roll out the broad strategic principles of the guidelines within their respective programmes and projects. Ultimately, the long-term sustainability of mainstreaming gender as a strategy is dependent on:

1. The degree to which the organisational environment within which gender mainstreaming is going to be implemented is supportive,
2. The degree to which gender mainstreaming is linked to an overarching gender management system that can provide overall strategic direction and support, and
3. The level of co-operation between the RBO and existing Gender Focal Points (GFPs) from the Departments of Water in each SADC Member State, the collaborating focal persons in the Ministries of Gender Equality, and civil society organisations collaborating with governments in gender and the water sector within the Member States. GFPs provide an important entry point for gender mainstreaming in the water sector and can play a catalytic role in facilitating gender mainstreaming in the specific activities outlined in an RBO's basin plans.

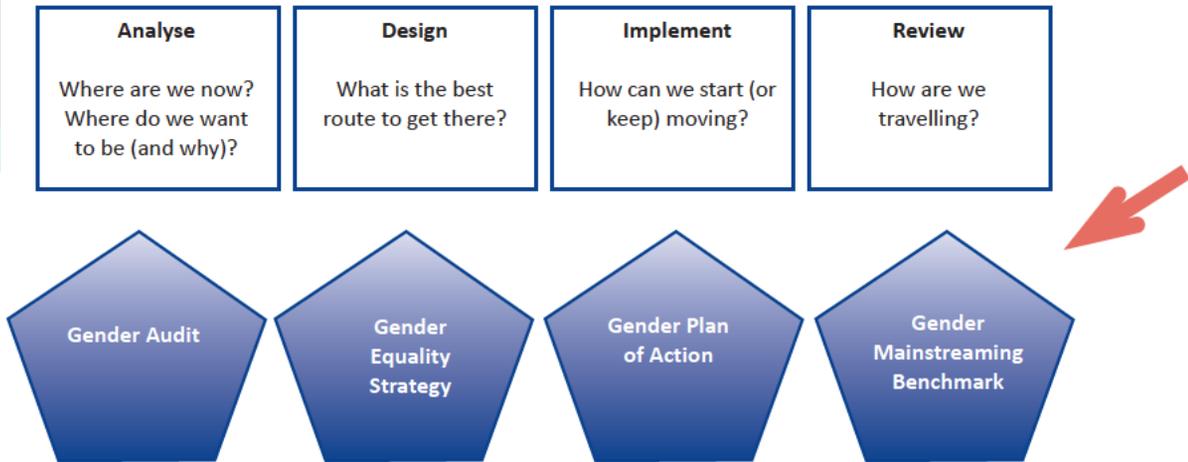
Implementation of the SADC Guidelines for Mainstreaming Gender in RBOs calls for close collaboration among the various institutions and stakeholders active in the field of gender equality such as Gender Focal Points, gender ministries, civil society organisations, and gender and water experts.



Woman fetching water

Benchmarking gender mainstreaming efforts is the process of measuring the quality of organisations' policies, programmes, strategies, and practices, and comparison of these with standard measurements, or similar measurements of other organisations. In the context of a River Basin Organisation, benchmarking allows an RBO to identify areas for improvement, and track the effectiveness of its gender equality strategies over time. Enhancing oversight through improved monitoring, evaluation, auditing and reporting procedures is critical to ensuring accountability of all RBO staff, including senior and mid-level management, for their performance in gender mainstreaming.

Figure 3: Gender mainstreaming step change process



Benchmarking is intricately linked to developing a monitoring system to record, analyse and document inputs, outputs, processes, and impacts in a disaggregated way. When data collection is disaggregated by sex, it is possible to assess the positive or negative impacts of gender programme management's decisions on women and men, young and old, rich and poor, and can support informed decisions about programming in future.

Monitoring implementation and progress in fulfilling gender goals and objectives, requires setting targets and developing indicators that track the delivery of specified outputs and outcomes. RBOs can use checklists or scorecards to measure adherence to gender-sensitive procedures such as gender analysis, planning, or resource allocation. For the latter, targets and indicators must be developed that track the extent to which the process itself is gender-sensitive.

For both processes, the indicators should not just measure the number of women participating in different activities. Indicators should be defined to measure the concrete impacts of the programme on women and men, how the outputs have affected their workload, how they have affected their capacity to equitably access critical resources, how they have contributed to addressing their respective needs, and how they have transformed power relations and empowered people. Table 2 below presents sample indicators for gender equality and gender equity. These can be adapted to suit the context of each RBO.

Text Box 3: Tips for effective monitoring and benchmarking

- Consider a combination of qualitative and quantitative data to generate richer data.
- Use participatory approaches wherever possible, especially when defining gender indicators.
- Use gender-sensitive indicators to assess the short-term results, outcomes, and impacts of gender mainstreaming.
- Support and strengthen local statistics offices to produce gender responsive data.

Table 2: Sample indicators

Strategic areas	Indicators
Policy level	<p>Existence of a gender policy within the RBO.</p> <p>Existence of gender specific objectives within the RBO.</p>
Operational level	<p>Extent of awareness of, and utilisation of gender and pro-poor concepts and frameworks by RBO management and Project Management Units implementing projects in the basin.</p> <p>Number of activities in the Gender Plan of Action implemented.</p> <p>Number of basin programmes that have been designed taking into account male, female and vulnerable peoples' needs.</p> <p>Level of development and inclusion of gender sensitive norms and standards in the working and practices of the RBO and its affiliated programmes.</p>
Strengthening the voice of men and women	<p>Proportion of women and vulnerable groups with improved skills in management and participation in basin activities.</p> <p>Percentage of men and women engaged in the planning, management, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of basin programmes.</p> <p>Ratio of contributions in decision-making meetings by women and men.</p> <p>Percentage of decisions adopted from women's and men's contributions in basin committee meetings.</p> <p>Number of male/female and vulnerable people participating in basin multi-stakeholder dialogue processes.</p>
Capacity building	<p>Increased capacity of RBO and Project Management Unit staff members to collect sex-disaggregated data.</p> <p>Number of training activities that promote gender equality in the planning, management and use of water resources.</p> <p>Number of training activities that mainstream a gender perspective.</p>

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